



Coronavirus (COVID-19) 2020

Procedures to minimise the risk of infection & cross-contamination

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Purpose

Social workers were characterized as Key Workers by the Government 2020 during the COVID-19 pandemic.

Health & Social Care

This includes but is not limited to doctors, nurses, midwives, paramedics, **social workers**, care workers, and other frontline health and social care staff including volunteers; the support and specialist staff required to maintain the UK's health and social care sector; those

Gov.uk (2020)

As key workers in health and social care, our work is invaluable in safeguarding vulnerable individuals, especially during this time.

The purpose of this procedure is to ensure team Nellie members, their families and our clients remain safe from exposure to the current pandemic COVID-19. By adhering to strict hygiene regulations outlined in this document, we can minimise the risk of infection and cross-contamination.



What is Coronavirus (COVID-19)

Coronavirus disease (COVID-19) is an infectious disease caused by a newly discovered coronavirus.

Most people infected with the COVID-19 virus will experience mild to moderate respiratory illness and recover without requiring special treatment.

Older people and those with underlying medical problems like cardiovascular disease, diabetes, chronic respiratory disease, and cancer are more likely to develop serious illness.

At this time, there are no specific vaccines or treatments for COVID-19. However, many ongoing clinical trials are evaluating potential treatments. WHO will continue to provide updated information as soon as clinical findings become available.

Taken from the World Health Organisation 23rd March 2020

Acceptance of work

Unless an individual who is self-isolating or quarantined is showing symptoms of the COVID-19 virus, we will endeavor to make every attempt to engage with the client face to face.

If a client or potential client is showing any of the symptoms listed below, we will encourage where possible, that the assessment be delayed until they are well, in accordance with the Mental Capacity Act (2005) **“if an assessment can be delayed it should be delayed”**.

If it is not possible to delay the assessment for any reason, we will complete a virtual assessment.

World Health Organisation (2020) states the symptoms of the COVID-19 virus are:

Common symptoms include:

- fever
- tiredness
- dry cough.

Other symptoms include:

- shortness of breath
- aches and pains
- sore throat
- and very few people will report diarrhea, nausea or a runny nose.

Virtual Assessments

During these times, it is essential to ensure the client feels comfortable; if our presence in their home is unsettling due to the current pandemic fears, they have the option to ask for virtual visits.

The government have released new guidelines during this pandemic that when the scenario calls for it, completing assessments via Skype, Facebook or any other media stream is suitable.

In this current situation, we are being client-led to ensure we continue to provide safe assessments across England and Wales that remain in line with the principles of the mental capacity act (2005).

Guidelines for a successful virtual assessment

- Establish which virtual application they can access, this may be Skype, Facebook messenger, Zoom or Whatsapp
- The key worker must be in a room on their own to ensure privacy and confidentiality is maintained
- Send a link to the client asking them to join you in the video call.
- Once the video link has been established, please ask them to confirm you have their consent to complete the assessment using the virtual application and completed a consent and capacity form. If the client lacks capacity please complete this in their Best Interests.
- If the client confirms consent, proceed with the assessment.

Guidelines for Virtual assessments will be updated when Cliniko's secure telehealth service is implemented.

Is it safe to work? - Key Worker health

Our no. 1 priority policy is to safeguard the health and safety of team Nellie and our clients.

Under no circumstances must a key worker make any visits if you exhibit any of the below symptoms, taken from the World Health Organisation (2020).

Common symptoms include:

- fever
- tiredness
- dry cough.

Other symptoms include:

- shortness of breath
- aches and pains
- sore throat
- and very few people will report diarrhea, nausea or a runny nose.

If as a key worker, you begin to show the symptoms of Coronavirus, outlined above, you must immediately inform your supervisor. All appointments must be either taken over by a colleague or postponed until you are at full health.



Is it safe to work? - Client's health

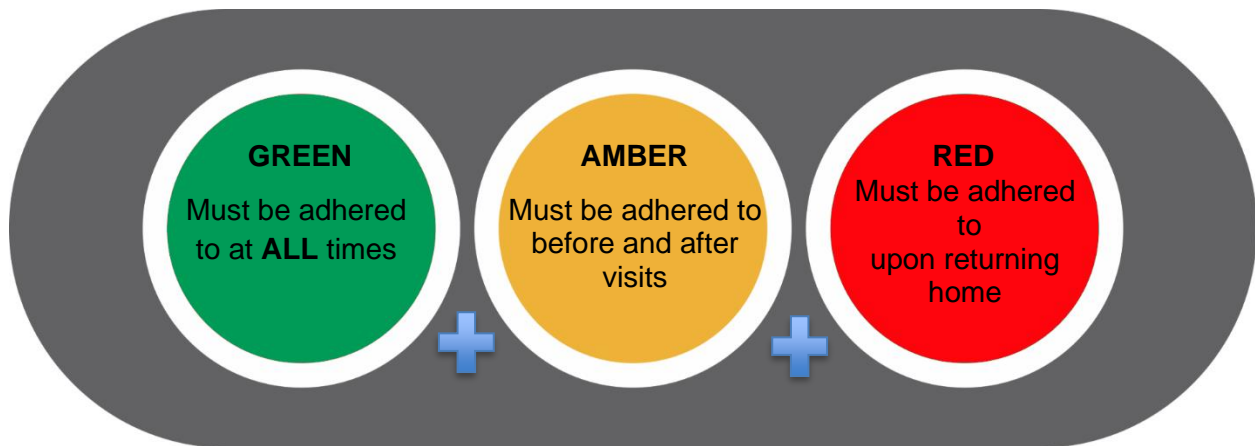
Circumstances may have changed since the work was initially confirmed. To ensure key worker safety and unnecessary travelling, please liaise directly with the individual, care home etc. on the day of your appointment to ensure they are still able to accept visitors.

