



Workforce Q & A's – COVID-19 – as at 10 November 2020

This will be up-dated as the COVID-19 situation changes
and Government advice is up-dated.

**Please do not print this document
refer to the most recent version on the intranet**

There will be a continuing need to maintain essential service requirements, potentially with an increased workload in a number of areas. Staff who remain clear of the virus and are not required under PHE guidelines to self-isolate should continue to attend their usual place of work.

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1. Self-Isolation

If you have symptoms, a close contact has symptoms or you/a household member are coming into hospital as patient

1.1 *What should I do if I develop symptoms of Covid-19?*

A **DO NOT ATTEND WORK**

- Inform your manager that you are unwell and advise when you last worked. If you become symptomatic while at work inform your line manager straight away and go home, take your belongings with you and wash your hands.
- Arrange for a Covid-19 swab via the hospital swabbing team as soon as possible, any delay should be escalated to your line manager. Guidance for accessing staff swabbing is below in Section 3.
- You must **NOT** return to work while awaiting your swab result.
- If your test is positive you **MUST** self-isolate for 10 days, as paragraph 1.2.

Key points:

- **DO NOT** attend work if you or a household member have symptoms of Covid-19
- Contact your line manager as soon as possible to arrange swabbing
- **DO NOT** attend work while waiting for swab results
- Maintain social distancing at all times
- Ensure you are wearing your mask correctly
- Maintain good hand hygiene

1.2 *How long should I self-isolate for if I have symptoms?*

A If you have symptoms (including a fever; loss of taste and smell and/or a continuous or new cough) you should remain at home and self-isolate for **10 days** from when your symptoms start and arrange a test if you have not had one already. You should stay at home while waiting for the result of your test. A positive result means you must complete a 10 day self-isolation period.

If your test is negative, you can stop self-isolating as long as you are well. If your test is negative, your symptoms are likely to be due to another illness and this will be recorded as sickness from the day of your negative test.

On day 11, if you haven't had a fever for 48 hours, you can return to work. The cough and loss of taste and smell may persist for longer.

Keep self-isolating if you have any of these symptoms after 10 days:

- a high temperature or feeling hot and shivery
- a runny nose or sneezing
- feeling or being sick
- diarrhoea
- loss of appetite

Only stop self-isolating when these symptoms have gone. If you need to self-isolate for longer than 10 days please contact your line manager who will advise you regarding medical certification.

Members of your household/'support bubble'/other close contacts should isolate for 14 days from when they had contact with you while you had symptoms (this should also include anyone who had close contact with you in the 48 hours prior to your symptoms starting).

Any member of staff who previously tested positive for Covid-19 and develops symptoms again should self-isolate again and have a further test.

Trust staff should be leading by example and following Government guidelines at all times.

If you are at home self-isolating due to symptoms of Covid-19, you should be staying at home and not going out.

For further information please see link:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/covid-19-stay-at-home-guidance/stay-at-home-guidance-for-households-with-possible-coronavirus-covid-19-infection>

1.3 What should I do if a member of my household develops symptoms?

If someone in your household/'support bubble' shows symptoms:

- If you are NOT with that person when their symptoms start or 48 hours prior, accommodation can be provided for you for the duration of your household's 14 day isolation period and you can continue to work.
- If you develop symptoms you should isolate for **10 days** as 1.2 above.
- If you have had contact with the person at the point their symptoms started or in the 48 hours prior to their symptoms starting, you should self-isolate with your household for 14 days from when you had contact with them. If during the 14 days you develop symptoms, you should arrange to be swabbed and if positive, self-isolate for **10 days** from the start of your symptoms, as 1.2 above.

Alternative accommodation

- If you are currently living with other healthcare workers and unable to meet requirements to self-isolate, or have individual circumstances which prevent you from attending work, please contact:
At Royal Bournemouth and Christchurch Hospitals please contact our HR helpline on 4804 between 8.00am and 5.00pm.
At Poole please contact Julie Mantell on Ext 2873 or email Julie.mantell@uhd.nhs.uk during office hours 08.30 to 16.30 and for Out of Hours please contact the Clinical Management Team Bleep 0111.

1.4 What happens if I live in a hospital residence with someone who has symptoms of the virus and is self-isolating?

- A If you have had contact with that member of your household at the point their symptoms started or the 48 hours prior to their symptoms starting, you should self-isolate with your housemates for 14 days, from when you had contact with them. If during the 14 days you develop symptoms, you should arrange to be swabbed and if positive, self-isolate for **10 days** from the start of your symptoms.

Where possible you should try to separate your living arrangements; not share towels for bathing, showering and hand hygiene. Regularly clean shared bathrooms and wipe down kitchen surfaces after use. It may be helpful to consider a rota for use of shared spaces.

Wash your hands frequently and avoid touching your face.

If possible, you should ask your line manager whether you can work from home.

1.5 I am coming into hospital for surgery and have been advised to self-isolate prior to my operation. Will I be paid?

- A If the hospital has advised you to self-isolate it is important to follow this instruction and not to leave your home for the period of time specified by your medical team. You will continue to receive your usual pay from the Trust.

It may be possible to continue to work from home during this period of self-isolation, including completing mandatory training and on-line development.

1.6 A member of my household is coming into hospital for surgery and we have all been advised to self-isolate prior to their surgery. Will I be paid?

- A If the hospital has advised the whole household to self-isolate prior to one person's surgery, you should all follow this advice and not leave the home for the period of time specified by the medical team. If you work for the Trust you will continue to receive your usual pay. Anyone who does not work for the Trust should discuss this with their employer.

It may be possible to continue to work from home during this period of self-isolation, including completing mandatory training and on-line development.

Alternatively, the person who will be undergoing surgery may choose to shield by distancing themselves from the rest of their household for the recommended period of time.

1.7 If a member of staff is self-isolating prior to coming into hospital for an operation how should this be recorded?

- A You should record this absence in the usual way, under 'other leave' – infection precaution.

1.8 If I feel well, can I come into work during a period of self-isolation?

- A You **MUST NOT** come into work if you should be self-isolating in accordance with Government guidelines.

Your manager also has a responsibility to prevent anyone who is required to be self-isolating from attending the workplace (except where they work from home).

