



## HSE COVID-19 risk assessment

**Charity name:** The Southmead Project

**Assessment carried out by:** Imogen McCabe

**Date assessment was carried out:** 27<sup>th</sup> August 2020

As an employer, we must protect people from harm. This includes taking reasonable steps to protect our workers and others from coronavirus. This is called a COVID-19 risk assessment. We must:

- identify what work activity or situations might cause transmission of the virus
- think about who could be at risk
- decide how likely it is that someone could be exposed
- act to remove the activity or situation, or if this isn't possible, control the risk

We will talk to our workers to explain the measures we are taking and monitor them to make sure that they are working as expected.

More information can be found here on working safely during the coronavirus outbreak: <https://www.hse.gov.uk/coronavirus/index.htm>

HSE's core guidance on managing risk can be found here: <https://www.hse.gov.uk/simple-health-safety/risk/>

Public Health England's (PHE) guidance on social distancing can be found here: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/staying-alert-and-safe-social-distancing>

What are the hazards?	Who might be harmed and how?	Controls	What further action do you need to consider to control the risks?	Who needs to carry out the action?	When is the action needed by?
1. Getting or spreading coronavirus by not washing hands or not washing them adequately.	All staff & volunteers on site  Clients who attended face-to-face counselling  Visitors to the building	We will follow PHE's guidance on cleaning, hygiene and using hand sanitiser: <a href="https://www.hse.gov.uk/coronavirus/working-safely/cleaning.htm">https://www.hse.gov.uk/coronavirus/working-safely/cleaning.htm</a>  <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• We will provide running water, soap and hand towels to dry hands at wash stations.</li> <li>• We will provide hand sanitiser on all floors of the building and in each counselling room.</li> <li>• We will provide information on how to wash hands properly and display posters.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A member of the Leadership Team or a second member of staff will always be in the office to accompany a counsellor who is delivering face-to-face counselling. The additional member of staff will regularly check the premises to monitor and make sure people are following the safety measures put in place.</li> <li>• We will place signs in the bathrooms and around the building to remind people to wash their hands and guidance on how to do this safely.</li> <li>• We will give information to both staff and clients/visitors about the measures put in place, where the wash facilities/hand sanitiser can be located, and what we expect of them whilst inside the building.</li> <li>• A member of the Leadership Team will regularly replenish hand washing/sanitising products by monitoring our supplies each week and members of staff will report back if additional products are needed in the meantime.</li> <li>• We will ask staff, volunteers, clients and visitors to report to the Leadership Team if there are any problems.</li> </ul>	Leadership Team (Head of Operations, Head of Counselling and Head of Finance)  Counsellors / staff on the premises	Date of first face-to-face counselling session in the building (14/09/2020).

What are the hazards?	Who might be harmed and how?	Controls	What further action do you need to consider to control the risks?	Who needs to carry out the action?	When is the action needed by?
<p>2. Getting or spreading coronavirus in common use high traffic areas such as corridors, stairwells, counselling office, waiting area, toilet facilities, entry/exit points to facilities, and other communal areas.</p>	<p>All staff &amp; volunteers on site</p> <p>Clients who attended face-to-face counselling</p> <p>Visitors to the building</p>	<p><b>We have identified:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Areas where people will congregate, i.e. inner front door area, stairwell, kitchen, waiting area, counselling office, outside of toilet facilities, and upstairs landing.</li> <li>• Areas where there are pinch points meaning people can't meet the social distancing rules, i.e. coming in and out of the building; passing each other on the way to the kitchen, toilet facilities and stairwells; in the counselling office and waiting area.</li> <li>• Areas and equipment where people will touch the same surfaces: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- For clients – front door handle, intercom buzzer, inner front door, Group Room door, chairs, toilet door, toilet flush and taps.</li> <li>- For staff / volunteers – all the above, as well as kettles, tea/coffee/sugar pots, kitchen equipment (including cutlery, crockery, microwave, bins, shared condiments, and cupboard doors); IT and office equipment (including computer, printer and shredder), stationery, light switches, handrails by the stairs, doors upstairs, counselling resources, client files and filing cabinets.</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Areas and surfaces that are frequently touched but are difficult to clean, i.e. window blinds, office phones, filing cabinet keys, and key boxes.</li> <li>• Communal areas where air movement may be less than in other areas, i.e. the kitchen and counselling rooms.</li> </ul> <p><b>Here are the controls we will put in place to reduce the risk:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Reduce the number of people at the Southmead Project at any one time to make social distancing of two metres possible (in the counselling office as well as the building in general). We will try to reduce this to two people (one</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Leadership Team to monitor and supervise to make sure people are following the controls put in place, e.g. following hygiene procedures, washing hands, and following one-way systems.</li> <li>• Information will be given to both staff and clients/visitors to explain the measures put in place and what we expect of them whilst inside the building.</li> <li>• Near-miss reporting to be carried out to help identify where measures cannot be followed or where people are not doing what they should.</li> </ul>	<p>Leadership Team (Head of Operations, Head of Counselling and Head of Finance)</p> <p>Counsellors / staff on the premises</p>	<p>Date of first face-to-face counselling session in the building (14/09/2020).</p>

