

# SMRC self-management delivery and Covid-19: a message from Jean Thompson



Dear Coordinators

We have been asked to give some guidance on how to support people with long term conditions to stay engaged with their self-management journey during the ongoing uncertainties created by the Covid-19 Pandemic.

SMRC has advised providers across the world to be flexible during these difficult times and if possible, to identify a different delivery method. In light of this, we would like to share with all UK providers some options for consideration.

Since social distancing is the best way to stay well, the immediate priority will be to cancel all face-to-face community courses. However, this should not mean that we stop supporting people living with long term conditions to self-manage, so you might like to consider the following instead:

- Video workshops via Zoom, Skype Video, GoToMeeting, etc
- Mailed course Helpbook as a stand-alone resource
- Mailed course Helpbook with telephone contact 1 to 1 or as part of a group chat – your tutors have short (half hour) conference calls with no more than 4 participants at a time. This serves the double purpose of providing a useful tool, the Helpbook and adding the phone call to help reduce social isolation

*How to deliver community courses via Skype, Zoom, Go to Meeting, etc:*

This is being allowed by SMRC to support you during this current Pandemic and so here are a few helpful points:

1. These platforms usually require your organisation to have a subscription or license
2. There may be compliance issues for you to check out
3. Your participants will have to download software such as Zoom or get the app

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4. You will have to have a technical support person as most of your users will be new to this technology and may struggle at first
5. Instead of asking for volunteers during the workshop you will probably have to call on people for such activities as action planning and feedback
6. For freethinking you again may need to call on people, not the best, or ask people to use the raised hand features in some software and call on those with raised hands
7. For charts you can use the show screen feature which means your tutors will have to be familiar with the software
8. Instead of pair/sharing work you can have each person report for him or herself. It will be very important to model this well
9. Tutors will need someone to turn to for problems and concerns both technical and non-technical. In these difficult times it may be that you will have more people that are frightened, anxious and depressed in the workshops

*Other options being considered and explored over the coming weeks:*

- Preparation of a short script for each week. For example, in week one the tutors will introduce the materials, maybe do the lemon exercise and have everyone make an action plan. **You will not need any update training**, but you will have to support tutors to use the phone for conference calling
- The development of a UK Toolkit for people to self-manage at home this will be adapted from the existing US toolkit <https://www.selfmanagementresource.com/programs/mail-program/>

Finally, I just wanted to say that we are all in a new situation and will learn what works or does not work for your communities. Let us all share our experiences via the Talking Health Twitter feed [@TalkingHealthS1](https://twitter.com/TalkingHealthS1) or if you prefer at [info@talkinghealth.org](mailto:info@talkinghealth.org) and we will post useful feedback on the Talking Health website. SMRC will also be inviting organisations who try an alternative form of delivery to share their experiences via an online survey on the SMRC web site – check out [www.talkinghealth.org](http://www.talkinghealth.org) for regular updates