



**Domiciliary Care Coronavirus Policy and Procedure
March 2020**

Review Sheet

Last Reviewed 13 Mar '20	Last Amended 13 Mar '20	Next Planned Review in 12 months, or sooner as required.
Business impact	<div style="display: flex; align-items: center;"> <div> <p>Immediate action these changes are business critical and to be delivered as a matter of urgency.</p> <p style="color: red; font-weight: bold; margin-top: 5px;">CRITICAL IMPACT</p> </div> </div>	
Reason for this review	New Policy	
Were changes made?	Yes	
Summary:	<p>This policy has been updated for Domiciliary Care. The policy references the updated guidance and advice from the NHS, Public Health England and the Department of Health and Social Care. Additional content on home working has been included. References have been updated and additional reference links included. This policy will be under review and will be changing frequently. Please refer to QCS the most up to date version. This policy has been made publicly available</p>	
Relevant legislation:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Health Protection (Coronavirus) Regulations 2020 Civil Contingencies Act 2004 Control of Substances Hazardous to Health Regulations 2002 Equality Act 2010 Health and Social Care Act 2008 (Registration and Regulated Activities) (Amendment) Regulations 2015 Health and Safety at Work etc. Act 1974 	

Underpinning knowledge
- What have we used to ensure that the policy is current:

- Author: UNICEF, WHO et al, (2020), *Social Stigma associated with COVID-19*. [Online] Available from: https://www.epi-win.com/sites/epiwin/files/content/attachments/2020-02-24/COVID19%20Stigma%20Guide%2024022020_1.pdf [Accessed: 11/3/2020]
- Author: Department of health and Social Care, (2020), *Number of coronavirus (COVID-19) cases and risk in the UK*. [Online] Available from: <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/wuhan-novel-coronavirus-information-for-the-public> [Accessed: 11/3/2020]
- Author: Public Health England, (2020), *COVID-19: infection prevention and control*. [Online] Available from: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/wuhan-novel-coronavirus-infection-prevention-and-control> [Accessed: 11/3/2020]
- Author: Public Health England, (2020), *COVID-19: guidance to assist professionals in advising the general public*. [Online] Available from: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/novel-coronavirus-2019-ncov-guidance-to-assist-professionals-in-advising-the-general-public> [Accessed: 11/3/2020]
- Author: Public Health England, (2020), *COVID-19: background information*. [Online] Available from: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/wuhan-novel-coronavirus-background-information> [Accessed: 11/3/2020]
- Author: World Health Organisation, (2020), *Coronavirus disease (COVID-19) advice for the public*. [Online] Available from: <https://www.who.int/emergencies/diseases/novel-coronavirus-2019/advice-for-public> [Accessed: 11/3/2020]
- Author: Public Health England, (2020), *Guidance for social or community care and residential settings on COVID-19*. [Online] Available from: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/guidance-for-social-or-community-care-and-residential-settings-on-covid-19/guidance-for-social-or-community-care-and-residential-settings-on-covid-19> [Accessed: 11/3/2020]
- Author: ACAS, (2014), *Homeworking a guide for employers and employees*. [Online] Available from: <https://archive.acas.org.uk/media/3905/Homeworking---a-guide-for-employers-and-employees/pdf/Homeworking-a-guide-for-employers-and-employees.pdf> [Accessed: 11/3/2020]
- Author: Department of Health and Social Care, (2020), *Guidance for social or community care and residential settings on COVID-19*. [Online] Available from: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/guidance-for-social-or-community-care-and-residential-settings-on-covid-19/guidance-for-social-or-community-care-and-residential-settings-on-covid-19> [Accessed: 11/3/2020]
- Author: Public Health England, (2020), *Coronavirus (COVID-19): number of cases in England*. [Online] Available from: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/coronavirus-covid-19-number-of-cases-in-england/coronavirus-covid-19-number-of-cases-in-england> [Accessed: 11/3/2020]
- Author: Public Health England, (2020) <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/covid-19-residential-care-supported-living-and-home-care-guidance> {Accessed 13/3/2020}
- Author: LGA and ADASS (2020) <https://local.gov.uk/social-care-provider-resilience-during-covid-19-guidance-commissioners>

