

Coronavirus Covid-19

Guidance and resources for members

6 April 2021

PTUK advises all members to keep up to date with the latest advice on the pandemic.

Gov.uk: <https://www.gov.uk/coronavirus>

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

Scot.Gov: <https://www.gov.scot/coronavirus-covid-19/>

Gov.ie: <https://www.gov.ie/en/>

PTI members should follow local regional advice

Update

Coronavirus remains a serious threat across the country. Around one in three people who are infected with Covid-19 have no symptoms and could be spreading the disease without knowing it.

In England

The Governments announced

From 12 April [more businesses and venues can reopen](#).

Twice weekly [rapid tests will be available to everyone](#) from 9 April.

6 people or 2 households can meet outside from 29 March.

[Shielding ended on 31 March](#).

Lateral Flow Testing:

Schools, nurseries and colleagues testing: order coronavirus (COVID-19) rapid lateral flow home test kits are available to be ordered and sent to your home in England. You can order kits to test your household, childcare bubble or support bubble if at least one member:

- is a school, nursery or college pupil
- works in a school, nursery or college (this includes temporary workers or volunteers)
- works in an [occupation related to a school, nursery or college](#)

A test kit contains 7 tests. You can order one test kit per household each day.

A flatshare or house share counts as a household.

In Scotland

People will be asked to 'Stay Local' from 2 April.

A [timetable for further lockdown easing from 5 April is on GOV.SCOT](#).

Lateral Flow testing:

Individuals and institutions who can access asymptomatic testing under this programme. The programme is initially available to:

- all primary, secondary and special school staff in local authority, independent and grant-aided schools;
- all ELC and childcare staff based in local authority, independent and grant-aided schools; and
- all senior phase pupils in local authority, independent and grant-aided secondary and special schools. School staff include teachers, classroom-based support staff, administrative staff, facilities management staff (cleaners, janitors, etc.), school transport staff and other school-based staff who are critical to the effective delivery of school education.

<https://www.glasgow.gov.uk/CHttpHandler.ashx?id=52426&p=0>

In Wales

The stay local restriction was lifted on 27 March. It is illegal to travel in or out of Wales without a reasonable excuse, such as work. Holiday accommodation open for people living in Wales only. Read about the [rules on GOV.WALES](#).

From February 2021 All staff working in childcare and education settings are eligible for Lateral Flow testing.

This includes:

- headteachers, principals, deputy and assistant headteachers
- teachers/lecturers
- childcare and play practitioner and managers
- child minders
- all support staff such as, but not limited to:
 - learning support workers
 - SEN support worker
 - catering staff
 - cleaning staff
 - caretaker/maintenance staff
 - administrative support
 - teaching assistants
- transport workers
- ITE placements

In addition, all upper secondary school pupils in years 10 to 13 and all Further Education (FE) learners will be able to access LFDs to undertake regular twice weekly asymptomatic testing, alongside the current provision for staff listed above. <https://gov.wales/coronavirus-asymptomatic-testing-school-further-education-and-childcare-settings>

In Northern Ireland

The next review will happen on or before 15 April. You can read the [guidance on current restrictions on nidirect](#)

Lateral flow testing advice published 15 March 2021:

Initially, all post-primary staff (including teaching and support staff) and older students in Years 12-14 in schools and in Education Other Than at School (EOTAS) centres will be included in this programme of regular testing, which will use Lateral Flow Device (LFD) tests.

Expansion of testing to other staff in primary and pre-school settings will be rolled out in later phases. <https://www.health-ni.gov.uk/news/ministers-announce-programme-regular-covid-19-testing-schools>

Vaccine

All Nations have begun their vaccination programmes, some therapists and trainee therapists have already received their vaccinations for Covid-19. The vaccine is a significant part how our Governments are hoping to combat Covid-19 so life can return to “normal”.

It is vitally important to remember that just because you might have received a vaccination does not mean the risk of Covid has reduced.

All regions are clear we need to be maintaining all of the current restrictions and public health advice, **Face, Hands and Space**.

