

THINKING OF RETURNING TO FACE-TO FACE WORKING?

As the Covid lockdown measures begin to be eased, a question in many minds, therapists as well as clients, is when can face-to face-work be returned to safely.

As with much of official guidance on how to behave and keep safe during this pandemic, there are no explicit rules governing this. What is needed, therefore, is a careful and ethical consideration of the needs, safety and risks in each individual practice setting, for each individual client and for yourself.

The Practice Setting

Does your practice room allow you to sit *at least* 1 metre apart from your client? What about other parts of the site e.g. waiting room?

Transmission is more likely indoors and you will be with your client probably for at least 50 minutes. Are you prepared to wear a mask or visor and insist that your client does also?

Is there a window that can be opened?

Have you identified all the surfaces that would need to be sanitised before and after your client's visit including toilets?

The Client

Risk of virus transmission exists in any setting at the present time. The following are suggestions of what to consider.

Are you clear about the reasons for returning to face-to-face work with each client?

Do the reasons justify the risk e.g. is face to face meeting essential to the continuation of therapy?

Would the client be vulnerable to harm if therapy had to end?

Are there other options for your client e.g. referral elsewhere?

Is your client in a vulnerable category e.g. aged 60 plus, BAME or with a medical condition?

Is your client unable to use on line facilities for any reason including disability?

Would your client be exposed to additional risk in travelling to your practice room?

Will you insist on formal client consent to pass on information to contact tracers? If not, how will you respond to contact tracers?

You

Have you assessed your own risk e.g. are you in a vulnerable category?

Are you aware of the parameters necessary for you to feel safe?

Are you prepared to stay within these limits even in response clients who have justifiable reason for asking for personal meetings?

Will your insurance cover you?

Have you discussed this with your supervisor?

You may find this link helpful

<https://www.worksafebc.com/en/about-us/covid-19-updates/covid-19-returning-safe-operation/in-person-counselling>

With best wishes and keep safe.

John Fletcher
UKAHPP Chair