

COVID-19 FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS

Please see below for the most frequently asked questions by staff and management. This is a live document and will be updated when new questions are received. If you do have a question that is not answered on here please email the COVID Task Group.

Subject	Question	Answer
Anti-body tests	I have heard that we can now get an Antibody test. How do I get one?	At present Care in Mind does not have access to mass anti body testing. This is being rolled out by certain local authorities to some areas of the business but the priority by the Government is the NHS and Care Homes for the elderly. We will keep staff updated when we learn more about this.
Self-Isolation	A member of my household is due to have surgery, they have been advised to self-isolate for 14 days and for all household members to do the same, what should I do about work?	Where this applies, individuals should have a discussion with their line manager to discuss if they can complete any work from home. If their role does not allow this then annual leave can be granted or a period of unpaid leave. Consideration should be given to if you are able to live in a different household/support bubble during the isolation period.
Self-Isolation	I have been in contact with a friend and they have now tested positive for COVID-19, should I be in work?	If you do not live with your friend in the same household then you are not required to isolate unless you have been contacted Test and Track and have been advised to self-isolate and/or you have developed symptoms. If your friend is a member of your household or you develop symptoms, then you should follow the isolation guidelines.
Self-Isolation	If my colleague is tested Covid positive and we have been in close contact do I have to isolate as well?	No, as long as there has not been a breach in PPE you will not be required to isolate unless you develop symptoms.
Self- isolation	If I test positive for Covid and complete my 10 days self-isolation period, should I then be retested prior to returning to	A negative swab as a condition of return to work is not currently required. If the member of staff has come to the end of their 10 or 14 day isolation period and feels better and has been without a temperature for 48 hours they can return to the workplace. It is possible to still have a post viral cough for several weeks after the infection has gone but this is not a reason to prevent returning to work.

	work to confirm I am now negative?	
Self-Isolation	If a member of my household shows symptoms but I do not, what should I do?	You should self-isolate along with your household and all arrange for testing. If the member of your household has a test result and it is negative and the rest of the household also test negative and are not showing symptoms ,you can then return to work.
Test and Trace	I have been contacted by Test and Trace and told to self-isolate what should I do about work?	Please follow the guidance of Test and Trace and isolate for a 14 day period. Please inform your manager as soon as possible when you are notified and provide them with the evidence from Test and Trace.
Grade two masks	How do I put my surgical mask on?	Wash your hands or use hand sanitiser before putting your mask on and after taking it off. You should avoid touching the front of your mask when wearing it. <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Wash your hands 2. Hold the mask by the ear loops and pull them around the back of your ears. 3. The mask should cover your mouth, nose and chin with the coloured side facing outwards. To remove the mask hold both of the ear loops and gently lift and take off the mask.
Grade two masks	How often should I change my mask?	Your mask should be changed whenever you have removed it, e.g. after having a drink or at lunchtime after you have eaten. Masks should also be changed earlier if they are damaged, soiled or wet or if you have conducted any personal care. If you have left the home to take part in activities etc you should also put on a new one before re-entering the home.
Annual leave	I haven't wanted to use my annual leave as my holiday abroad got cancelled, can I carry it over?	Due to the operational pressures that COVID-19 is having on our services it is important for all staff to take their annual leave to rest and maintain their own mental health, even if this means resting at home. We are encouraging all staff to take their annual leave throughout the year and agree this with their manager. This applies equally to all staff regardless of whether they are shielding, working remotely, or in the workplace. Where staff have been unable to take their leave a maximum of 5 days will be allowed to be carried over into the new leave year with the agreement of your manager.

