



**** IMPORTANT UPDATE: Infection Prevention & Control ****

Distribution: To all IAS GPs / ANPs

From: Clinical Lead & Nurse Clinical Lead - Improving Access Services

Background:

With COVID cases on the rise again in Brighton & Hove and expected to follow a trajectory similar to other parts of the country currently worse off, we thought it was a good time to remind you of our processes and resources and what is in place to support you should you develop symptoms:

1. IAS Mandatory Infection Prevention & Control Service Specific Training

We have introduced service specific mandatory training with our new IAS Nurse Lead Pippa Halley and we will be contacting you in the coming weeks with dates for this training via MS Teams. We will be introducing a cut-off point whereby anyone who hasn't undergone the training will not be authorised to pick up shifts so please sign up to a session when the dates become available.

2. IAS process for COVID confirmed cases within workforce and advice for household contacts

It is really important that if you or any one of your close contacts develop COVID symptoms/tests positive for COVID-19 that you let us know immediately.

Currently the advice is as follows:

- Isolate as per NHS guidance (see link). There are **NO** exceptions to these rules **ESPECIALLY** as we are health care providers. <https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/coronavirus-covid-19/self-isolation-and-treatment/when-to-self-isolate-and-what-to-do/>
- Get yourself and your symptomatic close contacts tested via sxccg.covidtestingreferrals@nhs.net
- If your symptomatic close contact tests negative you can return to work. If your symptomatic close contact tests positive you **MUST** isolate for the full 14 days unless you become symptomatic yourself in which case you must isolate for 10 days from the day that you developed symptoms (even if this takes you over 14 days).
- If you test positive you must isolate for 10 days from the onset of your symptoms.

- **LOOK AFTER YOURSELF!** We understand that this is an incredibly stressful and tiring time – especially if you are caring for children or adults with symptoms / home schooling etc. We are here to support you and we understand. COVID is nobody's fault!

3. Opportunities for Remote Working if Self-Isolating / Shielding and / or undertaking shifts at short notice to cover last minute staff absences

We are very keen to support you to continue to work for the service if you have to self-isolate or shield. There are however limitations to the speed in which we can access VPNs to allow you to connect to the clinical systems.

There is a tick box on your Workforce Profile asking whether you have existing VPN access to clinical systems. If you have an NHS laptop with access to clinical systems then please do update your Workforce Profile to include this.

If you don't but would be interested in having a home working kit supplied by us please let us know by contacting antony.clark1@nhs.net. In return we would expect a certain number of hours work for us per month to make this worthwhile. This might include undertaking some last minute shifts to cover staff absences when you are available.

4. IAS Infection Prevention & Control processes and resources

With a significant rise in COVID cases within Brighton and Hove recently we just want to remind of our service processes and resources which are available on our service website:

<https://www.improvingaccessservices.co.uk/ehs-staff-resources/>

We would really like to emphasise the importance of following our processes, this is to protect both you and our patients. Please do take the time to look at them just to refresh your memory.

5. COVID 19 Risk Assessments

We will shortly be communicating with you about undertaking a COVID-19 risk assessment for working within the service. We would be grateful if you could complete and return to us as soon as possible. This is a mandatory requirement for continuing to work in the service and brings us in line with national primary care guidance.

If you have any immediate concerns around working in IAS relating to COVID-19 then please do contact us now.

Thank you for your continued support.

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