Failure to comply is a criminal offence punishable by a fine of £1,000 for a first offence, rising to £10,000 for repeated infringements. The same fines apply to those preventing others from self-isolating.

2. Shielding

2.1 Has shielding been reintroduced?

- A Some people who are defined as **clinically extremely vulnerable** and are at very high risk of severe illness from coronavirus, may be asked to shield. There are 2 ways you may be identified as **clinically extremely vulnerable**:
1. You have one or more of conditions listed below, or
 2. Your clinician or GP has added you to the Shielded Patient List because, based on their clinical judgment, they deem you to be at higher risk of serious illness if you catch the virus.

If you do not fall into any of these categories, and have not been contacted to inform you that you are on the Shielded Patient List, you will need to follow the general [staying alert and safe](#) guidance for the rest of the population.

If you think there are good clinical reasons why you should be added to the Shielded Patient List, discuss your concerns with your GP or hospital clinician.

People with the following conditions are automatically deemed **clinically extremely vulnerable**:

- solid organ transplant recipients
- people with specific cancers:
 - people with cancer who are undergoing active chemotherapy
 - people with lung cancer who are undergoing radical radiotherapy
 - people with cancers of the blood or bone marrow such as leukaemia, lymphoma or myeloma who are at any stage of treatment
 - people having immunotherapy or other continuing antibody treatments for cancer
 - people having other targeted cancer treatments that can affect the immune system, such as protein kinase inhibitors or PARP inhibitors
 - people who have had bone marrow or stem cell transplants in the last 6 months or who are still taking immunosuppression drugs

- people with severe respiratory conditions including all cystic fibrosis, severe asthma and severe chronic obstructive pulmonary disease (COPD)
- people with rare diseases that significantly increase the risk of infections (such as severe combined immunodeficiency (SCID), homozygous sickle cell disease)
- people on immunosuppression therapies sufficient to significantly increase risk of infection
- women who are pregnant with significant heart disease, congenital or acquired
- other people who have also been classed as clinically extremely vulnerable, based on clinical judgment and an assessment of their needs. GPs and hospital clinicians have been provided with guidance to support these decisions

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/guidance-on-shielding-and-protecting-extremely-vulnerable-persons-from-covid-19/guidance-on-shielding-and-protecting-extremely-vulnerable-persons-from-covid-19#Clinically>

2.2 I consider myself to be clinically vulnerable, but have not been asked to shield?

Only **extremely clinically vulnerable** people are being asked to shield, as above.

If you are over 60 OR **clinically vulnerable**, you could be at higher risk of severe illness from coronavirus. You:

- should be especially careful to follow the rules and minimise your contacts with others
- should continue to wash your hands carefully and more frequently than usual and maintain thorough cleaning of frequently touched areas in your home and/or workspace

Clinically vulnerable people are those who are:

- aged 70 or over (regardless of medical conditions)
- under 70 with an underlying health condition listed below (that is, anyone instructed to get a flu jab each year on medical grounds):
- chronic (long-term) mild to moderate respiratory diseases, such as asthma, chronic obstructive pulmonary disease (COPD), emphysema or bronchitis
- chronic heart disease, such as heart failure
- chronic kidney disease
- chronic liver disease, such as hepatitis
- chronic neurological conditions, such as Parkinson's disease, motor neurone disease, multiple sclerosis (MS) or cerebral palsy
- diabetes
- a weakened immune system as the result of certain conditions or medicines they are taking (such as steroid tablets)
- being seriously overweight (a body mass index (BMI) of 40 or above)

- pregnant

If you cannot work from home, you can still go to work. Measures should be taken in your department/ward to reduce the risk of exposure to Covid-19 in the workplace and your manager will be able to explain to you what they have put in place to keep you safe at work. If you have concerns about exposure to Covid-19 this should be raised with your line manager or Occupational Health.

As previously, you should follow [staying alert and safe](#) guidance and continue with strict social distancing, wash your hands regularly and avoid touching your face.

Try to keep the number of social interactions that you have low. The fewer social interactions you have, the lower your risk of catching Covid-19.

Consider how to get to and from work. If you need to use public transport, you must wear a [face covering](#) unless you are exempt. Where possible, consider travelling outside peak hours to reduce the number of people with whom you come into contact.

3. Staff swabbing/contact tracing

3.1 *If I have symptoms, can I be swabbed?*

- A In accordance with NHS advice, staff who have a high temperature, a new or continuous cough, a loss or change to their sense of smell or taste should arrange to be swabbed by the swabbing team. This should be between days 1 and 8 of your symptoms. You will need to email the following details to staff.swabbingrbch@uhd.nhs.uk Staff.SwabbingPoole@uhd.nhs.uk

Your name, date of birth, your contact number, your job role, symptoms and date they started.

Covid-19 swabs are available for symptomatic staff and their household members via the hospital drive-through facility. We are unable to offer this service to friends of staff. We know the national swabbing service is under tremendous pressure but unfortunately cannot accommodate more testing for non-staff members.

You do not need to be swabbed if you don't have symptoms or have different symptoms www.nhs.uk (self-isolation)

3.2 *I have symptoms and do not drive and do not feel comfortable walking into a testing centre. What should I do?*

- A If you are unable to visit a test centre you should order a home testing kit at <https://self-referral.test-for-coronavirus.service.gov.uk/test-type>

All symptomatic staff should be tested between days 1 and 8 of symptoms. Failure to do so may affect your pay.

3.3 I do not have symptoms, but have received a positive swab test. What should I do?

- A If you do not have symptoms but have tested positive for COVID-19, stay at home and self-isolate for 10 days from the day the test was taken. If you develop symptoms after your test, restart your 10-day isolation period from the day the symptoms start.

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/covid-19-stay-at-home-guidance/stay-at-home-guidance-for-households-with-possible-coronavirus-covid-19-infection>

3.4 The Government has launched a Track and Trace initiative and I understand that if I am identified as having been in close contact with a person with confirmed Coronavirus I will need to self-isolate for 14 days, is this correct?

- A If you are contacted by the Government test and trace team, you must report this as soon as possible to your line manager.

The Trust will need to be sent a copy of the test and trace email, letter or text that you have received. You will then continue to receive your usual pay during self-isolation.

