**Covid-19 and the Workplace**

We want to ensure that all staff are safe and protected when in work. This policy is to explain the steps we will take to minimise the risk of infection and what you can do to assist in protecting yourself and others.

**Symptoms**

The main symptoms of Coronavirus (Covid-19) (Coronavirus Symptoms) are:

• a new, continuous cough

• a high temperature

• shortage of breath

These symptoms do not necessarily mean you have the illness. The Coronavirus Symptoms are similar to other illnesses that are much more common, such as cold and flu. Current guidance indicates that among those who become infected, some will exhibit no symptoms. Of those who do develop an illness, the majority will have a mild to moderate illness similar to seasonal flu. A minority will develop complications severe enough to require hospital care, most often pneumonia and in a small number of these the illness may be severe enough to lead to death.

**Preventative steps and hygiene**

We require all staff to follow these simple steps to help stop the spread of germs like Coronavirus.

**Do**:

• Cover your mouth and nose with a tissue or your sleeve (not your hands) when you cough or sneeze

• Put used tissues in the bin straight away

• Thoroughly wash your hands with soap and water for at least 20 seconds – only use hand sanitiser gel if soap and water are not available

• Always wash your hands when you get home or upon arrival into work

• Clean and disinfect frequently touched objects and surfaces

• Try to avoid close contact with people who are unwell

**Don’t**:

• Touch your eyes, nose or mouth if your hands are not clean

**What to do if you have Coronavirus symptoms**

**At work**

If you become ill at work, please speak to your manager as quickly as possible. Please try to avoid unnecessarily touching surfaces.

Please use the NHS 111 online or telephone service and follow the advice you receive. If you are advised to go home and self-isolate, please tell your manager and then make your way home as safely as possible immediately. If you travel on public transport, please follow any instructions given to you by the NHS staff.

**If you become ill at home**

Please do not come into work. You’ll need to telephone your manager to advise as usual. If you have internet access, please use the NHS 111 online service and follow the advice you receive. If you don’t have internet access, please call NHS 111. You need to tell us if you are advised to self-isolate, if you are being tested for coronavirus and the result of any test.

**What to do if you test positive for Coronavirus**

Please advise us immediately if you test positive for Coronavirus, even if your symptoms are mild. You will not be able to return to work until you are considered fit by Public Health England or any other competent authority. You don’t need to obtain a fit note from your doctor, but please send to us anything you do receive which confirms your diagnosis and/or fitness to return to work.

If you feel well enough to work, please let us know, as you may be able to work from home.

If a member of your household becomes unwell or tests positive for the virus and you are advised to isolate with them, again, you should let your manager know. Arrangements may be made for you to work from home.

**Workplace Closure**

If government advice is that you should work from home, we will endeavour to facilitate this as far as possible. It may be necessary for someone to attend the office to collect post etc. This will usually be the manager, however if you are required to attend the office, your manager will discuss this and travel arrangements etc. with you.

**Attending the Office**

You should only attend the office if you are feeling well, are not displaying any symptoms and have not been in close physical contact with others who have tested positive or displaying symptoms until they have been advised that they no longer need to isolate.

A face covering should be worn when moving around the building outside of our office. Desks in the office allow for at least a 2 meter space between all team members.

Whenever possible, a window in the room should be left open to allow for ventilation.

You should wash your hands or clean them using sanitiser gel before entering the room.

We have provided cleaning materials to ensure that your desk/workspace is cleaned regularly.

Ensure that the office bin is emptied daily, and rubbish removed to the main bin in the car park.

We will regularly review the situation as government/official advice changes and communicate changes to the policy or work practices as appropriate.

Further advice can be found on the NHS and government websites.