Suggested action:

- Encourage sharing the policy using the QCS App
- Establish process to check and confirm staff understanding of the policy
- Include discussion in staff handovers
- Ensure policy is on the agenda for all supervisions
- Hold specific meetings to discuss impact
- Display changes and impact in relevant places e.g. office, staff room, reception areas, kitchens etc.
- Ensure relevant staff are empowered to develop specific and individualised processes to share policy changes
- Share information quickly and widely
- Ensure all staff know about the policy changes



1. Purpose

1.1 To ensure that the organisation remains up to date and is able to respond in the event of a member of staff, Service User or contact, contracting the virus (SARS coronavirus-2 (SARS-CoV-2)) which results in the disease COVID-19

1.2 To support QCS Client Ltd in meeting the following Key Lines of Enquiry:

Key Question	Key Lines of Enquiry
SAFE	S2: How are risks to people assessed and their safety monitored and managed, so they are supported to stay safe and their freedom is respected?
SAFE	S3: How does the service make sure that there are sufficient numbers of suitable staff to support people to stay safe and meet their needs?
SAFE	S5: How well are people protected by the prevention and control of infection?
WELL-LED	W5: How does the service work in partnership with other agencies?

1.3 To meet the legal requirements of the regulated activities that the organisation is r registered to provide:

- The Health Protection (Coronavirus) Regulations 2020
- Civil Contingencies Act 2004
- Control of Substances Hazardous to Health Regulations 2002
- Equality Act 2010
- Health and Social Care Act 2008 (Registration and Regulated Activities) (Amendment) Regulations 2015
- Health and Safety at Work etc. Act 1974



2. Scope

2.1 The following roles may be affected by this policy:

- All staff
- Senior Management

2.2 The following Service Users may be affected by this policy:

- Service Users

2.3 The following stakeholders may be affected by this policy:

- Family
- Commissioners
- External health professionals
- Local Authority
- NHS



3. Objectives

3.1 To ensure that safe, effective procedures are in place with staff and Service Users having information in an accessible format.

3.2 As the spread of the virus is resulting in response requirements changing daily, the organisation will ensure that it stays up to date with reliable sources of information and has the flexibility to respond when required.



4. Policy

4.1 We recognise that the outbreak of a new strain of Coronavirus SARS coronavirus 2 (SARS-CoV-2) which results in the disease COVID-19 is a fast-moving situation. The WHO has stated that it is now characterised as a pandemic. As care providers, ensuring robust infection control and business continuity plans form part of preparing business at for any events that can cause disruption to the normal business.

4.2 We will ensure that staff are aware and understand the importance of pandemic preparedness and will carry out preparations by following the checklist in the Pandemic Policy and Procedure We understand that business continuity planning involves all aspects of the business and to be effective we must work with our partners, suppliers and commissioners to ensure that a safe and effective service can be maintained.

4.3 We understand that we have a responsibility for ensuring that staff follow good infection control and prevention techniques and that we support Service Users with this too. As a business we will ensure that staff have access to reliable information to reduce anxiety and dispel any myths and inaccurate information that may cause worry or distress to staff, Service Users or the wider public.



5. Procedure

5.1 Pandemic Policy

QCS Client Ltd recognises that the WHO has declared COVID-19 can be characterised as a Pandemic on 11 March 2020. We will ensure that we review the Pandemic Policy and Procedure and will complete the checklist to ensure that the business is prepared and that robust business continuity plans are in place.

5.2 Reducing the Risk of Contracting or Spreading the Virus

We will ensure that staff follow the WHO and NHS advice to reduce the risk of contracting the virus and the risk of spreading it. The following procedures must be followed.