		<p>counsellor and one supporting member of staff) in the building at once if possible, as well as one client.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Online counselling sessions and Zoom meetings will take place for as many clients and meetings as possible. There will only be face-to-face counselling sessions offered to clients who cannot have them online or by phone. All meetings will take place online or by phone unless this is not possible and if it is imperative that the meeting takes place, in which case social distancing and the measures set out in this document will be followed.</li><li>• Counselling chairs will be placed at least two metres apart to allow for social distancing. Counsellors will sit at least two metres apart in the counselling office or upstairs office.</li><li>• We will stagger the counselling sessions so that counsellors have time to clean the premises in between and so that multiple clients are not passing each other in the building at any one time.</li><li>• The breaks for staff/volunteers will be staggered so that only one person is using the kitchen facilities and break out areas at once.</li><li>• Face masks and gloves will be made available to those that want to use them.</li><li>• Hand sanitiser and gloves will be made available particularly at the entrance to high traffic areas.</li><li>• Staff will be given advice on how to move safely around the building and reduce high-traffic areas.</li><li>• Non-fire doors and windows will be kept open where possible and where this will not affect the privacy/confidentiality needs of the counselling work, so that it improves ventilation.</li><li>• Personal belongings will be kept in locked drawers or coats kept on the back of a chair that is being used by that person. Each chair is to be wiped down by that person when they leave the office for the day.</li><li>• Surfaces in the kitchen or communal tables will be kept clear to make cleaning easier.</li></ul>			
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What are the hazards?	Who might be harmed and how?	Controls	What further action do you need to consider to control the risks?	Who needs to carry out the action?	When is the action needed by?
3. Getting or spreading coronavirus by not cleaning surfaces, equipment and work stations	<p>All staff &amp; volunteers on site</p> <p>Clients who attended face-to-face counselling</p> <p>Visitors to the building</p>	<p>We will use the HSE guidance on cleaning and hygiene during the coronavirus outbreak: <a href="https://www.hse.gov.uk/coronavirus/working-safely/cleaning.htm">https://www.hse.gov.uk/coronavirus/working-safely/cleaning.htm</a></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Surfaces that are frequently touched and by many people include: door handles, light switches, intercom buzzer, chairs, shared equipment (including filing cabinets, files, stationery, kitchen and IT equipment), toilet flush, taps, kettles, handrails on stairs, and tea/coffee making equipment.</li> <li>• Each member of staff or volunteer will clean the parts of the office that they and their clients have come into contact with at the end of each day (including wiping down client chairs).</li> <li>• Counsellors will clean surfaces/items that clients have come into contact with as soon as their counselling session ends.</li> <li>• The building will be cleaned thoroughly each week by a professional cleaner.</li> <li>• We will reduce the need for people to move around the building by staggering staff/volunteer working times and holding counselling online where possible.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Leadership Team to monitor and supervise to make sure people are following the controls put in place, e.g. implementing the cleaning regime.</li> <li>• Information will be given to both staff and clients/visitors to explain the cleaning measures to be implemented and what we expect of them whilst inside the building.</li> </ul>	<p>Leadership Team (Head of Operations, Head of Counselling and Head of Finance)</p> <p>Counsellors / staff on the premises.</p>	Date of first face-to-face counselling session in the building (14/09/2020).

