

Time Line on advice CSP gave to members March 24th 2020-July 2nd 2020

Pre Lockdown 20.3.20

Should I close my practice if a patient is found to have COVID-19?

Practices can remain open unless advised to close by your local Health Protection Team (HPT).

It is not necessary to close the business or workplace or send any staff home, unless government policy changes.

Given the advice on social distancing, group based therapy is now unlikely to be appropriate. Consider alternative methods of delivery.

23.3.20 - LOCKDOWN

24.3.20

Face to Face or not?

During the COVID-19 emergency the physiotherapy workforce, regardless of sector or setting should be compliant with UK government advice and follow NHS guidance for healthcare professionals. What follows is based on guidance from NHS England. In the absence of specific guidance from the other UK countries, it should be used widely.

Patients should only be offered face-to-face consultations if:

- They are in hospital and require physiotherapy.
- You have a high suspicion of risk of serious deterioration from underlying pathology and you are unable to determine this remotely.
- They have urgent rehabilitation needs, which if not met, will require care from General Practice, secondary care or social care agencies. This is particularly important if they are themselves a carer for someone who is vulnerable .
- They require rehabilitation to support their rapid discharge from secondary care.

All other physiotherapy consultations, at this time (and until further notice) should be remote.

26.3.20

Face to Face or not? Updated

On 25 March, Government issued an update to its list of businesses that should close. Physiotherapy clinics were included explicitly as an exception to this list.

This does not change our advice about the provision of face-to-face consultations, which is as follows.

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17.4.20

Face to Face or not? updated

As a result of the Government's ongoing directives on social distancing; Government guidance on how health and care services should be prioritising their efforts and managing their services at this time and despite the exception of physiotherapy businesses named amongst those exempt from closure, the CSP advice on face to face consultations has not changed.

11.5.20

Many CSP members would like clarity about when and how to restart non-essential care whether in the NHS or elsewhere. Unfortunately, the Prime Minister's announcement on 10 May was not clear about what will be allowed and when.

The CSP is seeking greater clarity and will update our advice online as we get more information. The governments in Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland have signalled that they will not follow the English approach. The Isle of Man, Guernsey and Jersey also have their own approaches. It is therefore important members review the advice specifically for their country or Crown dependency.

The attached flow chart shows how we advised members to follow all national guidance and only see urgent patients in very specific circumstances.

Easing of lockdown 23rd June 2020

Following the Prime Minister's speech on the 23rd June and the plan to further ease lockdown measures, the CSP reviewed new government guidance and considered this in relation to our guidance to private practitioners. There was no new specific guidance for the health and care sectors, other than the reducing of the 2m social distancing rule to 1+m.

2nd July 2020

We published the following guidance on our website on July 2nd signalling a move from to a virtual triage approach as restrictions eased. We also **updated our flow chart** on the website in accordance.

Coronavirus still exists within the community and as such is a risk to public health. Physiotherapists are bound by their responsibility as an HCPC registered professional to reduce the risk of spread of the disease when delivering physiotherapy services. Government guidance in each country, and crown dependency, needs to be known and adhered to: each area has a slightly different coronavirus risk status, and slightly different set of regulations around social distancing. Every member must follow the guidance within their own country. Secondly every physiotherapist who is employed must follow the policies and procedures of their employer whichever sector they work in. CSP advice is based on legal regulations and regulatory guidance and standards.

It has been a challenging few months for all of healthcare, the NHS and private and independent sectors. Wherever you practice, out of a hospital or clinic, in care homes or the patient's own home and in whatever speciality, MSK, neuro, respiratory, with older people or children, the challenges have been immense.

Across the UK, you should be confident to open up your services and practices, and to see patients

face to face subject to your countries or areas lock-down restrictions and following the relevant safety and government guidance. As an HCPC registrant you do need to do all you can to minimise risk to yourself and colleagues.

Virtual triage is still advised in order to risk assess as part of infection prevention control measures and to determine clinical need for each individual patient prior to a first session.

Continue to consider and offer virtual treatment as your first option where possible.

Services users should expect you to be open about your approach to infection control and, may ask you to explain how you are following relevant guidance.