The NHS test and trace service:

- ensures that anyone who develops symptoms of Covid-19 can quickly be tested to find out if they have the virus
- helps trace close recent contacts of anyone who tests positive for Covid-19 and, if necessary, notifies them that they must self-isolate at home to help stop the spread of the virus

You can find out more about the service [here](#).

3.5 What is the NHS contact tracing app?

- A The new NHS contact tracing app has now been launched and we are aware that many of you will want to use this in your personal lives. Details of the app can be found [here](#).

The current advice for healthcare workers is that the app should be turned off when arriving at work as you will be wearing masks and other PPE in accordance with your role. Alongside this, you must continue to maintain the two-metre social distancing and hand hygiene rules in place.

The requirements for patients, visitors and areas such as on-site cafes are currently under review. Further detailed guidance concerning QR codes and other aspects of the app will be issued next week.

At this time the simple message for you is: **'Mask on - app off'** and continue to adhere to the national guidance with respect to hand hygiene, physical distancing and face coverings/masks.

Further information from NHS Employers advises:

You should pause the app when you:

- are working behind a fixed Perspex (or equivalent) screen and are fully protected from other people
- store your phone in a locker or communal area, for example while working or taking part in a leisure activity like swimming
- are a worker in social care and are wearing medical grade PPE such as a surgical mask
- are a healthcare worker working in a healthcare building such as a hospital or GP surgery ([read more about using the app as a healthcare worker](#))

Remember to turn contact tracing back on once you leave this situation. When you pause contact tracing in the app it will give you the option to set a reminder to turn it back on after a certain period of time.

When contact tracing is paused, you will still be able to check into venues with an official NHS QR code poster. [Read more about the difference between contact tracing and venue check-in.](#)

3.6 What should I do if contacted by NHS TEST and TRACE?

- A If you are contacted by **NHS TEST and TRACE** and informed you are a contact of a positive case:
- you should follow the instructions given to you within the contact
 - if told to do so you **MUST NOT** attend work and **MUST** self-isolate for 14 days
 - if you become symptomatic follow guidance in 1.1 above

3.7 A colleague has received track and trace message as they have been in contact with someone, outside of work, who tested positive for Covid-19. Do I also need to self-isolate?

- A Your colleague will need to self-isolate for 14 days. Provided they do not develop symptoms they may return to work on day 15. You do not need to self-isolate.

4. Social distancing

4.1 What is social distancing?

A To reduce the risk of catching or spreading coronavirus keep at least 2 metres away from people you do not live with. Social distancing is essential to stop the spread of the virus, as it is more likely to spread when people are close together. An infected person can pass on the virus even if they do not have any symptoms, through talking, breathing, coughing or sneezing.

As from 5 November 2020 you are advised to stay at home as much as possible. You can go outside for exercise, but try to keep all contact with others outside of your household to a minimum, and avoid busy areas.

You can still meet your support bubble, but you cannot meet with friends and family **you do not live with** unless they are part of your support bubble .

Try to stay 2 metres away from other people within your household, especially if they display symptoms of the virus or have been advised to self-isolate

Where you cannot stay 2 metres apart you should stay more than 1 metre apart, as well as taking extra steps to stay safe. For example:

- wear a face covering: on public transport and in many indoor spaces you must wear a face covering by law, unless you are exempt
- move outdoors, where it is safer and there is more space
- if indoors, make sure rooms are well ventilated by keeping windows and doors open

It may not always be possible or practicable to maintain social distancing when providing care to a young child, or person with a disability or health condition. You should still limit close contact as much as possible when providing these types of care, and take other precautions such as washing hands and opening windows for ventilation.

Seeing friends and family

You must not meet socially indoors or outdoors with family or friends unless they are part of your household - meaning the people you live with - or support bubble.

A support bubble is where a household with one adult joins with another household. Households in that support bubble can still visit each other, stay overnight, and visit outdoor public places together.

You can exercise or visit outdoor public places with the people you live with, your support bubble, or 1 person from another household (children under school age, as well as those dependent on round-the-clock care, such as those with severe disabilities, who are with their parents will not count towards the limit on two people meeting outside).

Outdoor public places include:

- parks, beaches, countryside,
- public gardens (whether or not you pay to enter them), allotments

- playgrounds

You cannot meet in a private garden.

From 5 November 2020 funerals can be attended by a maximum of 30 people, and it is advised that only close friends and family attend. Linked ceremonial events such as stone settings and ash scatterings can also continue with up to 15 people in attendance. Anyone working is not included. Social distancing should be maintained between people who do not live together or share a support bubble.

Weddings, civil partnership ceremonies will not be permitted to take place except in exceptional circumstances.

Places of Worship will be closed, unless they are being used for:

- Funerals
- To broadcast acts of worship
- Individual prayer
- Formal childcare or where part of a school
- Essential voluntary and public services, such as blood donation or food banks
- Other exempted activities such as some support groups

It is critical that everybody observes the following key behaviours:

Reminder:

- HANDS** - Wash your hands regularly and for 20 seconds.
- FACE** - Wear a face covering in indoor settings where social distancing may be difficult, and where you will come into contact with people you do not normally meet.
- SPACE** - Stay 2 metres apart from people you do not live with where possible, or 1 metre with extra precautions in place (such as wearing face coverings or increasing ventilation indoors).

4.2 Can I meet as a group when leaving my usual work area or during break times?

- When going in to offices, kitchens and rest rooms you must adhere to the number of people allowed as indicated on the Covid-19 risk assessment displayed on the door.
- The risk assessment should have been undertaken by a line manager from that area.
- Facemasks must be worn as guided in the hospital where you cannot socially distance (2 metres) **and** in all corridors.
- Breaks **MUST NOT** be taken in ward offices or small rooms where a distance of 2 metres cannot be achieved between you and your colleagues.

- Where practicably possible, break times should be staggered to encourage social distancing.

4.3 How do I physically distance within an office workplace?

It is recognised that some office staff work in close proximity to each other, in view of this some precautions need to be put in place to physically distance when working. There are a number of options to support this, including working from home if equipment is available; developing a rota system, so that sufficient people are in the office to respond to walk-in enquiries and any urgent situations as they arise; splitting the working day into early and late shifts, dependant on the needs of the service.

