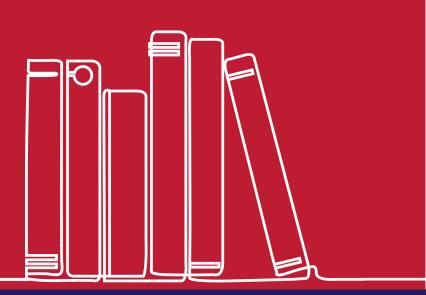


Return to Practice



Risk assessments on you and your staff

For further information:

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Return to Practice – Risk assessments on you and your staff

When you are returning to work after a period of closure i.e. following the Covid-19 pandemic, there are many areas of the business for you to take into account.

One the most important is to ensure that, if you are a practice owner, you have undertaken a risk assessment on all staff (including yourself) to be sure that they are ready and able to return to work.

Risk Assessments are relatively straightforward and to get the best out the process you need an honest discussion with your staff, and yourself, about each member of your team and what's best for them. Here are some ideas as to what to ask and how to react – but it's not an exhaustive list.

Remember you have a duty of care towards your staff's well-being

Are you, or any of your staff, in a category that should be shielded or cocooning?	If so then that should continue until the member of staff has completed the shielding or cocooning period as per their government letter or equivalent.
How do you and your staff feel about returning?	It's natural that you or your staff may be anxious about returning to work. Some people will think that the restrictions are being lifted too soon and would rather stay away. Forcing your staff to return in these circumstances



	T
	will not make for a good working environment.
	Consider giving them more time or let them return
	gradually – it may in any case take you time to build
	up the number of appointments you have.
Have you or any of your staff tested	More research is needed to be sure that if you have
positive for Covid-19?	had Covid-19 you therefore have immunity. But this
	should be considered as part of the return to work
	discussion.
	You should also consider that in severe cases
	members of your team may need additional time to
	recover or seek rehab and therefore you may wish
	them to obtain a GP fit note to confirm they are able
	to return to work.
Are you or a member of your team in a	As we know Covid-19 seems to affect people with
higher risk group?	underlying health conditions more severely. If you or
	a member of your team already have a condition
	that might make the symptoms worse a longer time
	away may be appropriate.
	There is also growing evidence that people from a
	Black or Ethnic Minority group may be more at risk
	from Covid-19. If you or your staff are concerned
	you may want them to change their duties to be less



	at risk. For example could they under take remote consultations for the practice. Remember that an employer has a legal responsibility not to put staff knowingly at risk and great care needs to be taken to avoid breaking health and safety legislation.
Do you or any of your staff have caring responsibilities?	During these uncertain times it may be harder for you or your staff to arrange care for family members who need it. Schools may not be fully open, support for disabled family members and older people may be unavailable. Have a discussion with your staff about their needs and be as flexible as possible to allow them to meet caring responsibilities.
	caring responsibilities.
Can you or staff continue to work at home?	Current government advice is that if you CAN work at home then you should continue to do so. Obviously being in a clinical environment makes home working more difficult but consider each member of staff individually. For example can receptionists do their duties remotely?



What about the journey to work?	You may be able to introduce suitable social
	distancing at work and provide full PPE. But what
	about the journey to work? What's the current
	advice about using Public Transport? Are you or your
	staff at risk using public transport?
	Current advice is to walk or cycle to work but this
	may not always be practical.
	may not always be practical.
	If travelling by car is the only option do you have the
	spaces available?
	You may wish to stagger working times to avoid busy
	times or find other locations for staff to work in. In
	some circumstances this may make it impossible for
	your staff to return until the risk reduces further.
What about if you or your staff return to	Current government guidelines insist that the
work but then show symptoms or a	individual must return to self-isolation. You might
member of their household does?	want to then consider who they have been in
	contact with and deep clean the practice.
What about when your staff take breaks?	Like with the question of public transport do
Time about triest your start take breaks:	consider if you and your staff have a safe rest area.
	Remember people will want to eat and drink and
	The manual people will want to cut and armit and



remove PPE during their breaks – is there a suitable
place they can go and feel safe – ask them how they
feel about the space.