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Each member of staff is to be allocated a desk and computer equipment to use on the day that they are in the office, which is not to be used by anyone else that day and will be cleaned by that person when they leave.</li> <li>• We will reduce the contact of people with surfaces by clients knocking on the front door, being met by their counsellor, and going straight into the Group Room (the Group Room door will be open). This will mean clients do not go upstairs, will not sit in the waiting area, and will not have to touch the Group Room door or intercom buzzer.</li> <li>• Other areas that will need cleaning to prevent the spread of coronavirus include the kitchen, toilet facilities and the counselling office. These will be cleaned at the end of each day by the member of staff/volunteer in the building. Counsellors will clean surfaces that clients have come into contact with after each session. A professional cleaner will clean once a week and will provide their own cleaning equipment. Anti-bacterial wipes and spray will be provided for staff/volunteers to use.</li> <li>• Surfaces will be kept clear to make it easier to clean and reduce the likelihood of contaminating objects.</li> <li>• Clients will bring their own drinks and tissues to counselling sessions and won't use the Southmead Project's cups or mugs. Staff can use mugs but will ensure these are washed in the dishwasher (not by hand) at the end of the day.</li> <li>• Bins will be emptied each day, with staff, volunteers and clients taking home their own rubbish (clients will be given plastic bags to take away their rubbish).</li> <li>• Personal belongings will be kept in locked drawers or coats kept on the back of a chair that is being used by that person. Each chair is to be wiped down when that person leaves the office for the day. Personal items are to be kept in that person's bag as far as possible to minimise the risk of contamination.</li> <li>• If someone who has been in the building develops symptoms of coronavirus then we will arrange a deep clean (lasting 5 hours) by our professional cleaner. We will follow the cleaning guidelines: <a href="https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/covid-19-decontamination-in-non-healthcare-settings">https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/covid-19-decontamination-in-non-healthcare-settings</a></li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• We will provide specific instruction around the cleaning products to be used, precautions to follow and the areas that need to be cleaned.</li> <li>• A member of the Leadership Team will regularly replenish hand washing/sanitising products by monitoring our supplies each week and members of staff will report back if additional products are needed in the meantime. Our professional cleaner will bring her own cleaning products.</li> </ul>		
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4. Mental health and wellbeing affected through isolation or anxiety about coronavirus	<p>All staff &amp; volunteers on site</p> <p>Clients who attended face-to-face counselling</p> <p>Visitors to the building</p>	<p>We will follow PHE's guidance on the mental health and public wellbeing aspects of Covid-19: <a href="https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/covid-19-guidance-for-the-public-on-mental-health-and-wellbeing/guidance-for-the-public-on-the-mental-health-and-wellbeing-aspects-of-coronavirus-covid-19">https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/covid-19-guidance-for-the-public-on-mental-health-and-wellbeing/guidance-for-the-public-on-the-mental-health-and-wellbeing-aspects-of-coronavirus-covid-19</a></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Weekly team Zoom meetings will take place to support staff and volunteers, as well as keeping them updated so that they feel involved and reassured.</li> <li>- Recurring agenda items will be self-care (including regular breaks and encouraging them to take leave, including a minimum of one week before September) and the impact of bringing trauma into their homes and Zoom fatigue.</li> <li>• Head of Counselling or Head of Operations will contact the counsellors that they line manage each day that they are due to have a counselling session to check how it's going and if they want to discuss anything further.</li> <li>• Head of Counselling, Head of Operations and Head of Finance will always be available to support the team as and when they need it.</li> <li>• A What's App group will provide informal support for the staff/volunteer team.</li> <li>• Monthly clinical supervision will be paid for by the Southmead Project for each counsellor.</li> <li>• Counsellors have been involved in transitioning our counselling service online and reviewed the risk assessments that were created for clients.</li> </ul>	<p>We will share information and advice with the staff/volunteer team about mental health and wellbeing.</p> <p>If personal stress and anxiety levels are high, we will look at how we can reduce/support that person's workload, regularly check in with them, encourage them to discuss relevant issues with their clinical supervisor, and remind them that the Southmead Project will pay for six sessions of private counselling a year.</p>	<p>Leadership Team (Head of Operations, Head of Counselling and Head of Finance)</p>	<p>Date of first face-to-face counselling session in the building (14/09/2020).</p>

