

## ISRM Return to Practice Covid-19 Checklist

17<sup>th</sup> June 2020

This checklist supports the ISRM's Preliminary Guidelines for Returning to Face to Face Appointments. It summarises the necessary changes required by therapists to comply with best practice when returning to work and gives advice on what to look for when purchasing additional safety equipment for your practice. Please note that links to products on the right hand side of the table are provided by way of example only - The ISRM has no financial interest in any of the businesses. The choice of which products to buy, and ensuring those products meet the guidelines, are the responsibility of the therapist.

We like to reinforce that as yet; we have no definite date for returning to practice. However, we are working on the assumption that the Roadmap to Recovery is on track and, therefore, Stage 3 of reopening (which includes close contact businesses) will be no earlier than 4th July.

As a continued package of support, within the next two weeks we will be releasing;

- **Risk Assessment Templates** for you to customise and individualise for your own working environment
- **Pre-treatment Screening Form** and Consultation Form templates, which will include all elements relating to Covid
- **Updated guidance** on return to practice, as soon as we have more information from the Government.

## ISRM Return to Practice Covid-19 Checklist

|  | NOTES  | LINKS  |
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| <b>Insurance</b>                           | Check with your insurer to make sure you're covered to provide ALL of the services you wish to offer.  | <a href="#">Balens</a>   |
| <b>Appointments</b>                        | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Meet your client outside of the premises</li> <li>They shall be asked to don a face covering and sanitise their hands before entering</li> <li>Open doors for them so they do not touch surfaces</li> <li>Allow a minimum of 30 minutes between appointments to avoid any contact between clients</li> </ul>  | <a href="#">Wearing a face covering</a>  |
| <b>Hand Sanitiser &amp; Hand Washing</b>   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Ensure hand sanitiser is available on entry to your clinic</li> <li>Both you and your client shall sanitise your hands before entry to the premises</li> <li>You shall wash or sanitise your hands again directly before giving treatment and immediately afterwards</li> </ul>   | <a href="#">Type &amp; Usage Advice</a><br><a href="#">Hand Washing Guidelines</a>   |
| <b>Face Coverings</b>                      | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Both you and your client shall don a face covering before entry to the premises</li> <li>You shall keep your face covering on until the towels and couch cover have been removed, bagged, or placed in washing machine and the treatment room has been wiped down and ventilated</li> <li>Avoid touching your face and face covering.</li> <li>Before putting on or removing your face covering hands shall be washed or hand sanitiser used</li> </ul> | <a href="#">Face coverings</a><br><a href="#">Disposable biodegradable face masks</a><br><p><b>*Other face coverings are available the above options are just an idea</b></p>                    |
| <b>Couch Protectors &amp; Couch Covers</b> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Couches shall be sanitised between clients, regardless of whether a couch cover is used. Use of a plastic couch protector will help prevent degradation of your couch material</li> <li>Fabric couch covers shall be changed between clients and washed at a minimum of 60 degrees</li> </ul>   | <a href="#">PVC Couch Protector</a><br><a href="#">PVC Couch Protection</a><br><a href="#">Fabric Couch Covers</a><br><a href="#">Fabric Couch Covers</a><br><a href="#">Flannelettes sheets</a> |
| <b>Towels</b>                              | Towels shall be washed at a minimum of 60 degrees. Quick-drying microfibre towels are a good option.   | <a href="#">Microfibre Towels</a>  |
| <b>Cleaning Equipment</b>                  | Your usual cleaning products should already be effective.  | <a href="#">H&amp;S Advice</a><br><a href="#">Government Advice</a>  |
| <b>Sealed Storage</b>                      | Use plastic storage boxes with lids to stow clients' clothes during treatment, unnecessary clutter and for dirty towels and couch covers until washed. Sanitise the boxes between clients.   |  |
| <b>Payment</b>                             | Avoid taking cash payments, when possible. You should use a contactless payment system. Ideally, clients should pay before their treatment by direct bank transfer or online payment system.   | <a href="#">PayPal Links</a><br><a href="#">Izettle Links</a><br><a href="#">Sports Injury Fix system (ISRM discount)</a>  |

