



Barnsley Healthcare Federation

Better Health, Better Care, for a Better Barnsley

BHF Covid-19 Risk Statement

Staff Group to whom it applies:	All staff in the Barnsley Healthcare Federation.
How to access the document:	Proactive HR System.
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Introduction

Due to Covid-19 there is a direct threat to staff member's health and wellbeing from the transmission of Covid-19 in the workplace. This document therefore aims to set out guidance on how to work safely and the measures Barnsley Healthcare Federation have taken to ensure staff safety is implemented within the workplace. Further that the risk of spreading Covid-19 in the workplace is minimalised.

Hygiene

Employees are reminded to wash their hands on a regular basis for 20 seconds with water and soap and the importance of thorough hand drying. Staff are also reminded to catch coughs and sneezes in tissues following the catch it, bin it, kill it guidance and to avoid

touching their face, eyes, nose or mouth with unclean hands. Tissues will be made available throughout the workplace as well hand washing facilities and alcohol-based gel sanitisers in any area where washing facilities not readily available.

The following hand washing procedure will be adhered to by all staff members:

1. Wet hands with water.
2. Apply enough soap to cover hands.
3. Rub hands together.
4. Use 1 hand to rub the back of the other hand and clean in between the fingers. Do the same with the other hand.
5. Rub hands together and clean in between fingers.
6. Rub back of fingers against palms.
7. Rub thumb using other hand. Do the same with the other thumb.
8. Rub the tips of fingers on the palm of other hand. Do the same with other hand.
9. Rinse hands with water.
10. Dry hands completely with a disposable towel.
11. Use the disposable towel to turn off the tap.

If there is no immediate access to soap and water then alcohol-based gel sanitiser is to be used.

Hands should be washed:

- After entering or before leaving the building or office;
- After using the toilet;
- Before and after eating or handling food;
- After blowing your nose, sneezing or coughing;
- Before and after treating a cut or wound.

Some areas of the workplace may present a higher risk than others such as staff toilets or kitchens. Heavily used areas of the workplace are therefore more likely to present an infection transmission risk therefore it is essential for staff to wash hands regularly but also that toilets are kept clean and free of Covid-19 contamination. To enforce hygiene only one staff member at any one time will be permitted to access the toilet or kitchen areas.

Signage is displayed detailing all of the above within Barnsley Healthcare Federations premises.

Cleaning

Objects and surfaces that are touched regularly, particularly in areas of high use such as door handles, light switches, kitchen and toilet facilities and office equipment such as desks will be frequently cleaned and disinfected. The use of high-touch equipment such as whiteboards and printers will be limited however these will also be frequently cleaned and disinfected also. Rigorous checks will be carried out to ensure that these procedures are being followed.

Staff are encouraged to use their own work equipment where possible such as laptops, phones and pens to ensure that there is no cross contamination across between staff members. Staff are also encouraged to clean their work space on arrival into the office and before leaving the office. Hot-desking will not be supported at this time.

Training and guidance has also been provided to staff regarding hot desks and not eating in the office. Procedures and standard operating procedures are also in place regarding infection prevention and control and these can be accessed through the staff portal (RotaMaster).

Social Distancing

Social distancing refers to people being required to maintain a distance from each other of 2 meters, wherever possible or where not possible 1 meter plus. Social distancing effectively puts people at a safe range from anyone coughing as the main route of virus transmission is through droplets exhaled or coughed by an infected person.

Staff are therefore required to practice effective social distancing while in and around the workplace, while involved in work activities and when travelling to and from work, whenever possible, by:

- Avoiding non-essential contact with others;
- Keeping a safe distance of at least 2 metres (about 3 steps) from others whenever possible or where not possible 1 meter plus; and
- Avoiding physical contact (eg hugs, handshakes, etc).

In line with the above Barnsley Healthcare Federation have implemented a reduction in the amount of staff members in the office at any one time to ensure that social distancing is adhered to. A rota system is in place where it is agreed which staff members are in the office on certain days and times and which office space they will be using to ensure that each office space is only utilised to 50% capacity. Start and finish times will also be staggered where possible to avoid congestion in the corridors and entry and exit routes.

Office spaces have been designed to ensure that the 2-metre social distancing can be adhered to and staff are encouraged to remain alert. Where there is more than one staff member on an entry or exit route or corridors they will ensure that one staff member waits back to allow the other staff member to move keeping social distancing in place.

Further to the above a one way system has been implemented on all corridors where this can be, on the corridors where a one way system cannot be implemented the corridor has one way sides of the corridor, staff will wait for other members to enter/leave the corridor meaning only one staff member is using a corridor at a time.

Staff members are now required to wear a facemask upon entering and exiting the building and using the corridors. Staff have also been informed that where 2-metre social distancing cannot be maintained they have to wear a facemask also.

Staff are also encouraged to communicate with each other should they be uncomfortable with the space they have and to advise each other when they feel others are too close to them. Staff have been informed which access points to the workplace they can use and that staff are not to congregate at entrances and exits. Staff and patient entries have been implemented to reduce congestion on entry and exit routes. Alcohol gel hand sanitiser is also placed at each of the exit and entry points.

Barnsley Healthcare Federation has also ensured that all non-essential meetings have been cancelled and essential meetings are carried out through Microsoft Teams or with social distancing methods in place. Where any staff members have to meet face-to-face it will be ensured that they are socially distanced. This therefore allows for socialisation within the workplace whilst still ensuring staff members remain safe.

Training and recruitment practices have are only occurring where necessary with any essential training or recruitment is being completed via Microsoft Teams, using e-learning or with social distancing methods in place. Where training has to occur face-to-face it is ensured that the room is big enough to provide adequate social distancing and that a limit is placed on how many people are in Oaks Park at any one time.