Try and reduce congestion at entry/exit points of buildings, opening up additional doors where possible and safe.

Review layout of desks and equipment to ensure a 2m distance – using tape to mark out areas may be helpful. Where people can't be distanced use screens to separate them from each other.

Avoid hot-desking. If this is unavoidable frequently sanitise workstations and equipment between uses.

Reduce movement around the buildings as much as possible, by use of Microsoft teams and telephone calls. If meeting face-to-face ensure the room is well ventilated and large enough to physically distance from others or meet outdoors. Use stairs rather than lifts to avoid being in an enclosed space with others.

Evidence suggests that the virus can exist for up to 72 hours on hard surfaces, therefore, frequent cleaning of work areas with anti-bacterial wipes is recommended, particularly those areas that are touched frequently, such as door handles, phones, keyboards and light switches. Clear work spaces at the end of each day to allow thorough cleaning and removal of waste

Staff should wash their hands frequently and use hand gel when soap and water isn't available. Where possible, use paper towels rather than hand dryers. Also avoid touching your face.

It is also important to wash clothes frequently as there is evidence that the virus can stay on fabrics.

Following these guidelines should help prevent transmission of the virus.

If a member of an office team is symptomatic they should not come into work and should request a test from the staff swabbing line.

Physical distancing in the workplace should be observed by everyone. It is everyone's responsibility to practice physical distancing in all circumstances.

Further details are available at the following link:

5. Maintaining service requirements

5.1 *I'm an overseas worker and my Visa is due to expire. What should I do?*

A Some health workers and their families will get their visas automatically extended because of coronavirus. The extension will apply from the date your visa is due to expire.

If your visa is due to expire after 1 October 2020, you'll need to apply to extend your visa as usual.

These changes will apply to you if:

- you work for the NHS or an independent health or care provider
- your visa expires between 31 March and 1 October
- you work as a:
 - biochemist
 - biological scientist
 - dental practitioner
 - health professional
 - medical practitioner
 - medical radiographer
 - midwife
 - nurse
 - occupational therapist
 - ophthalmologist
 - paramedic
 - pharmacist
 - physiotherapist
 - podiatrist
 - psychologist
 - social worker
 - speech and language therapist
 - therapy professional

If you'll be working at a different NHS site than your usual place of work because of coronavirus

You can work at any NHS hospital during the coronavirus outbreak if your sponsor can maintain their sponsorship duties.

Sponsors will not need to notify UKVI of the change in your place of work.

If you do any different or extra work due to coronavirus

You can carry out supplementary work in any role at any skill level during the coronavirus outbreak. There is no restriction on the number of hours you can work.

Changes to the current restrictions on the number of hours you can work or volunteer

There is no longer a limit on the number of hours you can work or volunteer each week if you're a:

- Student (including Tier 4 student) working for the NHS in a list profession
- tier 2 worker and your NHS job is a second job
- visiting academic researcher
- holder of a short-term visa and are permitted to volunteer

If you're a pre-registration nurse in the UK, the deadline for you to sit the Occupational Structured Clinical Examination (OSCE) has been extended to 31 December 2020. If you do not pass on the first attempt, you'll have until 31 May 2021 to pass the exam.

If you're working on coronavirus research

If you're a scientist researching coronavirus (COVID-19), you may be able to apply for a Global Talent visa using the UKRI endorsed funder option. [Find out about the requirements for coronavirus researchers.](#)

Full details can be found at:

<https://www.gov.uk/guidance/coronavirus-covid-19-advice-for-uk-visa-applicants-and-temporary-uk-residents#if-youre-in-the-uk>

5.2 Should I be staying at home?

A The Government advises you must not leave or be outside of your home except for specific *purposes*. *These include:*

- for childcare or education, where this is not provided online
- for work purposes, where your place of work remains open and where you cannot work from home (including if your job involves working in other people's homes)
- to exercise outdoors or visit an outdoor public place - with the people you live with, with your support bubble or, when on your own, with 1 person from another household (children under school age, as well as those dependent on round-the-clock care, such as those with severe disabilities, who are with their parents will not count towards the limit on two people meeting outside).
- for any medical concerns, reasons, appointments and emergencies, or to avoid or escape risk of injury or harm - such as domestic abuse
- shopping for basic necessities, for example food and medicine, which should be as infrequent as possible

- to visit members of your [support bubble](#) or provide care for vulnerable people, or as a volunteer

This list is not exhaustive and there are other limited circumstances where you may be permitted to leave or be outside of your home. These will be set out in law and further detailed guidance will be provided.

5.3 *If I am asked to work more hours can I opt out of Working Time Regulations?*

A Yes. The reference period is averaged over 17 weeks with a maximum number of hours of 48 per week. You may also sign an opt-out form if required to work additional hours over an extended period.

5.4 *One of my members of staff is a military reservist and is expecting to be called-up to support the Covid-19 Support Force, must I release them?*

The MOD has written to employers regarding the mobilisation of some staff. All NHS staff are regarded as essential which means that hospital trusts are included in the protected category and therefore our members of staff who are reservists will not be included in this call-out.

5.5 *I've been asked to accept staff from another area to support increased workload. Will I be charged for these staff?*

A Any staff who are temporarily repurposed will continue to be paid in their established role. There will be no cross-charging for staff being moved during the Covid-19 pandemic.

5.6 *Do I need to stay 2 metres apart – or 1 metre?*

You should minimise time spent outside your home and when around other people ensure that you are two metres apart from anyone not in your household or support bubble.

Remember - 'Hands. Face. Space':

- hands – wash your hands regularly and for 20 seconds
- face – wear a face covering in indoor settings where social distancing may be difficult, and where you will come into contact with people you do not normally meet
- space – stay 2 metres apart from people you do not live with where possible, or 1 metre with extra precautions in place (such as wearing face coverings or increasing ventilation indoors)

5.7 *What should I do if a member of my work team develops symptoms?*

The member of staff should be sent home and asked to contact the swabbing helpline (As section 3 above).

Everyone in the workplace should be observing social distancing, washing hands regularly, cleaning with anti-bacterial solutions or wipes and/or using appropriate PPE. Provided you are following the guidelines you will not be required to self-isolate even if your colleague is positive.

