

SUMMARY - Infection risk assessment and mitigation policy

This document provides a summary of the heightened infection control measures that I have put into place to ensure the safety of everyone who visits my clinic during the COVID-19 pandemic. My full risk assessment and mitigation policy is available by email on request.

The risk assessment of my practice has been undertaken in with reference to the Institute of Osteopathy's guidance documents, 'Infection control and PPE' and 'Adapting practice guide'.

I have assessed my practice for the risks outlined and put in additional processes as detailed below

Assessment date and review criteria

- This assessment was done on 25th May 2020
- It will be reviewed on an ongoing basis weekly during June 2020 and monthly thereafter
- To be reviewed in the light of any changed guidance from GOsC, iO or PHE.
- To be reviewed if any unanticipated risks arise.

Cleaning and waste disposal

A heightened cleaning, aeration and waste disposal routine based on advice from the Institute of Osteopathy will take place. This includes disinfecting and sanitising all areas of the clinic and everything which could be touched before every patient visit, aerating the clinic before and during all treatments and safely disposing of all waste.

Personal Protective Equipment (PPE)

I will be following NHS guidelines for the use of PPE and hand hygiene. For hands-on treatment appropriate PPE will be worn and masks will be provided for clients. Hand hygiene recommendations will be followed at all times.

Streamlining the clinic environment and staff protocols to increase protection of all users

In preparation for re-opening the clinic, the following measures have been undertaken:

The clinic room, reception, corridors and toilet have been decluttered and streamlined for ease of cleaning. A separate risk assessment has been produced for Zest Physical Therapies covering reception staff and other practitioners which I have agreed to adhere to. Decisions made about overall structural and staff routines of Zest Physical Therapies are not in my hands but agreement has been made to ensure there are no contradictions between Zest policy and my own.

Measures for my own patients and clinic routines over and above the Zest policies are detailed in my full Risk Assessment and Mitigation Policy available on request.

New clinic database software

I am now using clinic database software which facilitates physical distancing and communication.

- It provides a platform for online consultations
- It enables the delivery of information about the new safeguarding systems instituted in the clinic
- It delivers as standard the pre-appointment COVID-19 Screening Questionnaire to patients prior to any in-person appointments
- It facilitates on-line payments and reduces the risks from using cash and cheques.

New physical distancing measures

I have reduced capacity to support physical distancing measures and to ensure that there will be sufficient time between patient appointments to follow the new cleaning regime.

- There will be a 30 minute break between patient appointments
- Patients will be encouraged to arrive promptly and maintain a 2 metre distance from other clinic users
- I will offer online/telephone consultations as standard alternatives to in-person appointments.

Special training

I have undertaken training in the following

- Donning and Doffing of PPE produced by Public Health England.
- World Health Organisation (WHO) the six step technique for sanitising your hands.
- Public Health England 'Tier 2 Test and Trace' training.

New online and telephone availability

I am providing the following

- Online and telephone consultations for any patient who would prefer them, and/or for if they would be at risk by attending in person.
- All patients due to attend the clinic will have a telephone pre-screening call prior to their appointment and will also receive an automatic COVID-19 triage questionnaire.
- Follow-up appointments available via telephone/video call if requested.

Reviews and Changes

1st June 20	Reviewed - no changes
8th June 20	Reviewed - no changes
15th June 20	Reviewed - no changes
22nd June 20	Reviewed - no changes
29th June 20	Reviewed - no changes
31st July 20	Reviewed - no changes
31st August 20	Reviewed - 30 minute gap between apptmts reduced to 15
30th Sept 20	Reviewed - no changes
31st Oct 20	Reviewed - 2nd lockdown. No changes to protocol.
30th Nov 20	Reviewed - no changes
31st Dec 20	Reviewed - no changes
31st Jan 21	Reviewed - no changes
28th Feb 21	Reviewed - no changes
31st March 21	Reviewed - no changes
30th April 21	Reviewed - no changes
31 st May 21	Reviewed - no changes
30 th June 21	Reviewed - no changes

19th July 21

Reviewed in the light of major changes to lockdown rules in England by the UK Govt.

PHE, GOsC and iO all advise to keep current infection controls in place in medical and care settings.

There will be no changes to my infection risk and mitigation policy except for the following

Clients' use of facemasks

The following is advice from the Institute of Osteopathy.

"In line with the public health bodies of England and the home nations and Government recommendations, it is still recommended that patients are encouraged to wear a face-covering when receiving osteopathic care, unless exempt.

You may wish to apply a policy that states that if a patient is unable to wear a face covering, they may not be able to receive hands-on treatment due to the close contact required and therefore risk of transmission.

If you choose to put such a policy in place, you should make every effort to support the patient to find appropriate, alternative care. This could be by offering a telephone/virtual consultation, a recommendation to an alternative practitioner or clinic who can provide treatment or refer them to their GP for access to NHS services.

Naturally, any such policy must be proactively communicated to all your current and prospective patients before any appointments are booked, and clearly published on your website and any other relevant clinic information materials.”

I will continue to request all clients to use Type IIR Fluid Resistant Surgical Mask which I will provide when in the clinic. This will be clearly stated on the home page of my website and will also be clear in my telephone triage script for new clients. The email check 24 hours before each appointment will also be adapted to request the clients' agreement to use a facemask. In all cases where a person is unable or unwilling to use one, I will offer an alternative telephone/virtual consultation, a recommendation to another practitioner and/or referral to GP for access to NHS services. This will be done by telephone in the first instance with a written record kept of the outcome.

Use of Facemasks in Clinic Reception

I do not own or control the clinic where I work and do not directly employ the receptionists. Up to the present time the Risk Assessment and Mitigation Policy for Zest Physical Therapies has been in line with my own. From July 19th 2021 the Zest policy will be relaxed to allow personal choice on mask wearing in public areas of the clinic by both reception staff and clients of other practitioners. I have discussed this with the clinic owner and have been unable to persuade her to change this decision.

In order to protect myself and my clients from possible aerosol borne infection when passing through the Zest Reception area and using toilet facilities I will,

- Minimise my own time in reception
- Bring clients into the treatment room immediately on their arrival
- At the end of their appointment offer all administration, payment and future booking to be done with me in the clinic room should they so wish and clearly explain the risks of not doing so.

Aeration and cleaning time of Clinic Room

Institute of Osteopathy advice was updated on 19th May 2020 to state that aeration time between clients could be cut,

“It is no longer considered necessary for osteopaths to maintain a fallow period for aeration after each patient.”

Cleaning the clinic room is still required. I am able to do this easily within 10 minutes and therefore the 15 minute aeration and cleaning time will be reduced to 10 minutes.

31 July 2021

Reviewed - no changes

31 August 2021	Reviewed - no changes
30 September 2021	Reviewed - no changes
31 October 2021	Reviewed - no changes

24th November 2021

Update to PPE guidance

The UK Health Security Agency has now issued updated infection control measures for the prevention and control of seasonal respiratory infection in healthcare sessions for Winter 2021/22. The new guidance reiterates the importance of maintaining the current standard infection control procedures, such as distancing where possible, hand washing, ventilation, pre-assessment COVID checks, as we move into the winter months. Masks are still considered essential PPE for healthcare practitioners and encouraged for use by patients.

I will therefore be keeping all the measures above in place. The guidance states that gloves and aprons will no longer be necessary except in cases where there is a possible transfer of blood or bodily fluids or contact with a confirmed case of SARS-CoV-2.