|                  | QUESTIONS   | ANSWERS   |
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| <b>Insurance</b> | <b>I am a member of more than one professional association and their guidance differs. Whose should I follow?</b> | Discuss this with your insurance provider. Commonly, insurance is linked to a professional body and this will determine whose guidance you should follow.   |
|                  | <b>Face Coverings</b>   |   |
|                  | <b>Are reusable, washable face covers acceptable?</b>   | Yes, but these must be changed between each client, stored in a sealed container or bag and washed at a minimum of 60 degrees.  |
|                  | <b>Should disposable face coverings be changed between each client?</b>   | Yes. We recommend that you try and source biodegradable disposable face coverings see link above.   |
|                  | <b>What is the minimum standard for face coverings?</b>   | The purpose of face coverings is to reduce the dispersal of moisture particles into the air rather than filtering the air the wearer is breathing. Consequently, they do not fall within the Health & Safety definition of PPE and no minimum standards (ie, kitemark) exist. However, the ISRM recommends face coverings which fit correctly, covering the nose and mouth, and which are as comfortable as possible. Scarves and buffs may be used as face coverings but these may not be practical in a therapy setting as they are more difficult to keep in place and may need adjusting. |
|                  | <b>Are homemade face coverings acceptable?</b>  | Yes, if they fulfil the above criteria. Consider contacting a local company/seamstress to create fabric face coverings for you and your clients - a great networking opportunity too!   |
|                  | <b>What if my client does not want to wear a face covering?</b>   | Current government advice states that in any situation where social distancing cannot be maintained face coverings shall be worn. So, if a client (or therapist) refuses to wear a face covering this is a total contraindication and treatment must not take place. Likewise, if a client removes a face covering whilst treatment is in progress, treatment must cease. Failure to do so may invalidate your insurance.   |
|                  | <b>Can my client provide their own face covering?</b>   | This is at your discretion, however, if they do, you will have no control over the safety of the client's face covering before arrival for treatment. Therapists should have a supply of face coverings that can be provided to clients and, if a client's  |

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| Couch Protectors & Couch Covers | I'm concerned my client may find it uncomfortable to lie prone whilst wearing a face covering, what can I do? | face covering is considered inappropriate, provide your own.<br><br>Whilst it is safe to be in a prone position whilst wearing a face covering, some clients may find this uncomfortable. In this situation, alternative treatment positions should be tried, such as side-lying or sitting. If a client removes a face covering whilst prone, treatment shall cease immediately.   |
|                                 | Can the client be treated directly on the couch and this cleaned between clients?                             | Yes, however be aware that this may damage the cover making it more difficult to sanitise. There is also a risk that clients may react with the chemicals of the cleaning products. If you have a two or three-sectioned couch, this will also be more difficult to clean thoroughly.   |
| Towels                          | For mobile treatments, can clients provide their own towels?  | Using a client's own towels is not advisable as you cannot ensure they have been washed in accordance with best practice and so you are not in control of the risk. However, if you choose to do so, be sure to discuss required washing standards prior to the treatment and record this in the client's notes.  |
| Meeting Clients                 | Why must I meet clients outside and is this still relevant in a single room treatment setting?                | Meeting outside allows you to remain in control of the situation throughout. A final verbal check for any symptoms can be made prior to entering the treatment area, and you can ensure that hands are correctly sanitised and an appropriate face covering is in place prior to entering the treatment space. This is equally applicable to single room treatment settings.  |
| Time Between Clients            | *Can I leave less than 30 min between clients?  | At this time, we recommend leaving 30 min to ensure there is enough time for sanitisation and to avoid clients meeting around your clinic. However, if you have created a careful risk assessment which shows that the room can be sanitised, is well ventilated and ready in less than 30 mins, and the risk of clients meeting has been mitigated, then leaving less time is acceptable. Please note, however, there <b>must be a minimum of 15 mins between clients</b> as it takes 8 min for any airborne droplets to descend onto surfaces |
| Protective Clothing             | Do I need to wear a disposable apron or change my clothing between clients?                                   | No. Current government guidance states that close contact work is only permissible where the level of Covid-19 within the population renders protective clothing (other than face coverings) unnecessary. This is subject to continued review in line with government advice.   |