If the individual is now showing symptoms of COVID-19 virus, please DO NOT continue with the visit. The appointment must be postponed for a minimum of 14 days or you can offer them a virtual assessment if the assessment can not be delayed for any reason.

Traffic light system

As key workers, we must maintain a vigilant and vigorous regime to ensure we minimise any risk to ourselves, our family, our clients and our community.

A three-step prevention system has been established to ensure we do all that is necessary to safeguard against infection and cross-contamination.



Green
Must be adhered to ALL the time by Key Workers and their families

Green

This is the primary prevention strategy outlined by the World Health Organisation. These basic principles should be followed by key workers and their families at **all times** to prevent possible infection of COVID-19 virus and any other virus or bacterial infection.

- Wash your hands regularly with soap and water, or clean them with alcohol-based hand rub.
- Maintain at least 1-metre distance between you and people coughing or sneezing.
- Avoid touching your face.
- Cover your mouth and nose when coughing or sneezing.
- Stay home if you feel unwell.
- Refrain from smoking and other activities that weaken the lungs.
- Practice physical distancing by avoiding unnecessary travel and staying away from large groups of people.

WHO 2020

Amber
Must be adhered to before and after visits

Amber

Green outlines our daily basic prevention strategy. Amber describes procedures which should be followed when attending visits.

The following should be followed along with maintaining strict green procedures.

- 1) Are you well? If you are showing any symptoms do not leave your home, please self-isolate for a minimum of 14 days and contact your supervisor who will distribute your cases. See section “is it safe” section
- 2) Is the client well? You must ensure the individual is still healthy and not exhibiting symptoms of COVID-19. Please ring the individual, care home etc. to establish their current state of health. As discussed in “Is it safe to Work?” section.
- 3) Try to minimise appointments, where possible only attend one visit per day to reduce the risk of cross-contamination.
- 4) Car hygiene - your car should be decontaminated each time you enter your vehicle, please refer to the “car hygiene section”.

- 5) Before entering the home or care home of the individual.
 - Make sure you have your Nellie ID on to confirm you are a Key Worker
 - Use alcohol-based hand sanitizer or anti-bacterial wipes to clean your hands.
 - Put on gloves

Be prepared for the care home to insist you re-do this procedure when you enter the building.

- 6) Avoid physical contact where possible. In our area of work, this cannot always be avoided as the individual may be upset, distressed etc. But where at all possible limit contact as much as possible.
- 7) Please carry extra gloves and alcohol-based hand sanitizers at all times. If you have prolonged contact with an item, or person, please remove your gloves (using the procedure in “how to remove gloves safely”. Sanitise your hands and re-glove.
- 8) Gloves should be worn until you have completed your visit and arrive back at your car.
- 9) Please dispose of gloves in your rubbish bag, do not use general public waste.
- 10) Please remember “soap is best” if at any point in the day you have the opportunity to wash your hands with soap and water, please do so.
- 11) Your phone! Another high-risk item, please ensure you regularly clean both front and back with anti-bacterial wipes, periodically during the day
- 12) Filling your car with fuel, please ensure you are wearing gloves. A spokesman for Public Health England has stated that *'Petrol pumps are no worse than other surfaces, although we do recommend people use gloves and wash their hands after using them.'*
Daily Mail 2020

Red

Must be adhered to upon returning home

Red

The purpose of red prevention is to safeguard our key workers and their families. These procedures should be followed alongside Green and Amber.

When returning home from any visit, it is important to remember that although you have followed Green & Amber procedures, you potentially may have the virus on your clothes and in your hair etc. Please follow the following step by step guide to complete decontamination.

- 1) Tie a knot in your rubbish bag, **double bag it!** Then place this next to your general waste wheelie bin. Do not put inside the bin please refer to the “disposal section”.
- 2) Remove your shoes, ideally leave them outside, or place in a plastic bag near the front door. **Do not walk through your home with them on.** Place any bag/coat, or other belongs beside the door.
- 3) Before greeting your family or anything else, **have a shower**, thoroughly wash with soap, shower gel, shampoo etc. all parts of the body, **especially your hair.**
Remember, even with using alcohol-based sanitiser; soap is always best and more efficient.
- 4) Clothes should be placed straight away in the washing machine and put on a regular wash. Wash your hands with soap afterwards
- 5) Breathe and relax, you have done a fantastic job !!

Car hygiene

You spend a significant proportion of your time in your vehicle. Therefore, maintaining a strict hygiene and cleaning procedure is essential.