Annual leave	If individuals have AL booked and they then have to self-isolate, do they get this AL back?	In the event employees are required to self-isolate over a period of pre-booked annual leave, they can choose to cancel their leave. In the event they choose to cancel their leave, they should contact their manager to advise they are self isolating and therefore available to undertake work at home if the role allows. Requests to cancel leave cannot be done retrospectively as the individual needs to make their manager aware they are available for work. In circumstances where working from home in some capacity wouldn't have been possible, managers have discretion to authorise retrospectively.
Quarantine/Foreign Travel	I am due to travel abroad, what will happen on my return if the country I visit is added to the list of countries where you need to quarantine?	Staff are reminded that the FCO still advises against all but essential travel. It is important we continue to follow the government advice to keep ourselves and our patients safe. Staff who choose to travel and are required to quarantine for 14 days on their return, will need to take this as annual leave or unpaid leave if their job role means they are unable to work from home. The latest government advice can be found here: https://www.gov.uk/foreign-travel-advice
Sickness	I have been informed that I am required to self-isolate but I have used my full sick pay up as I was ill earlier on in the year, will I still get paid?	<p>Staff will be paid full sick pay for the full period of absence providing if they meet the following conditions;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • You test positive for COVID-19 • You must isolate due to being contacted by Test and Trace • You must self-isolate due to a household member testing positive for COVID-19 • You have symptoms and are awaiting a COVID test result • A household member has symptoms, and you are awaiting their test results <p>As per previous guidance your manager must receive evidence of your isolation notes/positive COVID test to enact the full pay.</p>

Sickness	Will my COVID-19 absence impact on my triggers for sickness absence	Care in Mind have agreed that COVID-19 related absence will not go towards triggers for sickness absence.
Sickness	I am new to the company but have been told I have to isolate by Test and Trace, will I get paid?	Yes you will receive full sick pay if you advised to isolate.
Sickness	What if somebody becomes unwell whilst they are at work?	If someone becomes unwell while at work they should be told to go home and advised to follow current national guidance in terms of self-isolation and accessing treatment. If the person cannot leave the workplace immediately, remove that person to an area which is at least 2 metres away from other people and, if possible, find a room or area where they can be isolated behind a closed door. If possible, open a window for ventilation. The employee should be asked to contact their manager when they are well enough to work, even if they are still required to self-isolate.
Raising Concerns	How am I able to escalate my concerns if I feel my manager is not supporting me?	Care in Mind has a grievance policy in place for staff which can be found here or if you feel your concerns are having an impact on patient care then then you can contact one of our Freedom to Speak up champions by following the policy here
Shielding	I have been advised to shield by my GP and have received a shielding letter will I receive full pay.	At the height of the pandemic Care in Mind paid full pay for any staff members that were shielding. This has recently been reviewed and if staff are required to shield again this winter the following will be paid if your contract does not state you will be paid full pay; 4 weeks full pay 4 weeks half pay The remainder SSP
Positive Action-BAME colleagues	I am from a BAME background and I have read that I may be	Please speak to your manager if you have concerns and they will hold a supportive conversation with you and complete a risk assessment with you to help protect you from

	more at risk what support is available?	COVID-19. If any further advice is required from a medical professional, then your manager may refer you to Occupational Health.
Pregnancy	I am pregnant and concerned about being work at this time, what should I do?	Please contact your manager so options can be discussed and a risk assessment be completed. The latest guidance recommends that pregnant workers at any stage of pregnancy should 'not be exposed to a greater risk in the workplace than what they would be exposed to outside the workplace'. Where there is a higher level of risk, the worker should be offered alternative work. For those workers over 28 weeks' gestation or with underlying health conditions, homeworking is advised. For those workers under 28 weeks gestation, the latest guidance means patient facing roles are not appropriate if social distancing cannot be implemented without compromising patient care or if there is a higher risk of exposure to the virus. Please refer to the latest guidance which is available here:
Health conditions	I have an underlying health condition what support is available to me?	Please raise this immediately with your line manager who will complete a risk assessment with you to help protect you from COVID-19. If any further advice is required from a medical professional, then your manager may refer you to Occupational Health.
Health conditions	I work in residential services and I am concerned about working as a member of my household has a serious health condition, what should I do?	We realise this is a concerning time for any front line workers who live with vulnerable people. Staff within service are required to wear Grade 2 face Coverings to help protect the spread of COVID-19.if you have any further concerns please speak to your manager who can offer support. Further guidance about how tio support your household is available by following the link below; 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
Health conditions	How often do Covid risk assessments need updating for staff ?	Risk assessment should be reviewed on a regular basis with staff. We advise that at each supervision you check the risk assessment to ensure nothing has changed and that there are no updates to be added.

