

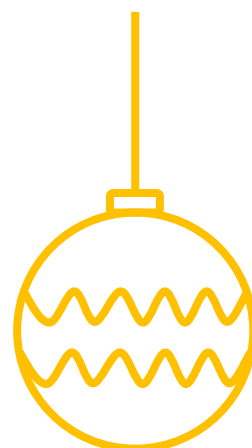


Festive guidance 2021

We're pleased to be able to relax some of the infection, prevention and control restrictions that were in place during last year's festive season. While Covid-19 has not gone away and remains a real threat, our aim is to strike a balance between ensuring staff, patients and visitors can enter into the festive spirit whilst doing so safely.

Headlines

- Staff should continue to take their lateral flow tests twice a week, and log their results
- PPE is still required in our hospitals
- Christmas is a time for getting together, and this will be allowed as far as is safe
- Follow social distancing guidance in our hospitals, and try to apply the same ethos and precautions outside of work
- Some decorations, and trees in specific areas and during specific periods, are allowed this year
- Manage risks by following our IPC policies available on the intranet



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Christmas trees



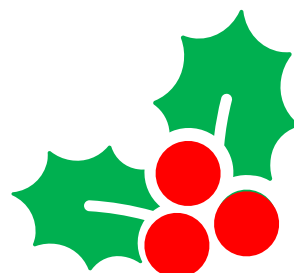
We'll be putting up our larger Christmas trees in the dome at Poole, the atrium at Royal Bournemouth and the entrance to the outpatients department at Christchurch again this year.

- If you have an exterior or courtyard space by your work area, consider putting up a tree here, especially where it may be seen from multiple wards or departments and the view can be shared with colleagues or patients. These trees can go up at any time.
- In indoor, non-inpatient areas which carry out only planned or outpatient work, decorated trees (eg baubles and/or tinsel) may be displayed from 18 December until 31 December only. This is to support an acceptable level of cleaning around this period.
- Inpatient areas may also display a decorated tree this year – to allow cleaning to take place, these may go up only between 22-28 December. Again, this will support adequate cleaning before, during and after.
- Trees should be placed away from toilets, sluices and heavy traffic areas.

Decorations

While festive decorations themselves aren't likely to be a point of transmission, they do make cleaning wards and clinical environments more difficult. Cleanliness is paramount to reducing hospital associated infections - please avoid festive decorations inside the healthcare or patient zone.

- Window film (not 3D gel) decorations are allowable, and the Trust will be distributing these to wards and clinical areas across UHD in the coming weeks.
- In offices and admin areas, a small string of battery-operated lights can be displayed, and turned off when unattended to comply with fire safety guidance.
- Modest decorations on individual desks are fine, as long as there is no risk of additional contact from other staff and that this does not affect routine cleaning
- Keep any decorations away from healthcare or patient areas, eg a clinic, treatment or procedure room or bay
- There should be no decorations on frequently touched points, including handrails or bed bumpers, in any clinical area.
- Reception areas, desks and other spaces in clinical areas and community team bases should be kept as free from clutter as possible to ensure effective cleaning is possible.



Getting together

Christmas is a time for getting together, but this year it is also a time to observe practices that will help keep us all safer. Try not to have too many people gathered together at one time to minimise the risk of transmission among teams.



At work

Festive events for staff and/or patients (eg team get-togethers, Christmas-themed events for patients, etc) may take place as long as they are in line with our guidelines on social distancing and our Covid-19 risk assessments.

Some points to consider:

- Ensure everyone washes their hands with soap and water for 20 seconds before and after preparing, serving, and eating food
- Use alcohol hand gel if soap is not available
- Encourage people to bring their own food and drinks or use grab and go options to avoid lots of people all gathering around an area together
- Individually wrapped items should be considered if you are sharing food
- Shared dips and crudities/crisps should be avoided
- If serving food, consider having one person serve all the food to reduce the number of people handling utensils
- Festive-themed clothing should fit within the recommendations currently in place – keep bare below the elbow, nothing fluffy/sparkly and likely to leave lint/glitter on a patient.

Outside of work

If you choose to meet outside of work you should follow the guidance on keeping yourself safe, particularly when meeting with people indoors that you would not normally have close contact with (without wearing a face mask).

In general, the risk of catching or passing on Covid-19 is higher in crowded and enclosed spaces, where there are more people who might be infectious and with limited fresh air.

Whilst not required outside of our hospitals, maintaining an element of social distancing is a sensible precaution.

Every little action helps to keep us safer.



Wishing you a happy and safe festive season

Your infection, prevention and control team