

Pandemic Workplace Controls

Following on from the UK Governments announcement in February 2022 the UK is now 'Living with COVID-19' and from this Pandemic controls which were implemented into UK society and healthcare settings are now decreasing.

There is a risk of transmission of COVID-19 with any risk control relaxation. The risk reduction measures here are in accordance with IPC guidance for the healthcare sector, along with a reduced level of COVID prevalence in society. For vaccinated colleagues the severity of symptoms and the risk of infection transmission is reduced, therefore, to reduce the control measures as below is considered acceptable.

The below controls are now in effect within our NHSBT centres – including departments within our centres; and replace all other pre-dated controls where applicable

- COVID-19 vaccination is strongly recommended and encouraged
- Where Triage (Blood donor sessions) takes place within our centres then the pre-attendance information, posters at the door will continue. The taking of temperatures upon entering will cease with immediate effect.
- Increased hand hygiene (colleagues, visitors, and donors) will continue to be implemented in line with current guidance
- Cleaning stations are to still be made available in workplaces / departments.
- Face coverings for donors will still be required, unless medically exempt. This will be until infection control guidance is updated to indicate these are no longer required.
- Fluid repellent face masks (Type IIR) for colleagues working in close contact with donors/patients will still be required as per infection control guidance, this will be updated when there are any changes.
- Face coverings in communal areas (canteens, kitchens, corridors, and stairs) in centres are to be made a personal choice and where colleagues wish to continue to wear them, they can
- Centres with areas that currently wear face masks when working closer than 2m can now be changed to only those working closer than 1m should wear face masks. IPC will continue to monitor, and the guidance will be reviewed end of April 2022
- Face coverings/face masks in areas where these are no longer mandated or more than 1m working is undertaken; are to be made a personal choice and where colleagues wish to continue to wear them, they can
- Where Perspex screens are in situ within the centre and if not impeding work or causing obstructions can remain in place
- Social distancing is to reduce to 1m in donor session waiting areas, in labs, conference rooms. This is subject to those areas having good ventilation. This may reduce further if IPC guidance supports this after consultation with staff side
- Touch point cleaning will be changing shortly to reflect the requirements outlined in the new National Standards of Healthcare Cleanliness 2021
- Asymptomatic testing (Lateral Flow Tests) for patient and donor facing staff will continue. Staff in this category are asked to continue with twice weekly LFT testing. Healthcare workers can order one pack of 7 Lateral Flow Tests every 3 days using the [online offering via gov.uk](#)

- Any colleague with respiratory infections and COVID-19 symptoms, as outlined by GOV.uk, should get themselves tested as a healthcare worker. Any staff with symptoms requiring a test will need to use the [self-referral link](#). Symptoms of COVID-19, flu and common respiratory infections include:
 - continuous cough
 - high temperature, fever or chills
 - loss of, or change in, your normal sense of taste or smell
 - shortness of breath
 - unexplained tiredness, lack of energy
 - muscle aches or pains that are not due to exercise
 - not wanting to eat or not feeling hungry
 - headache that is unusual or longer lasting than usual
 - sore throat, stuffy or runny nose
 - diarrhoea, feeling sick or being sick

- Desk booking in centres is currently set to 50% availability. Centres are to increase to 100% availability by April. This is expected to be monitored.

- Hybrid working (blended working) where possible is likely to continue through personal choice and discussion with managers. Where those hybrid workers are to attend centres then they are to use the desk booking system.

- Face to face training can continue with 1m social distancing and mandatory face masks when in close contact.

- Where individual COVID-19 risk assessments are in place, managers will be asked to review the controls within these assessments and where required get the local HS&W Advisor to amend or archive the risk assessment as the controls noted are now protecting all colleagues within NHSBT.

- Where departments within centres have immunocompromised colleagues that are at a higher risk of illness if they contract COVID-19. It is recommended that they review individual risk assessments and follow the below advice: -
 - Is it possible for the individual to work from home? This is to be discussed with your line manager with regards to keeping you safe and to reduce individual risk further. This maybe recorded as a reasonable adjustment. Support from Health, Safety & Wellbeing is available.
 - ensure that any identified vaccinations have been received and/or booked
 - ensure that individuals continue to follow specific advice from their specialist
 - avoid meeting someone with a confirmed positive result.
 - try to avoid people with symptoms of COVID-19 or other respiratory infections and have a temperature and feel unwell
 - keep socially distant if it feels right for the individual
 - consider continuing to wear a face covering in crowded public places
 - where immunocompromised individuals have symptoms and test positive for COVID-19 on LFT they are to log their result and the NHS will contact regards treatment

- Centres with areas who implemented staggered breaks and one-way systems, these are no longer mandatory; however, where departments wish to continue to implement then they can do.

- CO2 monitoring will continue to occur periodically in the centre to monitor ventilation levels.