



First Aider Advice following the COVID-19 Outbreak

The University has a duty to ensure it has sufficient arrangement in place for the provision of first aid in the event of an emergency. The University restart was planned in a controlled way and the availability of First Aiders is needed to be established and continuously monitored as part of the process.

The support of those trained First Aiders who are willing to continue to fulfil their first aid duties is required as buildings are re-occupied. With this in mind, this additional advice and information will enable informed decision making when choosing whether, or not, to carry out this crucial role on campus.

First aiders have been asked to carry out these duties, but no pressure has been exerted if any staff member feels unable to carry out this role at this time regardless of the reasons. We absolutely understand that we continue to live through unprecedented times and uncertainties are expected.

This guidance is aimed at identifying any additional COVID-19 related risks to First Aiders attending incidents but also provides guidance and additional controls that the University has put in place to ensure the Health, Safety and Wellbeing of our First Aiders remains our absolute main priority.

For those who are happy to volunteer the University will commit to providing the highest level of support, equipment including any PPE that is available and aligns with the very latest Government, PHE and WHO guidance. Staff will have the right to decline these duties at any time even if they were initially happy to volunteer, we just ask that you inform the Health and Safety Team of the decision as soon as possible, this will enable us to review the first aid cover we have on site.

One of the additional controls provided by the University is the mandatory requirement for First Aiders to download a phone application (app) called SafeZone. This app will enable Estate Patrol to identify the presence of First Aiders on campus and it will enable Estate Patrol to summon First Aid support promptly and efficiently. The App will also enable First Aiders to call for assistance from Estate Patrol, therefore ensuring they will never be alone while responding to a first aid incident.

Guidance for First Aiders during COVID-19 outbreak

In the current situation of sustained community transmission of COVID-19 in the UK, social distancing, the strict application of safe working practices and, where social distancing cannot be maintained, the use of PPE may be appropriate to reduce the risk of transmission of COVID-19.

This guidance is for all situations where close contact (defined as being within 2 metres of an individual) is required during First Aider duties.

Be aware of the risks to yourself and others

When approaching a casualty there is always a risk of cross contamination – especially when you may have to get close to the casualty to assess what is wrong e.g. to check their breathing. It is always important to be aware of the risks of how this cross contamination has occurred.



Keep yourself safe

In line with government advice, make sure you wash your hands or use an alcohol gel, before and after treating a casualty. Ensure that you don't cough or sneeze over a casualty when you are treating them.

- Don't lose sight of other cross contamination that could occur that isn't related to COVID-19
- Do not touch a wound with your bare hand
- Cover cuts and grazes on your hands with waterproof dressing
- Wear gloves or cover hands when dealing with open wounds
- Do not touch any part of a dressing that you may come in contact via any wounds
- Dispose of all waste safely by disposing of in a suitable waste bin

Give early treatment

The vast majority of incidents do not involve you getting close to a casualty where you would come into contact with cough droplets. Sensible precautions will ensure you are able to treat a casualty effectively.

- Where possible try and get the casualty to move themselves to a safe place away from others
- Initially keep your distance from the casualty and ask them what happened to understand the next steps you may need to take
- If they require something basic like a plaster and they can collect from a safe distance they should do so (i.e. leave them on a table for them to collect)
- If they require a bandage for a small wound they should be encouraged to place direct pressure themselves and a bandage can be secured from a safe distance
- If you must approach the casualty do so with caution and ensure any controls and/or PPE are in place before you do so
- Avoid contact for as little time as possible while being mindful that they require reassurance

Keep yourself informed and updated

As this is a new disease this is an ever changing situation and the government and NHS are continually updating their advice. Make sure that you regularly review the NHS 111 or Gov.UK website which has a specific section on Coronavirus.

- [COVID-19 Guidance - NHS](#)
- [COVID-19 Guidance for first responders - Gov.UK](#)
- [CPR & Resuscitation Guidance - Resuscitation Council](#)



Resuscitation Council UK Statement on COVID-19 in relation to cardiopulmonary resuscitation (CPR) and resuscitation in first aid and community settings

This statement is for anyone who is performing CPR/defibrillation in an out-of-hospital setting.

Firstly, ask someone to call an ambulance. If you do not receive an initial response, follow the procedures set out below, continue to call for assistance and activate support via the SafeZone App.

Whenever CPR is carried out, particularly on an unknown victim, there is some risk of cross infection, associated particularly with giving rescue breaths. Normally, this risk is very small and is set against the inevitability that a person in cardiac arrest will die if no assistance is given. The first things to do are shout for help and dial 999.