How does this impact on your practice?

The government guidance is there to support you to work and keep safe during the pandemic. You should continue to interpret and apply the guidance as appropriate ensuring you are complying with all relevant legal duties.

Employers, self-employed and trainees are responsible for undertaking a risk management approach to ensure compliance with government and public health advice. PTUK would encourage you to discuss your decision-making process within clinical supervision.

Interpreting the guidance can pose difficulties, the HSE provide support in understanding the finer details of the published documents <https://www.hse.gov.uk/coronavirus/index.htm>

Clinical working

Play Therapy comes under the category of essential worker which PTUK/PTIr support.

If you are a student on placement the head teacher or manager of the setting will make a decision based on the government guidance and their risk assessment, as to whether they feel it is safe for you to continue practice at this time and if they still have the available space for you to practice from. Ensure you share your risk assessment with your placement organisation. If there are difficulties with your placement continuing, please contact your Course Director.

If your placement is unable to continue and you find yourself without a placement contact the Alun at the clinical team for advice and support, contact@ptukorg.com.

PTUK would encourage you to discuss your decision-making process within clinical supervision.

Factors to take into account while continuing to practice during the pandemic:

Insurance:

- Check you have adequate cover to work during the pandemic
- Risk assessment: Returning to practice webinar is available on ALMs also consult close contact working guidance.
- Hands – hygiene
- Face masks and shields – see close contact guidance
- Space within clinical work, social distancing can it be maintained or not – see close contact guidance
- Ventilation
- Lateral Flow Testing
- Cleaning, space you are working from, equipment and resources including sand and puppets
- Managing equipment and resources
- Clients – safety do they have any underlying health concerns which you should factor into your risk assessment?
- Therapists – safety, any underlying health considerations, pregnancy
- Working within a “bubble system” or between “bubbles” or other schools/setting/organisations

Private practice premises shared or your own personal space from your home business address - Display the official NHS QR code poster. [Official NHS QR posters can be generated online](https://www.gov.uk/guidance/working-safely-during-coronavirus-covid-19/close-contact-services#close-contact-2-1-1). See <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/working-safely-during-coronavirus-covid-19/close-contact-services#close-contact-2-1-1>

Therapists who have a private practice separate from their home such as a converted garage or garden cabin advice from Gov.HSE “*Due to the workplace being within a domestic setting, guidance on safety within the workplace and not guidance within the domestic household applies.*

<https://www.gov.uk/guidance/working-safely-during-coronavirus-covid-19/close-contact-services#close-contact-2-1-1>

HSE considers that if an employer is following the relevant public health guidance for their sector in terms of controlling the public health risks, they will be taking reasonably practicable precautions to control workplace risks. HSE is not offering permissions or authorisations for work to commence. It is for the employer to determine whether the work is captured by the business closure requirements and carry out the appropriate risk assessment. This includes the self-employed where their work is with or near other people”.

Working from within your own private home, the guidance states “Support groups that have to be delivered in person can continue with up to 15 participants where formally organised to provide mutual aid, therapy or any other form of support. Support groups must be

organised by a business, charity or public body and **must not take place in a private home**".
<https://www.gov.uk/guidance/covid-19-coronavirus-restrictions-what-you-can-and-cannot-do?priority-taxonomy=774cee22-d896-44c1-a611-e3109cce8eae#support-groups>

PTUK has previously published the following guidance's to enable you to consider how to safely practice.

- Procedure for resuming Play Therapy June 2020
- FAQ resuming practice Sept 2020
- Webinar Returning to Play Therapy Practice during Covid-19
- FAQ following webinar Returning to Play Therapy Practice during Covid-19
- December 2020 Update
- January 2021 Update

We encourage you to revisit the above guidance's which you will find on PTUK's website, keep abreast of government guidance for your region, review your current risk assessment and discuss your decision making within Clinical Supervision.

Additional queries regarding working during the covid-19 pandemic, contact Eileen at clinical@ptukorg.com