**Lithium Patient Information Leaflet during the Covid-19 Pandemic**

**\*\*IMPORTANT information PLEASE READ\*\***

**Managing your lithium therapy during the Coronavirus Outbreak**

You should continue to take your lithium therapy as prescribed for you, and we recommend that you order your repeat prescriptions through your GP in the same way that you have done up until now. There is no need to build up a supply of your medicines at home, however, your GP surgery and community pharmacy might be quite busy during this time, so it would be important to order your next supply at least 2 working days before you run out.

**What to do if you are isolated or have suspected/confirmed Coronavirus**

We currently advise **any** patient with suspected Coronavirusor patients who are isolated to continue to take lithium unless you are told otherwise. If you are due to attend your surgery or clinic for routine blood tests you must ring the team to let them know that you won’t be able to come in.

**What to do if you develop a fever, cough and/or cold/flu like symptoms**

Coronavirus is known to cause fever, cough and flu-like symptoms. Sometimes these symptoms can cause your body to become dehydrated, and so it is very important to drink plenty of water, avoid alcohol and reduce your caffeine intake. If you develop ***muscle weakness or twitches, slurred words, blurred vision, confusion, drowsiness or upset stomach*** it could be a sign that there is too much lithium in your blood, and you should urgently contact your GP or lithium team **before you take your next dose.** Your team will advise you on what to do, whether you need any changes to your dose or extra blood tests, and will arrange that directly with you.

If you do have a temperature please take paracetamol as per the advice on the package, please avoid ibuprofen as this can cause your lithium level to rise.

If it is the weekend or out of hours, or you are in any way concerned about your symptoms please contact **NHS 111** and make sure that you also inform them that you take lithium?

**General Advice**

It is important to try and limit your chances of getting Coronavirus and follow the NHS advice

* Wash your hands with soap and water often – do this for at least 20 seconds always wash your hands when you get home or into work
* Use hand sanitiser gel if soap and water are not available
* Cover your mouth and nose with a tissue or your sleeve (not your hands) when you cough or sneeze
* Put used tissues in the bin immediately and wash your hands afterwards
* Try to avoid close contact with people who are unwell
* Don’t touch your eyes, nose or mouth if your hands are not clean

**Your team can be contacted on:**

***Please complete***