Haringey LONDON

A message from Will Maimaris
Director of Public Health at Haringey Council about coronavirus (COVID-19)

We are all concerned about the rapidly developing situation with coronavirus and will all be worried about the impact of the virus on our families, friends and ourselves.

It is really important to remember that for children and young people and healthy working age adults, the risk of serious illness from coronavirus is very low and most people will at worst have a high fever and cough for a few days. Even in people over 70, the overwhelming majority of people survive the illness.

For the vast majority of us the virus is nothing to fear, but we need to make sure we protect the many people in our community who are vulnerable to the virus, particularly the old and frail, and people with serious long-term health conditions.

To slow and stop the spread of the virus, and protect the most vulnerable in our communities we are all going to have to do our bit. This means making some changes to our lives, in particular radically reducing our face to face social interactions outside our own households.

The measures we all need to take are sometimes referred to as social distancing and include:

- Avoid gatherings with friends and family. Keep in touch using remote technology such as phone, internet, and social media

- Avoid non-essential use of public transport – we need to make sure public transport is safe for essential workers like doctors, care workers and nurses

- Work from home, unless you are in an essential front line job.

- Avoid large gatherings, and gatherings in smaller public spaces such as pubs, cinemas, restaurants, theatres, bars, clubs

- Use telephone or online services to contact your GP or other essential services

- Avoid contact with someone who is displaying symptoms of coronavirus (COVID-19). These symptoms include high temperature and/or new and continuous cough

- Wash hands frequently for 20 seconds or more

These measures seem difficult, but sticking to them tightly means that we will get on top of the spread of the virus, save lives in our vulnerable populations and things will begin to improve. If we don't stick to these measures, the virus will continue to spread and it will be even longer before we can return to normal.

We particularly need to make sure we are minimising contact with people over 70, people with serious health conditions and pregnant women.

We all need to support and encourage each other to stick to these measures.

The level and speed of change to our lives can be bewildering, so we need to be kind to ourselves and each other and take one day at a time.

It will be really important to look after our health and wellbeing. Going out for walks with people in our households, avoiding alcohol and cigarettes and staying connected with others by phone or internet are all sensible things that will help us stay well over the coming weeks. Stay positive as these measures won't go on forever.

For more information on coronavirus if you are worried about symptoms go to
www.nhs.uk/conditions/coronavirus-covid-19

Thank you

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Will Maimaris
Director of Public Health
Haringey Council

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