6. Homeworking

6.1 *How do I arrange to work from home?*

- A Home working will need to be agreed by your line manager and will be dependent on the needs of the service. An e-form needs to be completed if you are requesting hardware or remote access during the current pandemic. Priority will be given to those who are required to work from home due to health conditions but are essential to our Covid-19 response. If you have been self-isolating and working from home, please make sure you return your device when you come back to work.

Please ensure you have approval from your manager before submitting the form and if you have already been fast-tracked and given a device, please retrospectively complete the e-form. Staff should refer to the home working guidelines for guidance.

6.2 *If I'm working from home should I be calling in?*

- A If your line manager agrees that you are able to work from home, arrangements should be put in place to catch up with them or another appropriate person in the team on a regular basis. Please also refer to the wellbeing section of this document. Please also refer to the home working guidelines

7. Staff Absence

7.1 *How do I record Staff Absence?*

- A Please ensure that you update your staff absence records on a daily basis. If you are a member of staff reporting your absence, please do this via your line manager and not through the HR Covid-19 helpline. If your department is on the roster please record via the roster ONLY, this will pull through to ESR. ESR Related reasons can be found on your absence screen (second from bottom option). Please find a [link](#) to the seven reasons why people may be absent – please choose the right one. If you have a staff member who is taking a large amount of unpaid leave or you need help with recording please email Workforcehelp@uhd.nhs.uk.

Please see appendix A for recording Covid-19 absence on Health Roaster and ESR.

7.2 If I'm on long term sickness as a result of Covid-19 will I go into half pay?

A There is a national agreement that anyone on sickness absence due to any Covid-19 related condition receives full pay.

7.3 Do I accrue annual leave whilst on unpaid leave?

A You will **not** accrue annual leave for time taken as unpaid leave. You should also contact the Pensions Officer, as unpaid leave may have an effect on your pension contributions.

7.4 Should I provide a fit note (sick note) for any Covid-19 sickness absence that lasts for longer than ten days?

A If you have Covid-19 symptoms and have been told to self-isolate by the NHS website, NHS111 online, NHS inform or Covid-19 app you can get an isolation note, which will be for a duration of 10 days. The latest advice regarding isolation notes can be found at: <https://111.nhs.uk/isolation-note/>

In the event that your sickness, due to Covid-19 symptoms, or another illness, last longer than 10 calendar days, you should submit a self-certificate, which can be downloaded from the internet. This will cover you for a further 7 calendar days. You will need to request a Fit Note (sickness certificate), to cover any additional period of sickness absence from work, from your GP.

8. PPE/Uniforms

8.1 How do I get FIT tested?

A Information on FIT testing is available on the intranet at:

https://intranet.rbch.nhs.uk/uploads/infection-control/documents/coronavirus/Fit_testing_4.pdf

<https://intranet.poole.nhs.uk/index.php/infection-control/fit-testing-ffp3-masks>

8.2 What is the latest guidance about PPE and staff uniforms?

Latest guidance can be found at:

<https://intranet.rbch.nhs.uk/index.php/infection-control/organisms#PPE-video>
<https://intranet.poole.nhs.uk/index.php/infection-control/fit-testing-ffp3-masks>

8.3 Are masks or other face coverings advised for non-clinical areas?

A Only masks provided by the Trust should be worn in the workplace.

For full information on wearing of PPE and Covid-19 secure areas please see the link below or call the Covid-19 help-line for advice on ext. 4804:

<https://intranet.rbch.nhs.uk/index.php/infection-control/organisms#PPE-video>

<https://intranet.poole.nhs.uk/index.php/infection-control/fit-testing-ffp3-masks>

8.4 A member of staff has asked to wear their own PPE. Is this permitted?

- A Only PPE supplied and approved by the Trust can be worn at work. The member of staff should be referred to the PPE guidelines on the intranet. If there are specific health reasons for this request please liaise with Occupational Health for further advice.

9. Pregnant employees/maternity leave

9.1 *What is the advice if I am a healthcare worker and pregnant?*

Advice for pregnant healthcare workers

- A If you have no underlying health conditions and have a healthy pregnancy with no complications, you should follow the guidance for clinically vulnerable people as shown in section 2.2

If you are pregnant and also have an underlying health condition you should follow the guidance for clinically extremely vulnerable people in section 2.1

If you are concerned about continuing to work in your role while pregnant please contact your midwife or GP.

This will be subject to review as shielding measures are reviewed by the government.

9.2 *I would like to return early from maternity leave to support the Trust. How do I go about this?*

- A In agreement with the employee, the temporary contractual suspension of maternity, adoption or shared parental leave and pay could be considered. Where this is mutually agreed, this will end any remaining statutory entitlements. The employer would need to make up any loss of entitlement as part of extending the contractual entitlement. No member of staff should suffer a detriment if they choose this option.

On resumption of contractual maternity, adoption or shared parental leave, the remaining entitlement will need to be reinstated. Any lost statutory entitlement will need to be made up and you will need to liaise with ESR around the technicalities of how this will work.

10. Domestic responsibilities

10.1 My child has been sent home from school and told to self-isolate because another child from within their classroom 'bubble' has tested positive for coronavirus? Do I need to self-isolate as well?

- A You do not need to self-isolate, unless your child develops symptoms. Your child will then need to be tested and if positive, you will need to remain off work for two weeks, from the day your child's symptoms started. If you develop symptoms you will need to follow the instructions in section 1 above.

If your child does not have symptoms, but you are unable to work due to caring responsibilities, you should discuss how this can be supported with your line manager. If possible, you may be able to continue working from home or you may request a temporary change to your working hours/shift pattern. Alternatively, you may take annual leave, time owing, unpaid leave, carers leave or make time up at a later date.

11. Travel to work arrangements

11.1 What happens if Public Transport arrangements break down?

- A All reasonable efforts should be made to come in. It may be worth making plans for lift shares with members of your household / alternative forms of transport.*

*There may be a temporary requirement to adjust hours to accommodate this.

Please also consider cycling or walking to work, to avoid close contact with others on public transport.

11.2 During these exceptional times can I drive into work and park on-site if I haven't got an existing car parking permit?