Health conditions	Can high risk staff work with PPE if a positive case?	This should be discussed with your line manager at the earliest opportunity based on your risk assessment. You may be required to move services for the isolation period.
Tier Levels	I am confused about the Tier Levels where can I find further guidance?	Please follow the link on your Care in Mind computer desktop and also additional Government guidance can be found here; https://www.gov.uk/guidance/local-covid-alert-levels-what-you-need-to-know
Tier levels	If I live in a Tier 3 area can I still travel to a Tier 2 area if my place of work is there?	Yes, you can still travel between different regions for work purposes.
Home Working	I usually work at Hope House but have been advised to work from home. Can I still come into the office on the odd day as I feel it helps with my mental health?	We are advising all Hope House staff to work from home where possible. However, if you need to visit Hope House for any reason (e.g. printing/to pick up documents) then please speak to your manager to discuss this in advance. All staff are also required to update the Hope House calendar on Outlook if they are visiting. Please also ensure you have your ID badge on you to enter the building and that you are aware of the alarm access code if there is no one else in the building. For staff that feel isolated working from home and would benefit to visits to Hope House to support their wellbeing please speak to your manager so they can ensure the appropriate support is put in place and visits to the office can then be arranged in advance,
Home Working	I am struggling with my work station at home and my chair is uncomfortable what can I do?	Please speak to your line manager to ensure a DSE risk assessment is completed if not done so already. Chairs and equipment can be provided to ensure you have a comfortable work station.
Training	Will still be required to attend refresher training face to face?	Many of our training sessions are held online. However, some training will still be required to take place face to face when it is classed as essential training in order to provide a safe service to our young people. Therefore, the following training will still be face -face; TRUSST refresher training

		<p>Wound Care First Aid</p> <p>Our training centres are COVID secure and risk assessments have been completed to ensure a safe environment. All attendees will be required to wear face coverings when they attend the training.</p>
Clinical Sessions	I am a clinician will I still be required to provide face to face sessions in the homes if they are in Tier 3?	<p>Yes we deem these sessions as essential to the wellbeing of young people so they will still continue if the house is in Tier 3, however appropriate PPE and social distancing should be in place.</p> <p>If there is a positive case within the home then session must take place over Teams for a period of 28 days.</p>
Additional Guidance	How will be informed of any changes to COVID procedures?	Bulletins are sent out regularly via the Internal Communications email address please ensure you read these to keep yourself up to date.
Young People	Can young people do their own shopping?	Young people are encouraged to complete food shopping independently. Where this is not possible staff will complete online shopping or reduce the amount of times they are going to the supermarket by doing a big household shopping list including items for each young person.
Young People	What activities can we do ?	Activities with young people can be carried out on a 1:1 basis or as a group providing all localised guidance is being followed, this will vary depending on location of the home.
Young people	What do I do if a Young person refuses to listen to my advice ?	Discuss with your line manager. Provide young people with all necessary information to allow them to make an informed decision. Providing all facts is necessary for each young person to be aware of risk and benefits and potential consequences.
Young People	Can young people go on home leave?	Home leave is restricted at present depending on tier levels due to mixing households. Review the tier guidance and allow the young person to make their own decisions ensuring all tier information is provided beforehand.
Young people	Can transitions still go ahead ?	Transitions of young people will continue as normal at present; this is essential to ensure we support delayed discharges into the community. However, all young people visiting must wear a mask as a visitor until they move into the service. Transition visits can be supported by

		additional engagement sessions over Microsoft Teams where possible and appropriate to minimise contact between services.
Residential Homes	Can staff move between homes?	Wherever possible staff should remain in the homes they are contracted to work in. This applies to all homes within a Tier 3. However, in an emergency situation staff can transfer to work in another homes.
Residential Homes	Are visitors allowed?	Due to current restrictions, homes that are in a Tier 3 or Tier 2 area should not be allowing visitors to the homes. There may be occasions where a professional is required to visit for an essential purpose. If this is the case then they must wear full PPE for the visit. Care in Mind Clinicians can still visit the home to carry out session and therapy following PPE requirements.
Residential Homes	Do we need to contact scheduled visitors before they arrive to check if they have symptoms?	Yes, you should speak to them the day prior to their visit to ask if they have any symptoms. For further details please see the visitor's section of the COVID Policy.
Residential Homes	Who contacts PHT ?	The residential service manager/head of residential when this is required.
Residential Homes	What do I do if out of hours and tested positive ?	You should ring On Call to inform them that you will not be attending your shift due to testing positive. You should then follow this up with a call to your manager when they are next in.
Residential Homes	What is classed as a breakout?	A breakout is classed as 2 or more cases within a home.