- if you have symptoms of coronavirus infection (COVID-19), however mild, do not leave your home for 7 days from when your symptoms started. (See ending isolation section below for more information)
- this action will help protect others in your community while you are infectious
- plan ahead and ask others for help to ensure that you can successfully stay at home
- ask your employer, friends and family to help you get the things you need to stay at home
- stay at least 2 metres (about 3 steps) away from other people in your home if possible
- sleep alone, if possible
- wash your hands regularly for 20 seconds, each time using soap and water, or use hand sanitiser
- stay away from vulnerable individuals, such as the elderly and those with underlying health conditions, as much as possible
- you do not need to call NHS 111 to go into self-isolation. If your symptoms worsen during home isolation or are no better after 7 days, contact NHS 111 online. If you have no internet access, call NHS 111. For a medical emergency dial 999

5.3 Handwashing

Staff should wash their hands:

- Before leaving home
- On arrival at work
- After using the toilet
- After touching pets
- After breaks and sporting activities
- Before food preparation
- After using public transport
- Before eating any food, including snacks
- Before leaving work
- On arrival at home
- Before leaving work
- On arrival at home

5.4 Confidentiality

Staff will follow confidentiality and GDPR policies and procedures to ensure that the details of staff involved in caring for Service Users with suspected or confirmed COVID-19 is kept confidential. Staff must also respect each other's confidentiality and take care not to inadvertently share information when using social media.

Where staff are suspected or confirmed to have contracted COVID-19, their personal details should be treated as confidential, as they would be for any other Service User.

5.5 Safe Staffing

In the event of an outbreak of COVID-19, where staff are moved from other areas to support work on COVID-19, assessments should be made on the ability to continue to deliver safe and effective care in the services affected. Steps should be taken to mitigate any risks resulting from staff moving to other areas. We will as part of pandemic preparedness assess whether any staff need additional training, support or require a DBS check. We will use any safe staffing calculating tools to assess the level of need within the business.

5.6 Reducing the Risk of Stigmatization

Stigma occurs when people negatively associate an infectious disease, such as COVID-19, with a specific population. In the case of COVID-19, there are an increasing number of reports of public stigmatization against people from areas affected by the epidemic, this means that people are being labelled, stereotyped, separated, and/or experience loss of status and discrimination because of a potential negative affiliation with the disease. We will ensure that staff understand the importance of preventing and addressing [social stigma](#) by making sure facts are available to staff and Service Users

5.7 Identifying Possible Cases of the Virus

Whether an individual has travelled to a high-risk area is no longer an indicator of whether a person is at risk of coronavirus. If a person has the following symptoms

- A temperature of 37.8degrees
- A new cough

Then they must stay at home and self-isolate for 7 days from the onset of the symptoms. Unless the individual feels very unwell, they do not need to contact 111.

5.8 Actions if a Service User Meets the Criteria and Displays Symptoms

If a Service User complains of symptoms and has either travelled from an infected area or has been in contact with others, staff must make sure;

- The Service User is safe and withdraw from the room
- They immediately wash their hands and avoid touching the face, nose, mouth or eyes
- They contact 111 for advice or 999 if an emergency (if they are seriously ill or injured or their life is at risk)
- They contact the Registered Manager as soon as possible and advise of the situation. This must be a high priority
- They do not attend any other Service Users, visit their GP or travel in the community until advice is sought
- Whilst they wait for advice from NHS 111 or an ambulance to arrive, staff should remain at least 2 metres from other people. They should avoid touching people, surfaces and objects and be advised to cover their mouth and nose with a disposable tissue when they cough or sneeze and put the tissue in a bag then throw the tissue in the bin. If they do not have any tissues available, they should cough and sneeze into the crook of their elbow
- If they need to go to the bathroom whilst waiting for medical assistance, they should use a separate bathroom if available. This will apply only to the period of time while waiting for transport to hospital

5.9 Action if a Member of Staff Reports Symptoms

- We will contact the Local Authority and the [local health protection team](#) for advice. Public Health England will provide advice to the person infected and will carry out all contact tracing
- Advice will be given to the member of staff if they need to self-isolate and what action will need to take place for any Service Users that they may have had contact with
- If a member of staff reports that there are concerns about their children, close family, friends who they have had close contact with, the local health protection team must be contacted for advice
- We will ensure that confidentiality is maintained and that records are held in line with Data Protection Act requirements
- In the event of someone who is symptomatic, closure of the office, workplace or residential setting is not recommended. We will contact Public Health England (PHE) local [Health Protection Team](#) to discuss the case, identify people who have been in contact with them and advise on actions that should be taken
- Staff must follow the Sickness Absence Policy and Procedure and ensure that the government guidance is followed which states that if an employee or worker needs to self-isolate, they should receive any Statutory Sick Pay (SSP) due to them. We will ensure that staff are made aware of the requirements for 'fit notes' if staff are required to self-isolate for 7 days.