What are the hazards?	Who might be harmed and how?	Controls	What further action do you need to consider to control the risks?	Who needs to carry out the action?	When is the action needed by?
5. Contracting or spreading the virus by not social distancing	<p>All staff &amp; volunteers on site</p> <p>Clients who attended face-to-face counselling</p> <p>Visitors to the building</p>	<p>We will follow up-to-date PHE guidance on social distancing: <a href="https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/staying-alert-and-safe-social-distancing">https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/staying-alert-and-safe-social-distancing</a></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• We will identify where people would not be able to maintain social distancing rules.</li> <li>• We will keep people apart in line with social distancing rules by: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Using 2 metre marker tape on the floor;</li> <li>- Holding meetings online rather than in person;</li> <li>- Staggering staff start/end times;</li> <li>- Limiting the amount of people on site at any one time;</li> <li>- Having allocated counselling session times with longer gaps in between each client;</li> <li>- Rearrange work areas so that staff are sat 2 metres apart or work in separate rooms where possible;</li> <li>- Using empty rooms in the building for rest breaks;</li> <li>- Keep the group room cupboard clear for staff bikes;</li> <li>- Answer the front door for deliveries rather than allowing delivery people into the building where possible</li> </ul> </li> <li>• We have identified where it isn't possible to meet social distancing rules and put in place other physical measures to separate people: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Reduce the number of people in the building to the fewest amount possible;</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Leadership Team to monitor and supervise to make sure social distancing rules are followed.</li> <li>• Information will be given to staff/volunteers and clients/visitors to explain the social distancing measures in place and what we expect of them whilst inside the building.</li> <li>• We will display signs around the building to show clients/visitors what they need to do to maintain social distancing.</li> </ul>	<p>Leadership Team (Head of Operations, Head of Counselling and Head of Finance)</p> <p>Counsellors / staff on the premises</p>	<p>Date of first face-to-face counselling session in the building (14/09/2020).</p>

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Put signs on the stairs to ask people to wait at the top or bottom to let someone pass if they are already on the stairs;</li> <li>- Put signs by the corridor to the kitchen to ask people to check if someone is in the kitchen, toilet facilities or counselling room and wait if they are about to walk through the corridor;</li> <li>- Put a sign on the hallway by the upstairs bathroom to ask people to check and wait if someone is about to walk through the hallway;</li> <li>- We will temporarily not use our waiting room and will meet clients at the front door and take them straight to the counselling room.</li> </ul> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• We will put in place other measures to protect people where it isn't possible to meet social distancing rules and physical measures can't be used: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- An enhanced cleaning regime, including a deep clean of the building by a professional cleaner, increased hours of weekly professional cleaning, staff/volunteers to clean their own work space and after each client, and increase in hand washing;</li> <li>- We will limit the amount of time that staff are in the building, for instance with counsellors only working in the office for face-to-face counselling sessions and essential admin;</li> <li>- Where two members of staff are working in the same room they will work back-to-back or side-to-side and at different ends of the room;</li> <li>- Counselling sessions will take place at a two metre distance with chairs at an angle where possible;</li> <li>- We will keep a consistency in the staff that work together;</li> <li>- Ventilation will be improved by keeping windows and doors open where possible.</li> </ul> </li> <li>• We will display signs to remind people to socially distance.</li> <li>• Everyone will be given the choice to wear masks and gloves if they want to.</li> </ul>			
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What are the hazards?	Who might be harmed and how?	Controls	What further action do you need to consider to control the risks?	Who needs to carry out the action?	When is the action needed by?
6. Musculoskeletal disorders as a result of using DSE at home for a long period of time	All staff & volunteers on site	<p>We will follow PHE's guidance regarding display screen equipment (DSE): <a href="https://www.hse.gov.uk/toolbox/workers/home.htm">https://www.hse.gov.uk/toolbox/workers/home.htm</a></p> <p>If home working becomes long-term we will assess the risks:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• For people using DSE we will put in place information and training on how to protect themselves, for instance through regular breaks and setting up the equipment properly.</li> <li>• We will complete a DSE assessment with them and identify what equipment is needed to allow them to work safely from home.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• We will refer to the further PHE information on how to set up a workstation for short duration home working and long term home working found here: <a href="https://www.hse.gov.uk/toolbox/workers/home.htm">https://www.hse.gov.uk/toolbox/workers/home.htm</a></li> </ul>	Leadership Team (Head of Operations, Head of Counselling and Head of Finance)	January 2021 if we decide to continue working from home on a long-term basis.

