

COVID-19 Specific Staff Training Programme

Understanding COVID-19

COVID-19 is the Infectious disease caused by coronavirus. Coronaviruses are a large existing family of viruses that can cause respiratory infections, ranging from common colds to more serious diseases. COVID-19 is a new disease in this family that was unknown until the outbreak began in Wuhan, China and is now a pandemic affecting many countries globally.

The most common symptoms of COVID-19 include;

- Fever
- Dry cough
- Tiredness
- Aches and pains
- Headache

Some patients also experience;

- Nasal congestion
- Sore Throat
- Gastric symptoms
- Loss of taste and smell

Symptoms are often mild and begin gradually; however, you will still be infectious and transmit the virus. A minority of people will become very unwell, requiring hospital treatment for breathing difficulties. The elderly and those with underlying medical conditions are most at risk; however, anyone can catch COVID-19 and become seriously ill.

The disease spreads primarily from person to person through small droplets from the nose or mouth, expelled when a person with COVID-19 coughs, sneezes or speaks. This is why it is important to keep 2 meters apart to prevent transference. These droplets can land on objects and surfaces and people can become infected by touching these contaminated surfaces and then touching their eyes, nose or mouth. This is why it is important to regularly and thoroughly wash your hands. The virus can survive on some surfaces for up to 72 hours.

Understanding Social Distancing

Social Distancing is a means of physical distancing from others to slow the spread of infection. It is important to stay at least two meters away from others, particularly when in their company for more than 15 minutes. The more contact you have with an infected person, the more likely you are to catch the infection yourself. The goal is to reduce the spread of infection to help reduce the pressure on health care services so that they have capacity to care for individuals who become seriously unwell.

Understanding Shielding, Isolating and Quarantine

Shielding means restricting the activities and separating people who are considered vulnerable, for their own protection, rather than the protection of others. The goal is to reduce the chance of them coming into contact with somebody who is infectious and becoming ill themselves. Individuals who are shielding should not leave their home, and should minimise non-essential contact with other members of their household.

Isolating means separating people who are actually ill with symptoms of COVID-19. The goal is to reduce the spread of infection. It is important to continue isolating for a full 48 hours after your symptoms disappear.

Quarantine means restricting the activities and separating people who are not ill themselves but may have been exposed to COVID-19. The goal is to prevent the spread of disease before potential symptoms occur. Quarantine may be formally imposed, particularly with regards to travel, or you can self-quarantine if you have individual concerns that you may be at risk. During any period of quarantine you should continually monitor yourself for symptoms, and if you do become unwell, report your illness to the COVID-19 helpline (0800 024 1222) to facilitate any necessary contact tracing. A period of Quarantine must continue for 14 days.

Understand Government Guidance on COVID-19

All members of staff should regularly log in to <https://www.gov.uk/coronavirus> to read all current and relevant media releases and briefings to understand any changes that are taking place to current guidance. This site covers a variety of topics to keep you well informed, and is updated frequently. Please take time to fully familiarise yourself with the content on this site as the information is extensive, and necessary to keep yourself and others safe

Understanding Reporting of COVID-19

If you or a member of your family do become unwell, report your illness to the COVID-19 helpline (0800 024 1222) to facilitate any necessary contact tracing. A period of Quarantine must continue for 14 days for yourself and all members of your family. Anyone who you have had contact with should be advised, and they should also quarantine for 14 days.

As a staff member, is it essential you report any potential symptoms of illness immediately to your line manager and STAY AT HOME. This is equally important if any member of your family develops symptoms, or has been in contact with anybody who is potentially infected. Your line manager will inform all members of staff you have been in contact with to ensure they follow quarantine procedures, along with all patients you have had contact with. If any staff member becomes infected the clinic will be closed for 48 hours and deep cleaned prior to reopening.

If a patient that has visited the clinic subsequently reports they have become infected, all members of staff that have been in contact with that patient will be placed in quarantine. Every patient visiting the clinic will be prompted to let the clinic know if they go on to develop symptoms.

Principles of Infection Control

All staff members will repeat online infection control training following the link below prior to returning to the clinical environment ensuring their skills are fully up to date.

(https://www.highspeedtraining.co.uk/health-and-safety/online-infection-control-prevention-training.aspx?&mkwid=s_dc&pclid=406071534688&pkw=%2Binfection%20%2Bcontrol%20%2Bcourse%20%2Bonline&pmt=b&dim=&gclid=Cj0KCQjw7qn1BRDqARIsAKMbHDYZowOuWaq4sYUOxfT0F4GD7g0D4ns8O07T3vaBpaSa3QjLGRDujKlaAnKiEALw_wcB)

Clinic Infection Control Procedures Specific to COVID-19

The transmission of COVID-19 is thought to occur mainly through respiratory droplets, generated by coughing and sneezing and through contact with contaminated surfaces. All staff and visitors must maintain good respiratory hygiene measures as noted below;

- Disposable, single-use tissues should be used to cover the nose and mouth when sneezing, coughing or wiping and blowing the nose – used tissues should be disposed of promptly in the nearest waste bin
- Tissues, waste bins (lined and foot operated) and hand hygiene facilities should be available for patients, visitors and staff
- Hands should be cleaned (using soap and water if possible, otherwise using ABHR) after coughing, sneezing, using tissues or after any contact with respiratory secretions and contaminated objects
- Encourage patients and staff to keep hands away from the eyes, mouth and nose

Where possible a 2m distance must be employed at all times

Hand hygiene is essential to reduce transmission. Hand hygiene must be performed immediately before every episode of patient contact and after any contact or activity where contamination may have occurred (**Appendix 1** hand washing instructions)

Decontamination of equipment and the care environment must be performed using a combined detergent/disinfectant solution in a solution of warm water. See **Appendix 2** for routine decontamination instructions. Single-use items should be used if possible and disposed of safely. Reusable non-invasive equipment must be decontaminated immediately after use at regular intervals as part of equipment cleaning.

Protective clothing will be worn according to guidelines (**Appendix 3**) and staff will be trained in applying and removing (**Appendix 4 and 5**)