

# Coronavirus COVID-19

## Guidance and resources for members

**August 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/>

PTI members should follow local regional advice

### Update

Although most legal restrictions have been lifted and many people have been vaccinated there is still a risk that covid-19 can be caught and spread, even if fully vaccinated. Daily infection rates are still high, hospital admissions are lower than previously experienced. Each of the four nations are cautiously moving us forward whilst trying to mitigate risk.

We are reminded we all still have a part to play in the following ways:

- Ensure good hygiene for everyone.
- Maintain appropriate cleaning regimes.
- Keep occupied spaces well ventilated.
- Follow public health advice on testing, self-isolation and managing confirmed cases of COVID-19.

### In England - From 16 August 2021

If you're fully vaccinated or under 18 you no longer need to self-isolate after close contact with someone who has COVID-19. If you have symptoms you should still isolate and take a PCR test. [Find out when to self-isolate and what to do on the NHS website.](#)

### In Scotland - From 9 August 2021

There are no current protection levels. Most of the restrictions on what you can and cannot do have been lifted, and all places and businesses can open. There are no limits on the numbers who can attend weddings, funerals, and places of worship.

There are still some rules covering things like:

- wearing face coverings
- providing your contact details when you go to places like pubs, cafes and restaurants
- international travel

### **In Wales - From 7 August 2021**

Alert level 0: Most restrictions have been lifted. You still need to wear a face covering in many places including public transport. [Read the latest coronavirus guidance for Wales on GOV.WALES;](#)

### **In Northern Ireland**

Any number of people can now meet in a private garden or sit together at hospitality venues. [Find out what you can and cannot do in Northern Ireland on nidirect.](#)

If you're fully vaccinated, you do not need to self-isolate after close contact with someone who has COVID-19. You still need to take PCR tests and self-isolate if either are positive, or if you have symptoms. [Read the self-isolation guidance for Northern Ireland on nidirect.](#)

### **Reviewing the current guidance.**

It is clear to see there are many positive changes, enabling us to see our way out of the past 18 Months.

You should continue to interpret and apply the guidance as appropriate, ensuring you are complying with all relevant information. It is important to note that Senior Leaders in placements and places we are contracted to work from may have implemented different rules for you to follow.

Although alert levels have drop significantly to zero in all regions PTUK/PTI are continuing to advise registrants to move forward cautiously, and although the wearing of face coverings is no longer a mandatory requirement, the Government advises us to continue wearing them when in crowd and enclosed spaces. Close contact guidance also advises the use of face coverings.

Maintain good ventilation in rooms and continue to operate good hygiene and cleaning routines. Cleaning involves wiping down surfaces twice a day.

If you are fully vaccinated (2 doses) there is no need to self-isolate after close contact with someone who has COVID-19. You still need to take PCR tests and self-isolate if either are positive, or if you have symptoms.

### **Clinical working**

Play Therapy comes under the category of essential worker and is also considered a close contact service due to the nature of working alongside our clients.

### **Risk assessment**

PTUK advises you to review your risk assessment or develop one taking into consideration the current information for your region.

Employers, self-employed and trainees are responsible for undertaking a risk management approach to mitigate risk as much as possible to protect yourself, your clients, and any adults you come into contact with. PTUK would encourage you to discuss your risk assessment within clinical supervision.

### **Risk Assessment Factors to consider**

- Insurance: are there any changes you need to be aware of with your cover.
- Hygiene, hand sanitising, disposing of used tissues “catch it, kill it, bin it”
- Face masks, visors can aid communication.
- Ventilation, opening windows to the outside to circulate air flow.
- Cleaning, we are advised to increase the frequency of cleaning, using standard cleaning products such as detergents, paying attention to all surfaces but especially ones that are touched frequently, such as door handles, light switches, work surfaces, toys. As a minimum, frequently touched surfaces should be wiped down twice a day, and one of these should be at the beginning or the end of the working day. Cleaning should be more frequent depending on the number of children using the space, whether they are entering and exiting the room and access handwashing and hand-sanitising prior to playing.
- Managing the therapeutic tool kit equipment and resources, Consider:
  - If moving back to using one therapeutic tool kit, will you have time to clean the items between sessions?
  - If you will continue to use individual kits for your clients.
  - How will you manage sand, which cannot be easily cleaned between sessions?
- Clients – safety, do they have any underlying health concerns which you should factor into your risk assessment?
- Therapists – safety, any underlying health considerations.
- Vaccination.
- Maintaining Lateral Flow Testing Regular testing could identify more positive cases and protect you and your workspace, working full-time we are advised to test twice a week.

### **Working in Schools**

The final decision of how schools will operate will be informed by the Head Teacher and School Governors, it will be important to communicate with your school to ensure you are aware of their expectations for you to work within school, which might impact on how you work with clients.

**PTUK has previously published the following guidance to enable you to consider how to safely practice during the pandemic.**

- 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
- April 2021 Update
- June 2021 Update
- July 2021 Update

We encourage you to revisit the above guidance 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](mailto:clinical@ptukorg.com)