

Workforce Q & A's – COVID-19 – 11 April 2022

**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.

All sections in these FAQs have been updated on 11.4.22

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Appendix 1 - Recording Covid19 absence on Health Roster and ESR

1. Self-Isolation - If you have symptoms, a close contact has symptoms or you/a household member are coming into hospital as a patient

Staff may hear regular Government announcements on the news regarding changes to Covid-19 guidance for the general public, however it should be noted that there are higher levels of isolation/processes required for staff who work within healthcare premises. These FAQs will be updated only after we receive official government documentation relating to health care workers.

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

- Trust staff should always be leading by example and following Government guidelines .
- The Government have recently extended the list of Coronavirus symptoms and these can be found here: <https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/coronavirus-covid-19/symptoms/>
- If you develop any coronavirus symptoms but feel well enough to work, please take a lateral flow test to ensure that this is negative before attending work. If you do not feel well enough for work, then you should report your sickness absence in the normal way.
- You must self-isolate (in line with para 1.1.1) if you get a positive LFD test.
- If you become symptomatic while at work inform your line manager straight away and take a lateral flow test. If you are positive, then you must immediately inform your line manager and go home to isolate in line with para 1.1.1. If you are negative but do not feel well enough to continue working then you should inform your line manager and your sickness absence will be recorded accordingly.
- You must **NOT** return to work before you have made a good recovery and provided 2 negative LFD results if this is before day 10 of your illness and not before day 6. You should do this even if you have received one or more doses of COVID-19 vaccine. This is because it is still possible to get COVID-19 and spread it to others even if you are vaccinated.
- If you are at home self-isolating due to being Covid-19 positive, you should stay at home and not go out.

1.1.1 How long should I isolate for if I have had a positive LFD test result?

- If a staff member receives a positive LFD test result, they must complete a period of self-isolation. The isolation period includes the day the symptoms started (or the day their test was taken if they do not have symptoms), also described as Day 0.

- Staff who test positive will be able to leave self-isolation and return to work from day 6. This is on the basis that they test negative on days 5 and 6 after the date of their initial positive test, 24 hours apart, and providing they are medically fit.
- This means that if a member of staff tests negative on the morning of day 6 and was negative 24 hours earlier, they can return to work on day 6.
- If they do not test negative on day 6 then they should continue to test daily. Isolation can only end following 2 consecutive negative LFD tests which should be taken at least 24 hours apart.
- However, to mitigate any potential increased risk of transmission, all staff are then required to continue to test daily to day 10 after their initial positive test and stop at day 10 unless they remain or test positive. **Please note a Risk Assessment must be completed for return before day 10 of isolation if the member of staff works with patients whose immune system means that they are at higher risk of serious illness despite vaccination ([Gov.uk advice](#)) and this should be reviewed by the Group Director of Nursing or their nominated professional. Risk Assessment here: [RA 20.1.22](#)**

The likelihood of a positive LFD test in the absence of a high temperature after 10 days is low. If the LFD test result however, is positive on the 10th day, and staff have no symptoms they can return to work **once a risk assessment has been completed and reviewed by the Group Director of Nursing or their nominated professional. Risk Assessment here: [RA 20.1.22](#)**

For those that are risk assessed and deemed not suitable to return until day 14, repeated Lateral flow tests should be completed.

The likelihood of a positive LFD test after 14 days is considerably lower. However, if staff LFD test results are still positive on the 14th day, staff can now stop testing and return to work on day 15. **If staff work with patients who are especially vulnerable to COVID-19, a risk assessment will be undertaken by the line manager and consideration given to redeployment. Risk Assessment here: [RA 20.1.22](#)**

1.1.2 How do I record the Risk Assessment for returning to work from day 6?

A log of the Individual risk assessment carried out needs to be recorded via ESR Manager Self Service this is available on the Intranet under Risk Assessment Toolkit – How to log a completed risk assessment on ESR – see link here: (<https://intranet.rbch.nhs.uk/index.php/covid-19/hr>) The logging of this as soon as possible is very important as it gives the Trust real time information on staff unavailability. The completed form should be scanned and sent to HR.filing@uhd.nhs.uk so it can be held in the individual's personal file. Any local copy should be held securely or disposed of in confidential waste once scanned and sent.