Anti-bacterial wipes or bleach wipes must be used to wipe down all areas of the car most at risk of coming into contact with the virus these include:

- Steering wheel
- Door handles, inside and out
- Front, side windows (inside)
- Gearstick
- Handbrake
- Stereo
- Mobile / sat nav holder or digital display
- Charger cables
- Seat belt

Please ensure you are wearing latex gloves when you clean down your car.

Please use a new wipe for each part/area you wipe off your car, i.e. one wipe for your steering wheel, another for your gearstick.

The wipes should be disposed of in a plastic bag.

Do not dispose of these in general waste bins in public. The bag should be kept in your car boot and disposed of at home (see separate waste disposal procedure)

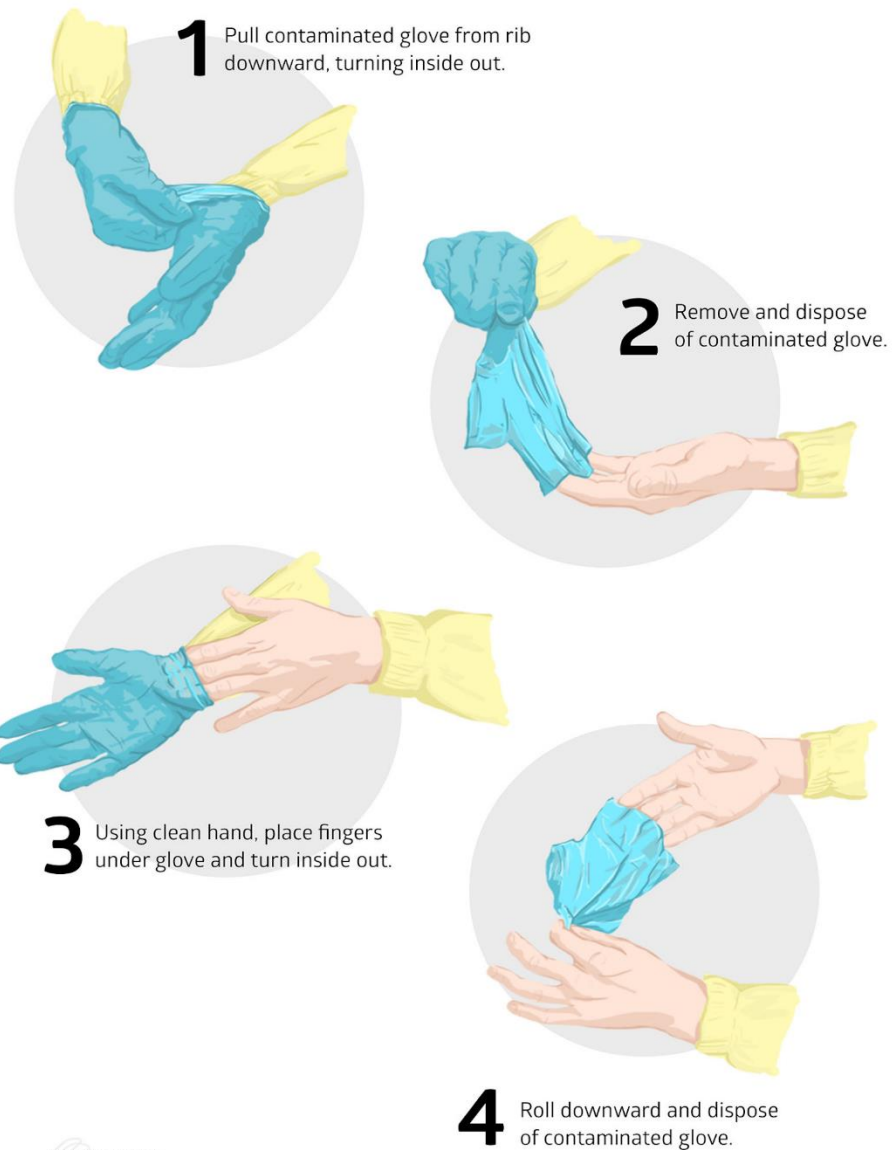
Please ensure you have the following items in your car at all times

- Tissues in case you sneeze
- Anti-bacteria or bleach wipes to clean high-risk areas in your vehicle (outlined above)
- Plastic bag for rubbish
- Alcohol-based hand sanitiser

How to safely remove gloves

Natalie Cormier (2020)

REMOVING PROTECTIVE GLOVES



Natalie Cormier 2014

Safe disposal of rubbish

All local councils have issued special treatment of tissues, gloves and over related items which may have come into contact with the COVID-19 virus.

The following was taken from the London Borough of Havering and is echoed throughout the UK council boroughs.

Important advice on waste disposal around Covid-19.

Tissues, disposable gloves and other related items used by anyone with suspected COVID-19 and those cleaning up afterwards should be double bagged, then stored securely for 72 hours before being thrown away inside your usual black sack waste.

You should not put this waste out with your usual rubbish for weekly collections until negative test results are known, or the waste has been stored for at least 72 hours

London Borough of Havering (2020)

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