What are the hazards?	Who might be harmed and how?	Controls	What further action do you need to consider to control the risks?	Who needs to carry out the action?	When is the action needed by?
7. Poor workplace ventilation leading to risks of coronavirus spreading	<p>All staff &amp; volunteers on site</p> <p>Clients who attended face-to-face counselling</p> <p>Visitors to the building</p>	<p>We will follow guidance on heating, ventilation and air conditioning (HVAC): <a href="https://www.cibse.org/coronavirus-covid-19/coronavirus,-sars-cov-2,-covid-19-and-hvac-systems">https://www.cibse.org/coronavirus-covid-19/coronavirus,-sars-cov-2,-covid-19-and-hvac-systems</a> and <a href="https://www.cibse.org/coronavirus-covid-19/emerging-from-lockdown">https://www.cibse.org/coronavirus-covid-19/emerging-from-lockdown</a></p> <p>We will identify if we need additional ventilation to increase air flow in all or parts of our building. We will not use the upstairs counselling rooms for the time being due to the lack of ventilation. We will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Keep windows and doors open (except fire doors) to ventilate with fresh air.</li> <li>• Use desk fans / floor fans for additional ventilation.</li> </ul>	We will keep doors and windows open where possible.	<p>Leadership Team (Head of Operations, Head of Counselling and Head of Finance).</p> <p>Staff and volunteers working in the building.</p>	Date of first face-to-face counselling session in the building (14/09/2020).

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8. Increased risk of infection and complications for vulnerable workers	All staff & volunteers on site	<p>We will identify who falls into one of the following categories:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Clinically extremely vulnerable:  <a href="https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/guidance-on-shielding-and-protecting-extremely-vulnerable-persons-from-covid-19/guidance-on-shielding-and-protecting-extremely-vulnerable-persons-from-covid-19">https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/guidance-on-shielding-and-protecting-extremely-vulnerable-persons-from-covid-19/guidance-on-shielding-and-protecting-extremely-vulnerable-persons-from-covid-19</a></li> <li>People self-isolating</li> <li>People with coronavirus symptoms</li> <li>Groups who may be at higher risk of poorer outcomes:  <a href="https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/covid-19-review-of-disparities-in-risks-and-outcomes">https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/covid-19-review-of-disparities-in-risks-and-outcomes</a></li> <li>We will discuss with our staff/volunteer team what their personal risks are and identify what we need to do in each case.</li> <li>If someone falls into one of these categories, they will continue to work from home and not travel into the office.</li> <li>We will protect all staff/volunteers in the office through social distancing and hygiene procedures.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>We will ask staff and volunteers to notify us if they fall into one of these categories, e.g. if they start chemotherapy or are pregnant</li> </ul>	<p>Leadership Team (Head of Operations, Head of Counselling and Head of Finance)</p> <p>Counsellors / staff on the premises</p>	<p>Date of first face-to-face counselling session in the building (14/09/2020).</p>

## Further information

HSE's latest advice on coronavirus: <https://www.hse.gov.uk/coronavirus/index.htm>. For information about health and safety, or to report inconsistencies or inaccuracies in this guidance, visit: [www.hse.gov.uk](http://www.hse.gov.uk)

HSE priced publications can be ordered here: <https://books.hse.gov.uk/> They are also available from bookshops.

This template document is available at: [www.hse.gov.uk/coronavirus/assets/docs/risk-assessment.pdf](http://www.hse.gov.uk/coronavirus/assets/docs/risk-assessment.pdf)

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