1.1.3 If I feel well, can I come into work during a period of self-isolation following a positive test?

Unless the criteria is met in 1.1.1 through a risk assessment process, you **MUST NOT** come into work if you should be self-isolating, in accordance with Government guidelines for healthcare workers.

1.1.4 I have symptoms but my LFD is negative, what should I do?

Staff who receive a negative LFD test result can return to work providing they are medically fit to do so. However, managers should consider the area in which the colleague is returning and ensure a risk-based approach to reduce contact with people who, in spite of vaccination, are at higher risk of serious illness from Covid-19.

1.1.5 Through my twice weekly LFD testing, my result is showing as positive, what should I do?

You should self-isolate in line with para 1.1.

1.2 I am a CONTACT (including household members) of someone confirmed as COVID-19 positive, what should I do?

- As of 30 March 2022, Staff who are a contact of a positive household Covid-19 case, if asymptomatic, can return to work and continue twice weekly testing and be vigilant for any symptoms. Managers should consider the area in which the colleague is returning and ensure a risk-based approach to reduce contact with people who, in spite of vaccination, are at higher risk of serious illness from Covid-19. (**Note:** a PCR Test **is not** required)

If you are symptomatic follow guidance in para 1.1

1.3 I have developed further symptoms after already having had Covid-19, what should I do?

Any member of staff who previously tested positive for Covid-19 and develops symptoms again should follow para 1.1.

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

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.

1.5 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?

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.

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

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

1.7 *What are the arrangements for staff that have travelled to England from another Country?*

There is no need to complete a UK passenger locator form before you travel, take any COVID-19 tests or quarantine when you arrive in England.

[Travel to England from another country during coronavirus \(COVID-19\) - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk/travel-to-england-from-another-country-during-coronavirus-covid-19)

1.8 *Recording of LFD Tests*

Please continue to do twice weekly lateral flow tests regularly and upload your result to <https://www.gov.uk/report-covid19-result> – especially now as cases of Covid-19 in the community are significantly high.

2. Covid Testing

2.1 *I do not have symptoms, but have received a positive LFD test. What should I do?*

If you do not have symptoms but have tested positive for COVID-19, stay at home and self-isolate in line with section 1.1.1 above.

2.2 *How often should I be doing a lateral flow test?*

All Trust employees should be carrying out a lateral flow test twice a week, these are important, especially with the increase in community cases.. There is a requirement with effect from 11th January for all staff to report the results of their twice weekly asymptomatic tests whether positive or negative at <https://www.gov.uk/report-covid19-result>

Further information can be found on the intranet at [Covid self-testing](#).

Obtaining new Covid lateral flow tests

NHS staff including those at Team UHD can now use priority ordering on the Government's lateral flow test [online ordering portal](#). Simply log in, select acute hospital, then the name of the trust.

2.3 *What should I do if I tested positive for COVID-19 more than 90 days ago and a routine test for COVID-19 identifies the virus again (either through a LFD test)?*

It is possible the vaccine has not been 100% effective, or you have been exposed to a variant not fully covered by the vaccine, therefore you should follow the current advice and self-isolate in line with this guidance.

This remains the case even if fully vaccinated.

3. Covid-19 vaccine/Mandatory vaccinations for front line workers

3.1 *Is the Trust still providing Covid-19 vaccines?*

Vaccinations and boosters have been running within UHD since 16 April 2021. The majority of our staff have now received their first and second vaccines. If you require a vaccine this can be booked via the following link:

<https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/coronavirus-covid-19/coronavirus-vaccination/book-coronavirus-vaccination/>

3.2 *Mandatory Covid vaccinations for health care workers working on the front line – what are the new government regulations?*

In light of the latest scientific evidence, and having considered the views and equality impacts received as part of a public consultation, the Government confirmed that the vaccination as a condition of deployment policy would be revoked.