5.10 Cleaning the Office and Workplace Where There are Confirmed Cases of COVID-19

The local Health Protection Team will provide advice on cleaning. Coronavirus symptoms are similar to a flu-like illness and include cough, fever, or shortness of breath. Once symptomatic, all surfaces that the person has come into contact with must be cleaned including:

- All surfaces and objects which are visibly contaminated with body fluids
- All potentially contaminated high-contact areas such as toilets, door handles, telephones
- Clothing and linen used by the person should be set aside pending assessment of the person by a healthcare professional

Public areas where a symptomatic individual has passed through and spent minimal time in (such as corridors) but which are not visibly contaminated with body fluids do not need to be specially cleaned and disinfected.

5.11 Rubbish Disposal Including Tissues

- All waste that has been in contact with the individual, including used tissues, continence pads and other items soiled with bodily fluids, should be put in a plastic rubbish bag and tied. The plastic bag should then be placed in a second bin bag and tied. This must be left in a safe place for 72 hours when it can be disposed in the normal waste system.

5.12 Raising Concerns

We have effective procedures in place to allow staff to raise any concerns in relation to equipment, policies and processes for managing COVID-19 at the earliest opportunity. All staff must be aware of the Whistleblowing Policy and Procedure and be able to raise concerns without any fear and receive timely feedback on their concerns.

5.13 Working from Home

Where staff are able to work from home, and we have agreed to the arrangement we have the following expectations;

- Staff can work independently and on their own initiative
- Staff are able to motivate themselves
- Complete agreed work within set deadlines
- Staff can manage their workload effectively
- Staff can cope well under any new pressure posed by working at home
- Staff will adopt healthy work from home practices which includes compliance with Health and Safety
- Staff will maintain contact with the business and colleagues with whom they would usually interact with
- Confidentiality will be maintained in line with the Data Protection Act
- Any concerns will be raised immediately with the Registered Manager
- Meeting with Service Users or external organisations will not take place with the employees at home unless teleconferencing facilities are used

We understand during the coronavirus outbreak, that where the employee's role makes home working feasible, it will consider this type of working on a case by case basis. We can reverse the decision to allow home working if there are concerns about an individual or productivity and the smooth running of the business is adversely affected. The decision to temporarily allow home working is not a contractual change.

5.14 Working from Home - Health and Safety Considerations

We have a duty of care for all their employees, and the requirements of the health and safety legislation apply to homeworkers. We are responsible for carrying out a risk assessment to check whether the proposed home workplace's ventilation, temperature, lighting, space, chair, desk and computer, or any kind of workstation, and floor are suitable for the tasks the homeworker will be carrying out.

We are responsible for the equipment we supply, but it is the employee's responsibility to rectify

any flaws in the home highlighted by the assessment. Once the home workplace has passed the assessment, it is the employee who is responsible for keeping it that way.

We will refer to the ACAS guidance on [Home Working](#).

5.15 Visitors

The impact of the coronavirus is far greater for people with underlying health conditions and who are elderly. We will monitor the changing situation. We will display information posters and advise anyone that is unwell to stay away. We will ensure that all visitors document their names and contact phone numbers should we need to. We will ensure that all visitors document their names and contact phone numbers.



