**COVID-19 Guidance for First Aid**

This guidance has been issued to First Aid responders to reduce the risk of exposure to Coronavirus during this time of pandemic. It is based on guidance from Public Health England and recognises that as a first responder, a First Aider may come into contact with people of unknown medical history/symptoms and therefore there is a possible risk of cross infection when administering First Aid, including that of coronavirus, unless precautions are taken.

It does not replace the requirement for First Aiders to conduct a dynamic risk assessment of any given First Aid situation that may arise, in accordance with standard First Aid training.

**If you feel that you have any concerns or issues after consulting this guidance to continue the role as First Aider, advice should be sought from the Safety, Health and Environment Department.**

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| **Coronavirus and route of transmission** | |
| The most common symptoms are:   * Recent onset of a new/continuous cough and/or. * High temperature. * Shortness of breath. * A loss of, or change in, normal sense of taste or smell   Other symptoms are less common e.g. headache, flu-like symptoms, sore throat but may still arise.  Transmission is through respiratory droplets via two routes:   * Direct transfer of droplets via inhalation, to mouth, nose or eyes. * Touching a surface, person or object that is contaminated and then transferring the secretions to own mouth, nose or eyes e.g. when touching your face. | |
| **General precautions** | |
| Precautionary measures require everyone to avoid getting infected via these transmission routes through hand washing, not touching your face and social distancing.  First Aiders should identify at-risk situations and in any non-emergency situation the potential for symptoms should be assessed prior to giving/administering First Aid and where possible, should be given while maintaining a distance of >2m.  Where distancing of >2m is not possible, Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) must be worn. | |
| **PPE** | |
| PPE should be kept close to the point of access/use, ideally in a grab bag with a copy of this guidance. It is for single use only and must be changed after each First Aid intervention and not used between casualties.  PPE should be put on and taken off (‘donned’ and ‘doffed’) in the correct order – see below.  Based on the requirement that distancing of >2m cannot be maintained whilst providing First Aid, the following PPE must be worn as a minimum:   * Disposable gloves * Face mask – Fluid Resistant Surgical Mask (FRSM – type IIR) * Disposable plastic apron * Eye protection * Clinical waste bag   Provision of alcohol hand rub and masks for patients are also advised. | |
| **Putting on and Taking off PPE** | |
| Put on PPE when administering First Aid and breaking the >2m rule.  It is important to keep your own hands away from your face when putting on and taking off PPE, to avoid self-contamination during the process. | |
| **Putting on**   * Wash or sanitise own hands * Put on PPE in the following order   + Apron or coverall   + Mask   + Eye protection   + Gloves | **Taking off**   * Take off PPE in the following order   + Gloves   + Apron or coverall   + Eye protection   + Mask   + Place all items in clinical waste bag   + Wash or sanitise hands |
| **Resuscitation** | |
| Call for help and defibrillator immediately. Contact Emergency Services  Do not place your face close to the casualty to check for breathing.  Do not give mouth to mouth.  Place a mask over the casualty’s mouth/nose, if one is available or possibly use any fabric as a covering over their nose and mouth.  Start chest compressions and continue until emergency services arrive.  The defibrillator can be deployed without increased risk of infection. | |
| **Individuals with presenting symptoms of coronavirus** | |
| If someone shows signs of coronavirus, keep person 2 meters away unless wearing PPE.  Provide them with a mask and keep others away.  Their Line Manager/Tutor should make arrangements for them to go home and keep them isolated in the agreed isolation area until they leave site.  If the casualty is significantly unwell e.g. short of breath, contact the emergency services and advise them of the potential of coronavirus situation.  Contact E&FM 5555 to have the person’s work area and/or the isolation area cleaned/ disinfected. | |