



Coronavirus Policy

COVID-19

COVID-19 is a new strain of the coronavirus. As with all respiratory viruses (such as flu) it is spread through small droplets (or secretions) that we can pass to each other via coughs and sneezes. There is no evidence to suggest that this virus is airborne and therefore cannot be transmitted through ventilation systems.

Another way it can spread is through material objects such as desks and chairs or handrails where a droplet may have fallen and we then touch the object with our hands and then touch our faces. Although viruses can survive on inanimate surfaces for up to 24 hours there has so far been very little evidence of COVID-19 being contracted this way.

It is much more likely to be passed by person to person exposure with a *confirmed* infected person that has coughed within 2 metres of you or whom you have had prolonged conversations with (over 15mins) in a small space.

Definitions:

In the event of concerns with COVID-19 within our community, staff and students will be identified into two separate Groups, 1 and 2:

- 1) Those who are suspected cases
- 2) Those who are confirmed cases

Suspected cases: This will be anyone that has been identified by Public Health England (PHE) as having direct *contact* with a confirmed case or has travelled to Category 1 or Category 2 zones. These groups of students will require **isolation** in their rooms for up to 14 days and will be directed by advice initially from NHS 111 then PHE.

Confirmed cases: Those confirmed will be as above but have on the advice of PHE had viral swab testing which has been laboratory tested and confirmed as a positive result for COVID-19. These students will be **quarantined** to their rooms for up to 14 days and again will be dependant on advice from PHE.

There are currently no special measures needed for anyone who has had contact with someone in isolation as a suspected case.

Anyone not fitting the criteria for suspected cases but for whom concerns are raised should be directed to the College Nurse for advice or in their absence to NHS 111.

Students in Isolation and Quarantine

Both groups of students, either Group 1 or 2 will need to remain in their rooms until advised to do otherwise.

- This means they **must not** leave their rooms to use common areas in boarding, **must not** visit friends' rooms and **must not** have visitors to their own rooms.
- Students in twin rooms should be separated so that the suspected or confirmed case will be on their own.
- Each individual should have access to their own bathroom and toilet.

Staffing and approach

- Staff should allocate x1 personnel per shift to be responsible for suspected or confirmed cases. This does not mean a 1-1 but that we are restricting the staff exposure to potential virus by keeping continuity with access to infectious areas.
- Staff should take a "cluster care" approach with each student. This means that the allocated personnel will restrict their visits to the rooms to essential visits only. For example, breakfast will be delivered in the morning, condition checked, observations checked, medications given **ALL** within the **SAME** visit.
- Each visit should take no longer than 15 minutes and ideally no more than 3 visits should be necessary per day (split time to breakfast, lunch and dinner).
- Staff can keep in touch with students for general wellbeing support via video calls.
- Following each visit, please ensure to update REACH with assessment, interventions and/or medication information.

Personal Protective Equipment (PPE)

Any staff entering the rooms of isolated or quarantined rooms should wear the appropriate PPE – current guidance for **suspected** cases are: **surgical mask, gloves and plastic apron**.

For students with **confirmed** cases staff should wear a higher-level protection mask called FFP3 and a gown – these will be available to staff and are single use only.

PPE should be put on *outside* the student's room and should be taken off *inside* the room.

Please ensure you are bare below the elbows – no long sleeves, jewellery or watches when wearing PPE.

Disposal of PPE

When leaving the rooms of students in both groups, any PPE worn must be removed correctly and disposed of appropriately to ensure risk of contamination is minimal.

Suspected cases: all PPE must be placed in double bin bags in the student's bathroom and left in the student's room – if they later become confirmed cases PHE will collect all waste. Once PPE is off – wash your hands as per the policy in the student's bathroom. Please then use hand gel as soon as you have left the room.

Confirmed cases: all PPE must be removed appropriately and placed in allocated yellow bins provided. PHE will collect waste. Once PPE is off – wash your hands as per the policy in the student's bathroom. Please then use hand gel as soon as you have left the room.

Donning PPE (putting it on) in this order

- 1) Wash hands
- 2) Gown/apron on – tie at the back
- 3) Mask on – cross tie at the back – pull over nose and down past chin
- 4) Gloves on – if wearing gown ensure gloves are over the cuff

Doffing PPE (taking it off) in this order

- 1) Gown/apron off – minimal touch
- 2) Mask off in one motion – tip head forward as removing
- 3) Gloves off – avoid touching your skin
- 4) Place in allocated waste bins
- 5) Wash hands

Please be aware that guidance for infection prevention and control is continually changing as we learn more about this strain of virus so please ask if you are unsure.

Guidance accurate at the time of writing.

Gina Penfold
College Nurse
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