- A Free parking at Littledown (for RBH) and Swimming Pool (for PHT) are BCP council initiatives that currently have no end date but could be reviewed by the council at any time and are only applicable to people who have registered and had this confirmed by the BCP Parking Team. Registration is via their website, staff are expected to pay for parking until their registration has been confirmed as accepted.

BCP Council details can be found [here](#).

11.3 Is car parking free on site for staff?

Free staff car parking onsite is only applicable to staff who hold and display a valid parking permit. Deduction from salary payments has been temporarily

suspended for these staff. Any member of staff wishing to park on site who does not hold a current permit should apply in the usual way. The usual criteria will apply and applications can be made at the following link:

Parking permit application: <https://www.rbchparkingpermit.co.uk/>
<https://www.phftparkingpermit.co.uk/>

Any queries relating to parking should be made to:

Email: travelteam@uhd.nhs.uk

11.4 I have a vulnerable member of staff who returned to work on 03 August 2020 and usually uses public transport. What should they do?

A They should follow the government guidance relating to wearing a face covering while on public transport or if possible, walk or cycle to work.

11.5 Should people wear face coverings on public transport?

It is the law that you must wear a face covering when travelling in England on a:

- bus or coach
- train or tram
- ferry or hovercraft or other vessel
- aircraft
- cable car
- in an enclosed transport hub, such as a train or bus station

If you do not wear a face covering you will be breaking the law and could be fined £100 or £50 if you pay the fine within 14 days. The government has announced that they will bring forward changes to mean that for repeat offenders these fines would double at each offence up to a maximum value of £3,200.

Please be aware that some people are exempt, and do not have to wear a face covering on public transport, including for health, age or equality reasons.

A face covering is not the same as surgical masks or respirators used as part of personal protective equipment by healthcare and other workers; these should continue to be reserved for those who need them to protect against risks in their workplace such as health and care workers and those in industrial settings like those exposed to dust hazards.

11.6 I need to travel in a car with my colleague to make a home visit. What are the current guidelines?

A You should try not to share a vehicle with those outside your household or support bubble. If you need to do this, try to:

- share the transport with the same people each time
- keep to small groups of up to 6 people at any one time
- open windows for ventilation
- travel side by side or behind other people, rather than facing them, where seating arrangements allow
- face away from each other
- consider seating arrangements to maximise distance between people in the vehicle
- clean your car between journeys using standard cleaning products - make sure you clean door handles and other areas that people may touch
- ask the driver and passengers to wear a face covering
- wash your hands for at least 20 seconds or sanitise your hand as soon as possible when finishing the journey.

12. Meetings and training courses

Face to face training resumed from the 1st June 2020. Some changes have been made:

- The number of places on each course has been reduced. The Training department reviewed delegates on a “first come first served” basis, therefore, some staff will be notified that their place has been cancelled.
- If you have a session booked and can no longer attend please can you withdraw via ESR or call Ext 4267 so we can reallocate the place.
- **PLEASE DO NOT wear uniform for training.**

All training can be booked via ESR as usual.

The BEAT team continue to consider different ways of helping staff access their mandatory training, any new changes will be communicated to you as soon as possible.

13. Annual leave

13.1 Can I book annual leave for a member of staff who hasn't used any leave yet?

- A Yes, all employees are encouraged to take a proportionate amount of annual leave throughout the year to support their own wellbeing and the needs of the service. Where individuals choose not to book leave, this can be undertaken by their line manager.

13.2 Do I need to quarantine on return from annual leave abroad?

- A This will depend on where you are travelling from and whether you have visited other countries during your time abroad.

From 10 July 2020 you will not have to self-isolate when you arrive in England, if you:

- are travelling or returning from one of the [countries with travel corridor exemption](#)
- have not been to or stopped in a country that's not on the [travel corridors exemption list](#) in the previous 14 days

This applies to all travel to England, by train, ferry, coach, air or any other route.

If you have been to or stopped in a country that is **not** on the [travel corridors exemption list](#) you will have to **quarantine (self-isolate) until 14 days have passed since you left that country.**

While staying abroad you will have to comply with the coronavirus requirements in the country you travel to. This may include self-isolating or providing your details to local authorities. Check [Foreign and Commonwealth Office \(FCO\) coronavirus advice](#) for the country you are travelling to. Make sure you have [appropriate travel insurance](#) in case you have unexpected costs.

Advice regarding quarantine after travelling abroad will be under constant review and staff should be mindful that any travel abroad may carry with it some risk, e.g. quarantine regulations changing in England or the visiting country with little/no warning.

The Foreign Office will be keeping conditions in countries listed on the travel corridor list under review and may change restrictions if they worsen. Travellers should always check the latest [FCO travel advice](#). Travel advice includes information on any health measures in place for visitors to the country or territory. These can include a requirement to self-isolate, quarantine, or undergo testing for coronavirus, or even restrictions on entry.

If travelling from a country not included on the above travel corridors exemption list, you will need to continue to **quarantine for 14 days**. This means when you arrive in the UK, you need to go straight to the place where you will self-isolate. Your friends or family can collect you from the airport, port or station. Only use public transport if you have no other option. If you do use public transport, wear something that covers your nose and mouth and stay 2 meters apart from other people.

You must not leave the place you're staying for 14 days. You can only leave if:

- you need urgent medical treatment
- you need support from social services
- you need food and medicine and cannot get them delivered or get a friend or family member to bring them
- you're going to the funeral of a close relative, or for other compassionate reasons

- there's an emergency, for example there's a fire at the place you're staying

You cannot have visitors, including friends and family, unless they are providing essential care.

If you're at home or staying with friends or family, avoid contact with the people you're staying with and minimise the time you spend in shared areas.

If you will not be able to safely self-isolate at the place you're planning to stay, tell Border Force officers when you arrive in the UK. They'll give you a choice of accommodation to stay at.

Please note healthcare workers, research staff and doctors involved in clinical trials are not exempt from quarantine requirements.

For further information: <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/coronavirus-covid-19-travel-corridors>

13.3 Will I be paid during my 14 day quarantine period?

Annual leave should only be booked once the total duration of your leave, including any known quarantine period, has been approved by your line manager.