The revocation of VCOD regulations for health and social care workers, came into effect on 15 March 2022. This removed the requirements already in place in care homes, as well as those that were due to come into force in health and wider social care settings on 1 April 2022.

The Trust will continue to strongly encourage new and existing staff to be Covid vaccinated.

4. Social distancing

4.1 *What is social distancing?*

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.

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.

Further information can be found at:

<https://www.gov.uk/guidance/covid-19-coronavirus-restrictions-what-you-can-and-cannot-do>

4.2 *Can we meet as a group when leaving our 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 worn in clinical areas at greater than 60 degrees. Uniforms must be worn if provided. Uniforms and work wear for the clinical area must not be worn when travelling to and from work.

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:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/coronavirus-outbreak-faqs-what-you-can-and-cant-do/coronavirus-outbreak-faqs-what-you-can-and-cant-do>

4.4 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.

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).

5. Maintaining service requirements

5.1 *Should I be staying at home?*

The Government's working from home policy has ceased. However, with the high prevalence of Covid-19 consideration should still be given to appropriate social distancing in offices and mask wearing where appropriate; such as in clinical areas.

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

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.

6. Homeworking

6.1 **What is the Government's advice on working from home in relation to Covid?**

The Government's working from home policy has ceased. However, some home-working and hybrid working may be a suitable option for some roles and this should be discussed and agreed locally and in line with Trust policies.

With the high prevalence of Covid-19 consideration should still be given to appropriate social distancing in offices and mask wearing where appropriate; such as in patient and visitor areas.

7. Staff Absence

7.1 How do I record Staff Absence?

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). 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 1 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?

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

7.3 Is Covid-19 sickness/isolation included when managing staff attendance?

Any periods of Covid-19 related sickness, including self-isolation, will not count towards a sickness score and should be removed from any calculations before inviting staff to a managing attendance meeting.

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

A fit note will only be required if you are still absent due to symptoms over 7 days following your second day negative lateral flow test.

Government advice is here: <https://www.gov.uk/taking-sick-leave>

8. PPE/Uniforms

8.1 How do I get FIT tested?

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>

As new evidence emerges PPE requirements are continually reviewed but at this time there are no changes to the PHE guidance.

PPE is just one of the tools available to minimise the spread of Covid-19 and other transmittable infections – click [here](#) for more detailed guidance on how Covid-19 is managed in hospitals, and links to the latest evidence and guidance.

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

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

PPE, and importantly, the *right* PPE, is still required. Guidance on the PPE needed in high, medium or low risk areas can be found at the top of [this page](#).

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?

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.

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

Advice for pregnant healthcare workers (as at Government advice 14th February 2022):

The following recommendations apply for women less than 26 weeks pregnant with no underlying health conditions that place them at a greater risk of severe illness from coronavirus (COVID-19):

You must first have a workplace risk assessment with your manager or occupational health team and should only continue working if the risk assessment advises that it is safe to do so.

This means that your manager should remove or manage any potential risks. If this cannot be done, your manager should consider suitable alternative work or working arrangements (including working from home) or suspend you on your normal pay.

You will need to ensure you are able to adhere to any active national guidance on social distancing.

Some higher risk occupations such as those with greater public contact or in healthcare positions there may be a higher risk of exposure to the virus. In healthcare settings this may include working in specific higher risk areas or higher risk procedures as summarised in the Public Health England publication *Guidance on Infection Prevention and Control*.

You should be supported by your manager with appropriate risk mitigation in line with recommendations from your workplace risk assessment, e.g. appropriate PPE.