6. Definitions

6.1 Pandemic

- A pandemic is the worldwide spread of a new disease COVID-19 was characterised as a Pandemic on 11th March 2020

6.2 World Health Organisation

- The World Health Organisation (WHO) is a specialised agency of the United Nations that is concerned with world public health

6.3 COVID-19

- Novel coronavirus is a new strain of coronavirus first identified in Wuhan City, China. The virus was named severe acute respiratory coronavirus 2 (SARS-CoV-2). The disease it causes is called COVID- 19

6.4 Outbreak

- A disease outbreak is the occurrence of disease cases in excess of normal expectancy. The number of cases varies according to the disease-causing agent, and the size and type of previous and existing exposure to the agent

6.5 Social Stigma

- Social stigma in the context of health is the negative association between a person or group of people who share certain characteristics and a specific disease. In an outbreak, this may mean people are labelled, stereotyped, discriminated against, treated separately, and/or experience loss of status because of a perceived link with a disease. Such treatment can negatively affect those with the disease, as well as their caregivers, family, friends and communities. People who do not have the disease but share other characteristics with this group may also suffer from stigma. The current COVID-19 outbreak has provoked social stigma and discriminatory behaviours against people of certain ethnic backgrounds as well as anyone perceived to have been in contact with the virus

6.6 The Health Protection (Coronavirus) Regulations 2020

- The Health Protection (Coronavirus) Regulations 2020 were put in place with immediate effect on 25th February to impose restrictions on any individual considered by health professionals to be at risk of spreading the virus
- The regulations apply to any individuals seeking to leave supported isolation before the current quarantine period of 14 days is complete. It will also apply to future cases during the current coronavirus incident where an individual who may be infected or contaminated could present a risk to public health



Key Facts - Professionals

Professionals providing this service should be aware of the following:

- The current understanding is that the virus does not survive on surfaces for longer than 72 hours. Regular cleaning of frequently touched hard surfaces and hands will therefore help to reduce the risk of infection
- Washing your hands often, with soap and water, or use alcohol sanitiser that contains at least 60% alcohol if handwashing facilities are not available - this is particularly important after taking public transport
- We will make sure you have the facts about the new coronavirus or the disease COVID-19 from a reliable source. Public Health England and the Department of Health and Social Care are 2 examples. Staff must read the fact sheet in the Forms section for more information
- We will have an up to date business continuity plan in place. The Pandemic Policy and Procedure has a checklist to help plan for an outbreak of a disease like COVID-19
- It's important that Service Users are made aware of how they can help limit the spread of COVID-19 and that they understand the signs and symptoms of the disease
- We will need to work closely with the Local Authority, health providers, suppliers and other agencies to ensure that there is continuity and consistency of care
- Microsoft have released their Teams software as free downloads to support people working remotely



Key Facts - People affected by the service

People affected by this service should be aware of the following:

- A coronavirus is a type of virus. Coronaviruses are common across the world. Typical symptoms of coronavirus include fever and a cough that may progress to severe pneumonia causing shortness of breath and breathing difficulties. This new virus is called SARS coronavirus 2. The disease it causes is called COVID-19
- There is no vaccine now for this virus. Washing your hands regularly with soap and water will help prevent the spread of the disease. Try not to touch your eyes, nose and mouth with unwashed hands
- Its ok to feel worried or anxious. QCS Client Ltd has plans in place to make sure you will get the care that you need



Further Reading

As well as the information in the 'underpinning knowledge' section of the review sheet we recommend that you add to your understanding in this policy area by considering the following materials:

CQC Responding to Coronavirus:

<https://www.cqc.org.uk/news/stories/how-were-responding-outbreak-coronavirus> **Handwashing and**

Handsanitiser Fact sheet:

https://www.who.int/gpsc/5may/Hand_Hygiene_Why_How_and_When_Brochure.pdf **Handwashing**

Video:

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/av/health-51637561/coronavirus-watch-how-germs-spread>

Public Health England Posters:

<https://campaignresources.phe.gov.uk/resources/search?utf8=%E2%9C%93&query=COVID-19>

Care Provider Alliance - Multiple Resources:

<https://www.careprovideralliance.org.uk/business-continuity-infection-control-flu.html>



Outstanding Practice

To be 'outstanding' in this policy area you could provide evidence that:

- QCS Client Ltd has robust infection control policies and procedures in place and staff understand the importance of good hand hygiene, how to use personal protective equipment appropriately and they share their knowledge with Service Users appropriately
- Staff have accurate and up-to-date information and QCS Client Ltd is able to respond quickly and safely to a fast-changing situation
- QCS Client Ltd has shared its pandemic and business continuity plan and everyone knows what their roles and responsibilities are.