



## Consortium of Local Medical Committees

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### Guidelines for Workplace Safety During COVID - 19

Due to recent government changes leading to more people returning to work and the introduction of the Test and Trace service, the LMC have put this guide together as a reference to help you comply with social distancing guidelines within the office. With changes likely to be in place for the foreseeable future we have included suggestions on Test and Trace, hygiene precautions, risk management and safe work planning.

Please refer to the library of links to full documents, at the end of this document, should you require further guidance.

#### Test and Trace

You will be aware that the Government launched the NHS [Test and Trace](#) service last week to minimise community transmission of COVID-19. It is designed to ensure that anyone who develops symptoms can quickly be tested to find out if they have the virus and, if they do, to trace close recent contacts who will be notified that they should self-isolate at home for 14 days.

For an overview of the NHS test and trace service, including what happens if you test positive for coronavirus (COVID-19) or have had close contact with someone who has tested positive click [here](#).

#### Risk Management

Here are some steps to consider prior to performing your Risk Assessment:

- Practices should make every reasonable effort to enable working from home as a first option. Where working from home is not possible, workplaces should make every reasonable effort to comply with the social distancing guidelines set out by the government (keeping people 2m apart wherever possible).
- Where the social distancing guidelines cannot be followed in full, in relation to an activity, consider whether that activity needs to continue and if so, take all the mitigating actions possible to reduce the risk of transmission between staff, such as:
  1. Increasing the frequency of hand washing and surface cleaning.
  2. Keeping the activity time involved as short as possible.
  3. Using screens or barriers to separate people from each other.
  4. Using back-to-back or side-to-side working (rather than face-to-face) whenever possible.
  5. Reducing the number of people each person has contact with by using 'fixed teams or partnering (so each person works with only a few others).
- Finally, if people must work face-to-face for a sustained period with more than a small group of fixed partners, then you will need to assess whether the activity can safely go ahead. No one is obliged to work in an unsafe work environment.

## Staff working from home

Your Risk Assessment may suggest that, if possible, some members of staff work from home. Here are some points to consider when managing home workers;

- Monitoring the wellbeing of people who are working from home and helping them stay connected to the rest of the workforce, especially if most of their colleagues are on-site.
- Keeping in touch with off-site workers on their working arrangement including their welfare, mental and physical health and personal security.
- Providing equipment for people to work at home safely and effectively, for example, remote access to work systems.

## Self-isolation and Sick Pay

You must make sure that individuals who are advised to stay at home under existing government guidance do not physically come to work. This includes individuals who have symptoms of COVID-19 as well as those who live in a household with someone who has symptoms. If you have staff who have been advised to self-isolate, please consider;

- Enabling workers to work from home while self-isolating if appropriate.
- See current guidance for employees and employers relating to statutory sick pay due to COVID-19.
- Click [here](#) to view the guidance from our HR team, including sick pay and annual leave.
- See current [guidance](#) for people who have symptoms and those who live with others who have symptoms

## Social distancing in the workplace

You must maintain social distancing guidelines where always possible. **Where it isn't always possible to maintain social distancing, Public Health advice is that wearing a face covering is an appropriate precautionary measure.** Therefore, if staff members are NOT able to work 2 metres apart, only then is it advisable for them to wear a face covering. The social distancing rule applies to every aspect including entrances, exits and common rooms. Please consider:

### **Arriving and leaving work:**

- Staggering arrival and departure times at work to reduce the number of people gathered.
- Having more entry/departure points into the workplace if possible.
- Providing more storage for employee's personal belongings.
- Using signs/markings to ensure there is a one-way system at the entrance and exit points.
- Providing hand washing/sanitation stations at entrance and exit points where possible.
- Not using touch-based devices such as keypads.

### **Workstations:**

- Review the layout of the workplace to allow changes.
- Use floor paint or labels to help employees keep to the 2m distance.
- Arrange for people to work side by side, back to back or facing away from each other when it's not possible to move workstations.
- Avoid use of hot desks.
- If there is a lift situated in your building, please limit the number of people.

## **Meetings**

It's important to use technology to host any meetings you may have if possible or to maintain social distancing measures. Please consider;

- Always try to conduct the meeting virtually if possible.
- Avoid sharing pens, papers or any other materials you may use.
- Hold meetings outdoor or in well ventilated rooms whenever possible.
- For meeting rooms, use clear signs to ensure attendees maintain social distancing.

## **Common Areas**

It is important to ensure you try to adhere to social distancing guidance throughout all your common areas in the workplace. You should also think about how frequently you clean these common areas which would include kitchen areas, toilets, rest areas or changing facilities. Please consider:

- Stagger break/lunch times to low occupancy amount in kitchen/canteen.
- Use safe outside areas for break.
- Use any additional space which has been freed up due to remote working.
- Ensure staff bring to work packaged lunches to limit use of kitchen facilities.
- Ensure staff make their own drinks and use their cups.

## **Visitors/Patients**

The main objective is to minimise the number of unnecessary visits to the workplace if possible. Please consider the below points:

- Always encourage visits virtually where this is an option.
- If a visit is required, workplace guidance on social distancing and hygiene should be explained to visitors on or before arrival.
- Limiting the number of visitors at any one time.
- Maintaining an accurate record of all visitors, if practical.
- Ensuring visitor arrangements are in place regarding hygiene, for example, where someone physically sign anything with the same pen in reception.
- Reviewing entry and exit points to minimise contact with other people.

## **Cleaning and hygiene**

Good workplace hygiene has never been more crucial, encourage your employees to practice their own good hygiene and the importance of regular handwashing and use of hand sanitisers. Below are some key points you should consider in your workplace:

- Frequent cleaning of work areas and equipment between uses.
- Frequent cleaning of objects and surfaces that are touched regularly such as door handles and keyboards.
- Clearing workspaces and removing waste and belongings from the work area at the end of a shift.
- Limited or restricting use of high-touch items and equipment, for example, printers or whiteboards.

- Use signs and posters to build awareness of good handwashing technique and the need to increase the frequency.
- Provide hand sanitise in multiple location in addition to toilets.
- Setting clear use and cleaning guidance for toilets to ensure they are kept clean and social distancing is achieved as much as possible.
- Enhancing your cleaning arrangements for a much deeper, longer clean.
- Providing more waste facilities and more frequent rubbish collection.
- Ensuring there are either paper towels or electrical dryers available.
- Ensure there are cleaning procedures for goods entering the workplace and restricting non-business or personal deliveries to workers.

### **Reference Library**

- [Test and Trace Guidance](#)
- [Getting Tested Guidance](#)
- [Workplace Risk Assessment Tool](#)
- [Risk Assessment Result Certificate](#)
- [For further details on working safely please visit](#)
- [Corona Virus Fact Sheet for Children](#)
- [NHS Posters for Waiting Rooms](#)



Social Distancing Lift  
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