If you are returning from a country where you are required to self-isolate on your return, this will need to be taken as one, or a combination of, the following:

- paid annual leave (from your usual annual leave allowance)
- unpaid leave
- making up some or all of the 14 days' leave through working additional hours/shifts over your normal contracted hours. Time must be made up within 18 months of your return to work
- taking previously accrued time off in lieu (TOIL)
- working from home, where this is possible and meets the needs of the service
- temporary reassignment, where possible, to appropriate work that can be carried out from home

All of the above should be agreed in advance with your Line Manager.

If the requirement to quarantine changed after you travelled abroad, it will not have been possible to arrange additional annual leave, unpaid leave or other options in advance. You should therefore contact your line manager as soon as you return to the UK to advise them of your situation and agree how your additional time off will be recorded.

In extenuating circumstances, such as attending family funerals abroad or where cancelled holidays would incur financial loss, Line Managers are asked to contact their HR Business Partner for advice.

Anyone who has had to travel for the purpose of their job, and has to quarantine on their return, will be entitled to continue to receive normal full pay.

14. Support for staff

14.1 *How do I look after my mental wellbeing?*

A You may find self-isolation or 'social distancing' affects your mood or makes you feel anxious or worried. This may also affect your ability to sleep. There are things you can do to help you stay mentally and physically active, such as:

- Look for ideas of exercises you can do at home on the [NHS website](#)
- Spend time doing things you enjoy – this might include reading, cooking, other indoor hobbies or listening to/watching favourite radio or TV programmes
- Try to eat healthy, well-balanced meals, drink enough water, exercise regularly, and try to avoid smoking, alcohol and drugs
- Keep your windows open to let in fresh air, get some natural sunlight if you can, or get outside into the garden.
- You can also go for a walk outdoors if you stay more than 2 meters from others

Wellbeing advice, including:

- A healthy eating programme
- Personal training programme
- Stress management advice
- Downloadable health and fitness fact sheet.

is also available from Care First (Employee Assistance Programme) at www.rbch-vitality.co.uk register using the organisation code: rbch

If you are feeling anxious or concerned Care First (Employee Assistance Programme) provide confidential, impartial advice and support 24 hours a day, 365 days a year on telephone number 0800 174 319.

14.2 *What support is available for NHS staff during the COVID-19 pandemic?*

A Support is available on the Covid intranet site at:

For support from your Organisational Development team please do not hesitate to contact us at:

Email: organisational.development@uhd.nhs.uk,
Royal Bournemouth Hospital and Christchurch Hospital extension: 4438
Poole Hospital extension: 2820

The emotional support for staff across both Poole and Bournemouth is summarised in this video:-

https://www.youtube.com/esults?search_query=royal+bourne+hospital

Occupational Health: Helpline to signpost to relevant support – please email: Occupational.Health@rbch.nhs.uk

Weekdays: 01202 704217 or ext. 4217 weekdays

Care first - Employee Assistance Programme Helpline:
Freephone 0800 174319 helpline 24/7

NHS Wide Staff Support Helpline:
0300 131 7000 or Text FRONTLINE to 35258

Wellbeing advice is available for both sites at:
<https://intranet.rbch.nhs.uk/index.php/covid-19/hr>

Information relating to Staff Discounts; Mental, Physical and Financial wellbeing; Domestic Violence and Carers is also available on the NHS Employers site:

<https://www.nhsemployers.org/covid19/health-safety-and-wellbeing/support-available-for-nhs-staff>

14.3 *What financial support will be available for my family/partner should I die in service as a result of contracting Covid-19 virus?*

- A The government has announced a scheme to provide benefits for eligible NHS and social care staff who perform vital frontline work during the Covid-19 pandemic. This scheme, known as life assurance benefits recognises the increased risks teams are currently facing.

In the event of a staff member dying in the course of Covid-19 related work, the government has confirmed that a lump sum payment of £60,000 will be made to their estate. Covid-19 will need to be shown as the cause (or one of the causes) of death on the employee's death certificate. This payment will be made whether or not a colleague has in place their own life insurance or is a member of the NHS Pension Scheme.

We await further specifics of the scheme and will up-date as soon as information becomes available.

14.4 *Is there any specific support for Filipino colleagues?*

- A A hotline has been developed for the Filipino community and is accessed via Hospice UK. To access this service call 0300 303 4434 (8am-8pm, 7 days a week) and ask to speak to the Filipino support service. They call back within 48 hours. (Hospice UK has been commissioned to provide this additional support following feedback and requests. It is not limited to bereavement counselling).

15. Risk Assessments

15.1 *Who should receive a risk assessment?*

- A A new 'Individual Employee Risk Assessment' has been developed for all staff regarding Covid-19 related exposure. This is published on the Covid-19 website on the intranet at:

<https://intranet.rbch.nhs.uk/index.php/infection-control/organisms/staff-guidance>

<https://intranet.poole.nhs.uk/index.php/human-resources/covid-19-staff>

Whilst this is available for all staff, it is a priority for the staff who have been identified as being at higher risk from the symptoms of COVID-19, these priority groups are:

- 1) Black Asian and Minority Ethnic (BAME) members of staff
- 2) Staff with underlying health conditions which make them 'extremely vulnerable'
- 3) Staff who are aged 70+
- 4) Staff who have informed their manager they are pregnant

The risk assessment form includes instructions for completion and can be used without specific training. However, there is further support for line managers and a Risk Assessment Toolkit and Risk Assessment Briefing Video can be viewed at the following link:

<https://intranet.rbch.nhs.uk/index.php/infection-control/organisms/staff-guidance>

These should be carried out as soon as possible and prior to shielding staff return dates.

15.2 *How are risk assessments recorded?*

- A The Trust is now reporting the metrics for the percentage of staff risk-assessed in each of the defined groups. A field has been added to ESR for every member of staff identified as being in one of the 'at-risk' groups and Line Managers must ensure that once their risk assessment is completed that field is ticked on their ESR record. Instructions on how to log a completed risk assessment onto ESR are available at the following link:

<https://intranet.rbch.nhs.uk/index.php/infection-control/organisms/staff-guidance#risk>

If you have any questions or would like to discuss this further please contact the Covid-19 helpline on ext. 4804, or contact your HR Business Partner.

