

# Staff Update

November 2020



Welcome to Lockdown 2.0. I hope you are doing & feeling OK; I don't think that in August anyone really expected this to happen again. Lockdown 2.0 is going to look a little different though, more places are staying open and there are less restrictions about what you can and cannot do. We have a few updates, some reminders about procedure and some new items:

## Test & Trace

The test and trace system, which was not available in Lockdown 1.0, is having a huge impact on health and social care. All care settings, including hospitals, are losing large numbers of staff to isolation through contact tracing. One of the problems here is the Test & Trace App: the app does not recognise that a person has been in a working, COVID secure environment and protected by government-specified PPE, and so is generating alerts and isolation instructions where they may not be indicated.

**If you use the NHS contact tracing app, you must pause contact tracing while you are at work.**

If you do not know how to do this, please ask a colleague or supervisor.

If the NHS app is installed on your phone, contact tracing will automatically be enabled. Please do not leave an active mobile phone with contact tracing enabled unattended – in a coat or jacket, in a locker, desk or anywhere else. Your phone may detect another proximate phone and generate a false alert.

This does not take you outside the test & trace system; if you are identified as a contact you will still be contacted by telephone, and you will then be able to discuss your working COVID precautions, including the use of medical grade Fluid Resistant Surgical Masks (Type 2 FRSM). The trained contact tracer will then conduct a risk assessment based on your information and advise accordingly.

The full NHS guidance is here:

<https://faq.covid19.nhs.uk/article/KA-01100/en-us>

## PPE

### Face Masks

**The only face masks approved for company operations are company-issue Type 2 FRSM.** Other masks, including reusable cloth masks are not approved and must not be used. This applies to all operating environments, including offices, hospitals, care home(s) as well as community and residential settings.

A recent study commissioned by *Which?* showed that cloth masks allow transmission of up to 95% of particulate and airborne matter. Your Type 2 FRSM is medical grade and designed to filter microscopic particles, including Coronavirus.

### Visors

You should have, or have easy access to, a visor. Visors may be worn whenever you think appropriate, but please remember that visors *must* be worn where there is a risk of airborne fluid contamination: coughing, sneezing, vomiting or other 'aerosol generating' procedures.

Visors *do not replace* the need for a face mask. There is no scenario in which you would wear a visor and not a mask.

### PPE Supply

As always, a gentle reminder about stock and supply of PPE. Stocks are OK, but once again the Washington Post is reporting global supply disruption due to the 'second wave'. Please, use what you need, keep safe, and try to stay conservative and careful with supplies.



**REDUCE THE RISK**

Wash your hands || Keep your distance || Use PPE

# Staff Update

5 November 2020



## Fatigue and Complacency

Fatigue is not the same as being tired. Fatigue is usually brought about by long periods of work, concentration, stress or anxiety. It is not usually enough to 'get some sleep'; many of us already know the feeling of waking up tired – fatigued – in the morning.

The Coronavirus pandemic has brought with it not only the threat of illness, but the anxiety and outright fear that goes alongside it. People are worried about themselves, their friends, relatives, loved ones and colleagues. Keeping this level of worry – anxiety – alongside the additional pressures of the essential job that you do, is fatiguing. Being in the situation, as we have been, for some 9 months is both mentally draining and extremely fatiguing.

There are some things we can do to help; the principle ones center around our own health and wellbeing, and actively doing things to reduce stress and anxiety. You may have your own strategy, but some of these suggestions may help:

- Talk. Speak to friends, relatives, colleagues about what you are doing, why, and how you feel about it. People will understand.
- Try to reduce your own stress levels. People have many ways of doing this; mindfulness & meditation, reading, gentle exercise, sports can all help. Walk the dog, go fishing, cook a meal. Whatever floats your boat; try to make a little time for yourself.
- The only way to remove an actual stressor is to do something about it. If something has been on your mind, try if you can to talk about it, and maybe make a plan.
- Your physical health affects how you handle stress and fatigue. Keep active, even if that just means going for a walk or turning the assistance on your eBike down a notch. Try to keep hydrated; almost all of us do not drink enough water.
- Try to get enough *good quality* sleep. Switch your phone off.

Complacency is driven by many factors; familiarity, over-confidence (often linked with under-performance), routine, boredom. Complacency is also driven by fatigue; we are all tired of thinking about, worrying about, Coronavirus and what it brings with it. Masks drop, sanitizer bottles are empty, procedures are not followed. It is hard to remain vigilant for any extended period of time. Remaining vigilant for 9 months is almost impossible, and I challenge anyone to say "I get it right all the time, every time".

We are all subject to complacency, every single one of us. The first, and most important step in combatting it, is to recognise that it is a threat. Complacency is of course more likely to get us at the end of a long, tiring shift – but it can just as easily arrive on the morning of day 1. Try to remember who you are, what you are doing and why you are doing it. That trip back to the car for the forgotten mask or sanitiser bottle – it's worth it.

## In Closing

There are a limited number of ways to say *thank you*, but that doesn't mean it is any less valid. We are once again, thrust into a place where the world and his dog are at home, wrapped up, keeping safe. The shutters are down, and yet we – you – are out and about on mostly empty streets, giving absolutely essential care and support to those who need it most. To imagine what would happen without your consistent effort, hard work and commitment is almost unthinkable. I know many of the teams have been under huge pressure due to unavoidable absence, and once again you have managed to pull through for the people that you help. Once again, I do mean

Thank you.



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