

Risk assessment

COVID-19: For therapists working face to face in private practice



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Introduction

Company name:	Sam Buckwell Counselling	Location:	East Sussex
Assessor name:	Sam Buckwell	Signature:	S. Buckwell
Date completed:	01/11/21	Date for review:	This assessment should be reviewed weekly, or sooner if Government guidance changes.
Scope of assessment:	This assessment covers all activities in relation to face to face therapy sessions, taking place inside and in a designated therapy room. It focuses on the required control measures to prevent the spread of Coronavirus (COVID-19).		
Hazard description:	Coronavirus disease (COVID-19) is an infectious disease caused by a newly discovered coronavirus. The COVID-19 virus spreads primarily through droplets of saliva or discharge from the nose when an infected person coughs or sneezes.		
Details of who may be affected:	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Therapists• Clients• Vulnerable groups – elderly, pregnant workers, those with existing underlying health conditions• Anyone else who comes into contact with you in relation to the activities stated below.		

Activity	Who might be harmed and how?	Required control measures	What further action do you need to consider to control the risks?	Who needs to carry out the action?	When is the action needed by?
Working in a home environment	Therapist/Client	If a face to face session is required, discuss with the client to confirm how the session will be carried out.	Confirm in writing with your clients	Therapist	Before Session 1
	Therapist/Client	No one else will be permitted in the dedicated room apart from the therapist and the client.	Ensure others using your premises are aware of risk control measures and know which spaces they must not enter	Therapist	Throughout room use
	Therapist/Client	Client to contact therapist on arrival and wait to be greeted and shown into the dedicated room	Confirm in writing with your clients	Therapist	Before session 1
	Therapist/Client	Anti-bacterial gel to be provided to client on arrival	Confirm in writing with your clients	Therapist	At start of sessions
	Therapist/Client	Client to provide own tissues and refreshments	Confirm in writing with your clients	Therapist/Client	Before session 1
	Therapist/Client	Social distancing to be adhered to at all times	Confirm in writing with your clients	Therapist/client	Before session 1
	Therapist/Client	If social distancing cannot be adhered to then risk mitigation should be in place	Consider whether face coverings should be worn at all times unless either or both party have a legitimate exemption	Therapist	During session
	Therapist/Client	Seating should be placed a minimum of 2 metres apart or at least 1 metre with risk mitigation and should not be directly in line	Layout of room to be within guidance	Therapist	Before sessions
	Therapist/Client	Therapists will wash their hands or sanitise regularly before, during and after each counselling session	Access to washing facilities	Therapist	Before, during and after each session
	Therapist/Client	Therapists to clean touch points or surfaces regularly after each session and at the end of the day	Therapist to open/close doors for clients to reduce the number of touch points. Consider whether extra/unnecessary touch points need to be removed (e.g. cushions, therapeutic objects etc)	Therapist	Before, during and after each session.
	Therapist/Client	Comfortable room temperature	Heating slightly higher than normal to compensate for any open windows	Therapist	Before, during and after each session.
	Therapist/Client	Room to be well ventilated during (if practical and confidentiality can be maintained) and between sessions	Ensure fresh air is ventilating the room. Check whether filters require replacing in any automated air circulation systems	Therapist	Before, during and after each session.
Therapist/Client	Surface Infection – Before the end of the session make sure the client has all belongings including tissues etc	Place bin in room	Therapist	Empty bin regularly.	
Therapist/Client	At the discretion of the therapist* Toilet facilities out of use	Confirm in writing with your clients	Therapist	Before session 1	

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Toilet facilities Homes	Therapist/Client	At the discretion of the therapist* Toilet facilities available	Use anti-bacterial wipes to clean down toilet door handles, taps, flush handle, toilet seat/lid and wash hands with soap and water. Display signage listing risk mitigation steps	Therapist	Before sessions
		Request a copy of the premises risk assessment and follow actions identified if possible.	Make any necessary amendments to risk assessment if required and inform clients		
Working in rented premises	N/A	Within the working room follow the same control measures as mentioned in the previous section. In addition contact other users of the premises to ensure they are adhering to the required COVID-19 risk mitigation protocols	Amend risk assessment to mitigate any transmission risks caused by other users of the premises	N/A	N/A
Vulnerable groups elderly, pregnant workers, those with existing underlying health conditions	Therapist/Client	Any client in one of the vulnerable groups should where possible not attend a face to face session.	Confirm this protocol in writing with your clients	Zoom can be offered if client wishes so or government guidance advises too.	Regular communication with client and information gathering.
Illness and suspected COVID-19 cases	Therapist/Client	If the therapist develops a high temperature or a persistent cough while at work, they should: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cancel/reschedule all appointments • Arrange a COVID test either through your nearest walk in centre or online by visiting gov.uk website • Appointments should not go ahead until a negative test result or you have completed the self-isolation period 	Confirm this protocol in writing with your clients	Therapist	Before sessions
	Therapist/Client	Clients should not attend an appointment where they have any COVID related symptoms, are feeling unwell or have been in contact with anyone who has tested positive.	Confirm this protocol in writing with your clients	Client	Before sessions

Confirmation

By signing this form, you confirm that this assessment is a true reflection of the hazards, that you understand the risks and that the health, safety and welfare arrangements specified in the assessment will be implemented.

Name:	Samantha Buckwell	Signature:	S.Buckwell	Date:	
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Useful links

- [HSE Risk assessment during COVID-19](#)
- [HSE guidance for ventilation](#)
- [HSE guidance for cleaning and hygiene in the workplace](#)
- [HSE guidance for social distancing in the workplace](#)
- [HSE \(HSG268\) The Health and Safety Toolbox – how to control risks at work](#)
- [HSE \(HSG65\) Managing for Health and Safety](#)
- [BACP COVID-19 Hub](#)