Should you have given mouth-to-mouth ventilation there are no additional actions to be taken other than to monitor yourself for symptoms of possible COVID-19 over the following 14 days. Should you develop such symptoms you should follow the advice on what to do on the [NHS website](#).

If you are untrained or unable to do rescue breaths, give chest compression-only CPR (i.e. continuous compressions at a rate of at least 100–120 min⁻¹).

Because of the heightened awareness of the possibility that the victim may have COVID-19, Resuscitation Council UK offers this advice:

- Recognise cardiac arrest by looking for the absence of signs of life and the absence of normal breathing. Do not listen or feel for breathing by placing your ear and cheek close to the patient's mouth. If you are in any doubt about confirming cardiac arrest, the default position is to start chest compressions until help arrives.
- Make sure an ambulance is on its way. If COVID 19 is suspected, tell them when you call 999.
- If there is a perceived risk of infection, you should place a cloth/towel over the casualty's mouth and nose and attempt compression only CPR and early defibrillation until the ambulance (or advanced care team) arrives. Put hands together in the middle of the chest and push hard and fast.
- Early use of a defibrillator significantly increases the person's chances of survival and does not increase risk of infection.
- If you have access to any form of personal protective equipment (PPE) this should be worn.
- After performing compression-only CPR, you should wash your hands thoroughly with soap and water; alcohol-based hand gel is a convenient alternative. You should also seek advice from the [NHS111 coronavirus advice service](#) or medical adviser.

Remember your own needs

These are challenging and uncertain times for all. The COVID-19 outbreak has meant a lot of upheaval and worry for people. In order to help others you will also need to look after your own needs. Make sure you take time to talk about your fears and concerns with someone you trust and to take time out to look after yourself.

In the current climate with the prevalence of the COVID-19 pandemic, these skills become even more



important and here is how you can apply these skills when managing a first aid incident.

What to do if you are required to come into close contact with someone as part of your First Aider duties?

COVID Response Plan:

Providing assistance to unwell individuals

If you need to provide assistance to an individual who is symptomatic and may have COVID-19 (that is any individual with a new, continuous cough and/or high temperature), wherever possible, place the person in a safe place away from others. If there is no physically separate room, ask others who are not involved in providing assistance to stay at least 2 metres away from the individual. If barriers or screens are available, these may be used.

Personal Protective Equipment (PPE)

Where it is not possible to maintain a 2 metre or more distance away from an individual, disposable gloves and a disposable plastic apron are recommended. Disposable gloves should be worn if physical contact is likely to be made with potentially contaminated areas or items.

The use of a fluid repellent surgical face mask, that you will have been provided with, should be worn and additional disposable eye protection (such as face visor or goggles) should be worn when there is an anticipated risk of contamination with splashes, droplets of blood or body fluids.

When using a fluid repellent surgical face mask, you should mould the metal strap of the mask over the bridge of the nose and make sure the mask fits snugly under the chin, around or across any facial hair if present.

Clean your hands thoroughly with soap and water or alcohol sanitiser before putting on and after taking off PPE. In all circumstances where some form of PPE is used, the safe removal of the PPE is a critical consideration to avoid self-contamination. [Guidance on putting on and taking off PPE is available](#). Use and dispose of all PPE according to the instructions and training provided by the Health and Safety Team.

Cleaning the area where assistance was provided

Cleaning will depend on where assistance was provided. It should follow the advice for cleaning in [non-healthcare settings](#). 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 can be cleaned in the usual way. However, all surfaces that a symptomatic individual has come into contact with must be cleaned and disinfected.

If there has been a blood or body-fluid spill

Keep people away from the area, barrier off if possible. Use a bodily fluid spill-kit if available, using the PPE in the kit and following the instructions provided with the spill-kit. If no spill-kit is available, place paper towels/roll onto the spill, and seek further advice from the Facility Management Team.

Contacts of the person you have assisted

Advise anyone who had close contact with the individual that if they go on to develop symptoms of COVID-19 (continuous cough, fever), they should follow the advice on what to do on [the NHS website](#).



What to do if you become unwell

If you become unwell you should go home immediately and let your Manager and the Health and Safety Team know as soon as possible.

If you develop symptoms of COVID-19, however mild, you will need to stay at home for 10 days. Refer to the [Rapid Response Hub](#) for advice and follow the [Stay at home guidance](#).