The following recommendations apply for pregnant women who are 26 weeks pregnant and beyond or less than 26 weeks pregnant with underlying health conditions that place them at a greater risk of severe illness from coronavirus:

If you are 26 weeks pregnant and beyond, or if you are pregnant and have an underlying health condition that puts you at a greater risk of severe illness from COVID-19 at any gestation, you should take a more precautionary approach.

This is because although you are at no more risk of contracting the virus than any other non-pregnant person who is in similar health, you have an increased risk of becoming severely ill and of pre-term birth if you contract COVID-19.

Your manager should ensure you are able to adhere to any active national guidance on social distancing.

For many people, this may require working flexibly from home in a different capacity.

All managers should consider both how to redeploy affected staff and how to maximise the potential for homeworking, wherever possible. Advice can be sought from Human Resources.

Where adjustments to the work environment and role are not possible and alternative work cannot be found, you should be suspended on paid leave.

<https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/coronavirus-covid-19/coronavirus-vaccination/pregnancy-breastfeeding-fertility-and-coronavirus-covid-19-vaccination/>

9.2 What is the earliest date I can start my maternity leave?

The earliest date you are able to commence maternity leave is at 29 weeks. Further information can be found in the maternity leave pack on the intranet or by contacting your HR Advisor.

10. Domestic/caring responsibilities

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

Please refer to section 1.2 above. If you develop symptoms you will need to follow the instructions in section 1.1.1 above.

If your child does not have symptoms/not confirmed as COVID-19 positive, 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.

10.2 What should I do if my child's school closes and I can't come into work?

You may request dependant's leave (typically one day) to arrange alternative child care. If you require further time, this will be granted in accordance with existing Trust policy. If you require further flexible working your manager can then consider a number of options, including working from home (where possible), or you could request to take annual leave, special leave, unpaid leave or time owing, by agreement with your manager.

TOPS nursery both on-site and in other locations has availability for children up to the age of 11, between the hours of 06:00 and 20:00, Monday to Friday. Parents who wish to find out more information should contact the nursery on 01202 300688 or 01202 551553 (select option 1, then 2) or contact info.rbh@topsdawnurseries.co.uk

Further information relating to childcare issues can be found at:

<https://www.nhsemployers.org/covid19/health-safety-and-wellbeing/supporting-staff-with-childcare-responsibilities/faqs>

10.3 *I am concerned about my elderly relative who I care for on a regular basis. What entitlement do I have to take leave?*

You may request dependant's leave (typically one day) to arrange alternative care. If you require further time, this will be granted in accordance with existing Trust policy. If you have been in contact with Covid-19 you should refrain from visiting vulnerable relatives or friends and arrange alternative care.

11. Travel to work arrangements

11.1 *What happens if Public Transport arrangements break down?*

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 *What are the parking fees for staff?*

The government's funding to enable free car parking for NHS staff during the pandemic is coming to an end, and staff car park charges will be reinstated from 1 May 2022. You can find out more information about the planned changes, and how to contact the team, in the updated Q&As [here](#).

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

11.3 *Should people wear face coverings on public transport?*

The Government rules on face coverings have now ceased. UHD advises continues to advocate the wearing of masks on public transport.

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

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

12.1 *Restarting Group Meetings*

The guidance around staff meetings, both on and off site, has been updated to reflect the latest advice from the Government.

Organisers should carefully consider whether any staff may be disadvantaged by the re-introduction of face-to-face meetings.

Please use the Covid-19 Mitigation Risk assessments for any rooms / venues used in conjunction with the current UHD and national [IPC Guidance](#).

The full guidance can be read [here](#).

Face to face training is taking place with some changes having been made:

- 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.
- All staff attending mandatory face-to-face training in the Trust **can attend in uniform**.
- Staff on training are reminded to continue with good infection control procedures by wearing masks, wiping down surfaces and practicing good hand hygiene.
- For any questions around this please contact the IPC Team UHD ipcteamuhd@uhd.nhs.uk

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/travel

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

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 *Will I get my annual leave if I need to self-isolate during my annual leave?*

If you are required to self-isolate for any period of time then this will be recorded accordingly and not as annual leave.