15.3 Do I need to use the new risk assessment if one has been completed in the past?

- A It is recommended you review risk assessments regularly to take into account any changes that are made as knowledge relating to the coronavirus increases and also if there are any changes to individual circumstances or the place of work.

15.4 What happens if I can't work in my usual area following risk assessment?

- A Where individuals are a greater risk they will be supported to find **temporary** alternative employment within the Trust wherever possible; while redeployed into a temporary role employees will continue to be paid at their usual rate of pay.

Where the risk assessment deems it is not safe for you to physically return to the workplace, it may be appropriate to consider reallocation of duties for a staff member in order to facilitate home working.

In instances where reason(s) for being unable to return to the workplace have been established and do not relate to ill health and working from home is not possible, managers will need to consider the use of following options on a case by case basis taking account of the duration needed:

- local special leave
- annual leave
- unpaid leave
- suspension on full pay for medical or health and safety reasons.

16. Retire and return pensioners and special classes already returned to work

- 16.1** The Government have temporarily suspended the rule that currently prevents some NHS staff who return to work after retirement from working more than 16 hours per week, along with rules on abatements and drawn-down of NHS pensions that apply to certain retirees who return to work. This means that recently retired experienced and skilled staff can return to work in the NHS, working as many hours as they can, without having their pension benefits suspended. Therefore, anyone currently retiring and returning to work after claiming their pension will have no restrictions on the amount of hours they can work in the first month, also anyone who is abated to the amount of hours they can work as they have returned to work and are a special classes member restricted to the amount they can earn up to age 60, may now also work as many hours as they would like to temporarily without penalty. For more info [NHS Pensions website COVID 19](#)

17. Other information

17.1 *What will happen to pay progression during the Covid-19 pandemic*

The new [pay progression framework](#) for staff who commenced NHS employment, or were promoted to a higher band on or after 1 April 2019, is underpinned by a mandatory annual appraisal process. However, during the Covid-19 pandemic the usual arrangements that require you to demonstrate or show you meet the requirements for the role will be paused. We are arranging to allow pay affecting increments to be progressed automatically, unless there are concerns that cannot be resolved through, for example, further support/training.

For all other staff who were in post before 1 April 2019, current organisational pay progression procedures will continue to apply until 31 March 2021 after which time they too will be subject to the provisions under Annex 23 Agenda for Change Terms and Conditions.

Recording Covid19 absence on Health Roster and ESR

If your department is on the roster please only record via the roster, this will pull through to ESR.

ESR Related Reason can be found on your ESR absence screen (second from bottom option).

If you need any further advice or help locating the above reasons please contact:

Bournemouth Hospital Site: Workforcehelp@UHD.nhs.uk

Poole Hospital Site: WorkforcePHT@UHD.nhs.uk

Absence Types	HealthRoster	ESR
- Positive test to Covid-19	<u>Sickness due to Corona virus:</u> Sickness – Covid-19 - S27 Covid 19	<u>Sickness due to Corona virus:</u> Sickness - S27 Infectious diseases - S27998 Other infectious disease Related reason: Coronavirus (COVID-19)
- Shielding due receipt of GP letter (Not working from home) - Shielding before start of Maternity leave (Not working from home) - Shielding before Surgery (Not working from home)	<u>Medical Suspension:</u> Other Leave – Medical Suspension COV - Paid	<u>Medical Suspension:</u> Special Increasing Bal - Medical Suspension Related reason: Coronavirus (COVID-19)
- Isolating due to own symptoms awaiting test results (Not working from Home)	<u>Infection Precaution:</u> Other Leave – Leave Paid – Infection Precaution	<u>Infection Precaution:</u> Special Increasing Bal – Infection Precaution Related reason: Coronavirus (COVID-19)
- Isolating when member of employee household has symptoms awaiting test results (Not working from home)	<u>Household Member Symptoms</u> HSEMemSymp - Leave Paid- Household Member symptoms	<u>Household Member Symptoms</u> Special Increasing Bal – Infection Precaution Related reason: Coronavirus (COVID-19) – Household Member Symptoms
-Working from home - Working from home due to - Test and Trace Contact -Working from home due to - Household Member Symptoms	<u>Home Working:</u> Working Day - HW - Home Working Working Day – HW – Test & Trace Contact Working Day – HW – Household Member Symptoms	<u>Home Working:</u> Standard home working not recorded Special Increasing Bal –Other - Related reason: Coronavirus (COVID-19) – Test and Trace Contact Special Increasing Bal – Other – Related reason: Coronavirus

<p>-Working from home due to - Post Travel Quarantine</p>	<p>Working Day – HW – Post Travel Quarantine</p>	<p>(COVID-19) – Household Member Symptoms Special Increasing Bal – Other-Related reason: Coronavirus (COVID-19) – Post Travel Quarantine</p>
<p>- Contacted by NHS Test & Trace - Direct contact with person who is diagnosed as COVID Positive</p>	<p><u>Test and Trace Contact</u> Other Leave – Leave Paid – Test and Trace Contact</p>	<p><u>Test and Trace Contact</u> Special Increasing Bal – Infection Precaution Related reason: Coronavirus (COVID-19) – Test and Trace Contact</p>
	<p><u>Post Travel Quarantine - TOIL</u> Other Leave – Post Travel Quarantine TOIL PLEASE ENSURE ZERO HOURS ARE APPLIED TO THIS</p>	<p><u>Post Travel Quarantine TOIL</u> Special Increasing Bal – Time off in Lieu Related reason: Coronavirus (COVID-19) – Post Travel Quarantine</p>
	<p><u>Post Travel Quarantine – Unpaid leave</u> Other Leave – Post Travel Unpaid Leave Hrs</p>	<p><u>Post Travel Quarantine – Unpaid leave</u> Unpaid Authorised Special Hrs – Other Related reason: Coronavirus (COVID-19) – Post Travel Quarantine</p>
	<p><u>Post Travel Quarantine – Annual leave</u> Annual leave – Annual leave post travel</p>	<p><u>Post Travel Quarantine – Annual leave</u> Annual leave Related reason: Coronavirus (COVID-19) – Post Travel Quarantine</p>