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| <b>Heating &amp; Air Conditioning</b>   | <b>Can I still use fans and air conditioning units during treatments?</b>  | Fans and air conditioning units will resuspend any droplets present. Should any contaminants be present in the air, this would increase the risk of these contaminants moving around the room. Extract systems that vent directly outside are recommended for use, if possible. Well maintained air conditioning systems with HEPA filtration should be fine. Such systems must be well maintained. |
|   | <b>How can I prevent overheating on hot days?</b>  | You will have to make a judgement call to ensure yours and your client's safety and comfort, if fans are used please include this in your Risk Assessment. Doors and windows may be opened where possible. Fans may be used between clients to cool the treatment room.   |
| <b>Track &amp; Trace</b>                | <b>What if my client cannot, or does not, wish to have the Track and Trace App?</b>  | Currently, the government has not made it compulsory to have the Track and Trace App. Failure by the client to use the app is not, therefore, a contraindication. However, as responsible citizens we should encourage our clients and contact group to have it if they can.  |
| <b>Shared Premises</b>                  | <b>I work in a mixed-profession environment (eg, hairdressers, beauty salon, physiotherapy clinic) and their guidance differs from mine, what should I do?</b> | You must abide by your own Professional Association's guidance as a minimum requirement. If the clinic you work in has different guidelines this can only be adopted if they are stricter than this guidance. Be aware that legislative guidance from Government or Public Health may supersede this guidance.  |
| <b>Mobile Therapy</b>                   | <b>When performing home visits, do I have to remove my couch from the premises before cleaning it? If so, where should I do this?</b>                          | Yes, you must remove your couch from the premises before cleaning it. Ideally, this should be done in the open air, weather permitting. If this is not possible, plastic coverings should be used to cover an area (eg, backseat) of your vehicle and cleaning may take place there prior to the couch being placed in its cover.   |
| <b>Scotland, Wales &amp; N. Ireland</b> | <b>What if I work in one the devolved nations?</b>   | You must follow the guidelines from your devolved government, so you may need to adapt the ISRM guidance to reflect any differences.  |
| <b>Shielding Groups</b>                 | <b>Will we be able to treat clients who have been in shielding groups?</b>   | This is yet to be decided and will depend on further government updates. It may be prudent to ask the client to seek guidance from a medical professional before treatment.   |

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| <b>Client Health &amp; Contra-indications</b> | <b>If we, as the therapist, have been advised that we are in a shielding group, can we provide treatments?</b>   | <p>This is yet to be decided and will depend on further government updates. It may be prudent to seek advice from your GP.</p>   |
|   | <b>Are there any new contraindications to Soft Tissue Therapy treatments as a result of having had Covid-19?</b> | <p>There are some very preliminary studies to suggest that they may be some lasting effects of Covid-19 which could impact on appropriateness of certain treatments. This is most likely to affect individuals who have been hospitalised with the virus. Currently, we recommend that you consult with a client's GP prior to commencing treatment if the client has been hospitalised as a result of Covid-19. The ISRM will continue to stay up-to-date with all emerging evidence around this and update this guidance as appropriate.</p> |
|   | <b>Should I be checking my client's temperature prior to treatment?</b>  | <p>The client should be asked prior to treatment whether they have any symptoms of Covid-19 (one of which is a high temperature). NHS guidance suggests that measuring temperature with a thermometer is not highly reliable; you can have a fever without registering at 38°C on a thermometer. Rather NHS advice is that a fever can be determined by the chest or back being hot to the touch. This should be checked by the client themselves prior to attending their appointment, not by you at the appointment.</p>                     |