Signage has been placed in all premises reminding staff of the key infection prevention requirements, including the need to maintain safe distancing, only one person being permitted access to toilet or kitchen facilities at any one time and handwashing procedures.

Regarding travel arrangements staff have been asked not to share cars and to walk, cycle or drive in their own vehicle to work wherever possible. Staff have also been asked not to use public transport if possible and where they have to they should confirm with all requirements such as wearing face coverings and social distancing.

Communication

It is important that during the current pandemic, communications remain in place with all staff members whether they are working from home or in the office. Guidance and any updates will therefore be communicated to staff via email. Regular meetings also occur via Microsoft Teams or with social distancing implemented to ensure that updates are cascaded to all staff members as well as relevant training.

All policies and safety procedures relevant to Covid-19 are available via the Covid-19 folder on the staff portal (RotaMaster) which is available for all staff members to access online. These set out how staff should behave and the precautions they must adopt during the pandemic to keep them safe.

Mental Health

Barnsley Healthcare Federation are promoting mental health and wellbeing awareness to staff during the Covid-19 outbreak and will offer whatever support we can to help. There is regular communication of mental health information and an open door policy for those who need additional support.

Regular communication with other team members such as team meetings and with line managers is also encouraged. This ensures that staff members feel that they have people they can talk to and they can be offered additional support.

Staff have access to the Employee handbook on the staff portal (RotaMaster) which details Barnsley Healthcare Federations occupational health and wellbeing and stress at work and details in depth Barnsley Healthcare Federations stance on what help is available for staff members and the how to access this.

Symptoms of Covid-19

If a member of staff becomes unwell in the workplace with Covid-19 symptoms (a new, continuous cough, a high temperature or loss of taste or smell) they will be sent home and advised to follow government advice to self-isolate. People who have symptoms must self-isolate at home for ten days from the start of symptoms to prevent them from passing the infection. Those who live with others and where one person has symptoms must self-isolate as a household for fourteen days from the day when the first person in the house became ill. If anyone else in the household starts displaying symptoms, they need to stay at home for seven days from when the symptoms appeared, regardless of what day they are on in the original fourteen day isolation period. Senior management or Human Resources staff members will maintain regular contact with staff members during this time.

Following this all surfaces that a symptomatic person has come into contact with will be cleaned and disinfected, especially objects visibly contaminated with body fluids and all potentially contaminated high contact areas such as toilets. Public areas where a symptomatic individual has passed through and spent minimal time, such as corridors, but which are not visibly contaminated with body fluids will be cleaned thoroughly as normal. Cleaning staff will use disposable cloths or paper roll and a combined detergent disinfectant solution at a dilution of 1000 parts per million available chlorine as well as wearing appropriate PPE. Waste from the cleaning of areas where possible cases have been (including disposable cloths and tissues) will be "double-bagged" and tied off and placed in a secure holding area for 72 hours before being disposed of in general waste. This will include the PPE worn by the cleaning staff.

Cleaning staff have been provided with training regarding the correct donning and doffing of PPE.

If advised that a member of staff or public has developed Covid-19 and were recently on Barnsley Healthcare Federations premises, including where a member of staff has visited other work place premises, the management team of the workplace will contact the Public Health Authority to discuss the case, identify people who have been in contact with them and

will take advice on any actions or precautions that should be taken. This will be communicated to all staff members accordingly.

Return to work after testing, isolation, illness.

Those who are returning to work after testing, isolation or illness may feel more concerned about returning to work and following an illness there is a risk that a return to work too soon could cause further illness to the person or a spread of the virus to others in the workplace or patients. Barnsley Healthcare Federation is therefore ensuring that staff members adhere to government guidance regarding isolation and testing and this has been communicated to all staff members.

Phased returns are being used and options for staff members due to return to work and if required arrangements are in place to place staff in less risk areas if possible to do so. This however is not feasible for all staff members.

Risk assessments are completed for each individual staff member to ensure that they are safely returned to the workplace.

Vulnerable staff members

Some staff may have pre-existing medical conditions which render them more vulnerable to the dangers of Covid-19 infection. Those who are classified by PHE as being at greater risk from Covid-19 include people in the vulnerable (moderate risk) and extremely vulnerable (high risk) categories.

Vulnerable (moderate risk) people include those who:

- Are 70 or older;
- Are pregnant;
- Have a lung condition such as asthma, COPD, emphysema or bronchitis (not severe);
- Have heart disease, diabetes, chronic kidney disease or liver disease (such as hepatitis);
- Are taking medicine that can affect the immune system (such as low doses of steroids); or
- Are very obese.

Extremely vulnerable (high risk) people include those who:

- Have had an organ transplant;
- Are having chemotherapy for cancer, including immunotherapy;
- Are having an intense course of radiotherapy for lung cancer;
- Have a severe lung condition (such as severe asthma or severe COPD);

- Are taking medicine that makes them much more likely to get infections (such as high doses of steroids) have a serious heart condition and are pregnant.

People in both categories are advised by the government to be particularly stringent in complying with social distancing requirements.

Pregnant women are included in the “moderate risk” category as a precaution but are not considered by PHE to be more likely to get seriously ill from Covid-19. There is also some evidence that people from ethnic minority backgrounds are hit harder by Covid-19.

Further to the above Barnsley Healthcare Federation has identified and is aware of staff who fall into the vulnerable and extremely vulnerable categories and are ensuring that adequate protection and support has been provided to these individuals and this will be reviewed on a case by case basis with the individuals themselves.

The following safety arrangements apply to staff health or staffing levels:

- Staff who are sick or self-isolating including those isolating due to a member of the same household having symptoms should phone immediately and inform their line manager – on no account should they attend for work.