If you continue to be unwell after the self-isolating period this will be recorded as sickness absence in the usual way.

13.3 *If I decide to travel whilst restrictions are in place will I be paid during for my isolation period?*

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

Where you have to self-isolate on your return (whether known at the time or travel of not), 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 isolation period 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.

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?*

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 favorite radio or TV programs
- 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?*

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

You matter page on intranet - LINK

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

Weekdays: 01202 704217 or ext. 4217 weekdays

The UHD app has information under support for you

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?*

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. Further information can be obtained via the HR Department.

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

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?*

In addition to the specific Risk Assessments for early return from COVID-19 isolation (for yourself as a confirmed positive case or as a contact of a

confirmed COVID-19 case) **all staff should have a general COVID-19 risk assessment.** The 'Individual Employee Risk Assessment' is regularly updated in line with updated evidence and to reflect local prevalence of COVID-19 infection rates. This is published on the Covid-19 website on the intranet at:

<https://intranet.rbch.nhs.uk/index.php/covid-19/hr>

<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
- 5) A change in health status or a change in medication

15.2 How should the 'Individual Employee Risk Assessment' be recorded?

A log of the Individual risk assessment carried out needs to be recorded via ESR Manager Self Service this is available on the Intranet under Risk Assessment Toolkit – How to log a completed risk assessment on ESR – see link here: (<https://intranet.rbch.nhs.uk/index.php/covid-19/hr>) The logging of this as soon as possible is very important as it gives the Trust real time information on staff unavailability. The completed form should be scanned and sent to HR.filing@uhd.nhs.uk so it can be held in the individual's personal file. Any local copy should be held securely or disposed of in confidential waste once scanned and sent.

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?

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?

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 had 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 temporary suspension is coming to an end **31st October 2022**.
For more info [NHS Pensions website COVID 19](#)

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

Shielding has ceased therefore this category has now been removed:

Absence Types	HealthRoster	ESR
- Positive test to Covid-19	<u>Sickness due to Coronavirus:</u> Sickness – Covid-19 - S27 Covid 19	<u>Sickness due to Coronavirus:</u> Sickness - S27 Infectious diseases - S27998 Other infectious disease Related reason: Coronavirus (COVID-19)
- Isolating 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 (COVID-19) – Household

-Working from home due to - Post Travel Quarantine	Working Day – HW – Post Travel Quarantine	Member Symptoms Special Increasing Bal – Other-Related reason: Coronavirus (COVID-19) – Post Travel Quarantine
	<u>Post Travel Quarantine - TOIL</u> Other Leave – Post Travel Quarantine TOIL PLEASE ENSURE ZERO HOURS ARE APPLIED TO THIS	<u>Post Travel Quarantine TOIL</u> Special Increasing Bal – Time off in Lieu Related reason: Coronavirus (COVID-19) – Post Travel Quarantine
	<u>Post Travel Quarantine – Unpaid leave</u> Other Leave – Post Travel Unpaid Leave Hrs	<u>Post Travel Quarantine – Unpaid leave</u> Unpaid Authorised Special Hrs – Other Related reason: Coronavirus (COVID-19) – Post Travel Quarantine
	<u>Post Travel Quarantine – Annual leave</u> Annual leave – Annual leave post travel	<u>Post Travel Quarantine – Annual leave</u> Annual leave Related reason: Coronavirus (COVID-19) – Post Travel Quarantine
-Post Covid vaccine recovery sickness	<u>Sickness</u> Sickness – C19 vacrec S98 C19 vaccine related recovery	<u>Sickness</u> Sickness – S98 Other known causes – not elsewhere classified Related reason: Coronavirus (COVID-19)