

Disclaimer

Please note, the information contained in this document is not intended to, nor does it, constitute a formal safe operating procedure. The aim is to provide general guidance only, which the reader can use to inform his or her own operation-specific risk assessment and risk control measures.

Q. *What should we do if a person contacts us to say they had recently visited our premises, after having unknowingly been in contact with somebody who might have had Covid-19?*

A. In the first instance, you do not need to do anything.

The person making the call should have started self isolation immediately upon being informed of their possible contact with an infected person and continue to self isolate in accordance with government guidelines.

The person is not required to arrange for testing unless he/she develops symptoms of COVID-19 and he/she will only be contacted by the local NHS Test and Trace team if they deem it necessary to do so.

If contact tracers do contact the individual, then they will look to determine;

1. where the individual has been recently
2. who the individual might have been in close physical contact with and for how long

Anybody that might need to self-isolate will be contacted by the Test and Trace team and advised accordingly. Therefore, if you, or your Organisation, have not been contacted by the NHS, then you and your colleagues do not need to self isolate nor do you need to take any further action; except to continue to follow existing risk control measures such as maintaining good hygiene, social distancing, etc.

Note. The time spent in close proximity to somebody who has the Covid-19 virus is considered an important factor in its transmission. Consequently, if you have reason to believe or suspect that a member of your team has potentially been exposed to an infected person for 15 minutes or longer, and in an enclosed space, then you might want to give consideration to asking them to work from home where they can self isolate for the required length of time. You should also consider doing the same for any other member of staff who lives in the same household as this person.

Q. *What should I do if a member of the team has or might have Covid-19?*

A. Ask them not to come into work. If they are already at work, then ask them to go home immediately.

Advise them to strictly follow the government guidelines on self-isolation and to arrange for a test if they start to display symptoms.

Keep a record of anybody the person might have been in close physical contact with, e.g. visitors, service users, colleagues, etc along with dates and times, if possible.

You do not need to take any further action at this stage (except to continue to follow existing risk control measures such as maintaining good hygiene, social distancing, etc.) unless you are contacted by NHS Test and Trace. They will advise you on anything that might need to be done.

This said you might want to think about how you might provide reassurance to the other members of the team to allay any concerns they have, e.g. provide an update on what's happening and perhaps arrange for additional cleaning in the area(s) the person was working.

Q. *What should I do if a visitor to our premises begins to feel unwell?*

A. If a person visiting the premises starts to feel unwell and has a temperature it does not necessarily mean they have coronavirus. However, it might be wise to err on the side of caution and to take the following precautions;

1. If necessary, administer first aid or seek medical help
2. Terminate (and rearrange) the appointment if it could last for more than 15 minutes from start to finish.
3. Advise the person to go directly home and follow government advice on self isolation.
4. If the person is unable to transport him/herself, then arrange for a member of their household or support bubble to collect them as soon as possible.
5. Where practical, ensure adequate ventilation of the room by opening a window and/or the door
6. When the person has left the premises, clean the surfaces they have physically been in contact with.
7. Dispose of waste material, i.e. cleaning cloths / wipes, disposable gloves, etc in accordance with government guidelines, e.g. double bag the materials in black bin bags and store in a safe and secure location for at least 72 hours before disposal via your normal waste stream – DO NOT place the bags and their contents in any recycling waste stream.

8. Keep a record of the person's visit for at least 21 days, noting the date, time, and duration of their visit, arrival and departure times and who it was they came to see or might have been in close physical contact with.
9. You do not need to take any further action at this stage (except to continue to follow existing risk control measures such as maintaining good hygiene, social distancing, etc.) unless you are contacted by NHS Test and Trace. They will advise you on anything that you might need to do.
10. You might want to think how you will provide reassurance to your staff members to allay any concerns they have, e.g. provide a brief on what happened, what action was taken and why.

Q. *What can I do to manage a potential Covid-19 outbreak?*

A. If you are informed or become aware of more than one confirmed case of Covid-19, with symptoms, dating within 14 days of each other, then you must report this to the local Public Health department for your area and seek their help and advice. This is important and will help to minimise any possible wider outbreak.

Your local Public Health department may ask you for your information such as;

1. your location (including postcode and local authority)
2. your contact details (name, phone number, email)
3. contact details of the people affected
4. when the individual or individuals became unwell
5. when they were last present in the organisation
6. the nature of the roles/job undertaken by anyone affected
7. known links between the individuals with COVID-19
8. number of people that the individual or individuals had close contact with
9. nature of the environment
10. details of control measures
11. whether you've contacted other agencies, such as the local authority or the Health and Safety Executive^(a)

Your local Public Health department will work with you to assess the risks and identify the most appropriate actions to take. You may be asked to:

1. introduce an enhanced hygiene, hand washing and cleaning regime
2. use personal protective equipment
3. increase staff and visitors' awareness and adherence to preventative measures
4. participate in enhanced testing and tracing

Depending on the outcome, your local Public Health department and local authority may establish an outbreak control team to help manage the situation.

(a) There is no requirement under The Reporting of Injuries, Diseases and Dangerous Occurrences Regulations 2013 (RIDDOR) to report incidents of disease or deaths of members of the public, patients, care home residents or service users from COVID-19.

The reporting requirements relating to cases of, or deaths from, COVID-19 under RIDDOR apply only to occupational exposure, that is, as a result of a person's work. Further details on this can be found on the HSE website at <https://www.hse.gov.uk/coronavirus/riddor/index.htm>

NOTE. *Official guidance on controlling the spread of the Coronavirus is constantly being updated so it is important that you keep yourself up-to-date with the latest information. This includes taking into account any restrictions imposed through local lockdown arrangements in your geographical area.*