

PRACTICE DURING COVID 19 LOCKDOWN 2 -- MANAGING THE RISK

In these difficult, Covid ravaged times there is an enhanced level of psychological and emotional suffering within all our communities which looks likely to continue - and possibly increase – for some time.

As providers of services for people experiencing psychological and emotional distress, counsellors and psychotherapists, under current government guidelines, are not required to close their practices. UKAHPP registrants are nevertheless encouraged to review their practice arrangements in the light of the current Covid restrictions, particularly with regard to offering clients in-person sessions.

Many registrants may have recommenced in-person sessions since the last lockdown but as the Covid threat appears likely to increase during the winter, all registrants are encouraged to review their practice in the light of the latest lockdown restrictions in relation to in-person and remote working.

In line with previous guidance (see UKAHPP website) UKAHPP registrants are encouraged to decide on whether to work in-person, remotely or suspend practices through an ethical balancing of the needs and well-being of clients and the risk of transmission involved for self, clients and unknown others.

It cannot be emphasised enough that in-person settings can never be risk free no matter how thorough the precautions taken. It is also important to recognise that the risk of transmission related to in-person settings can affect people other than therapist and client concerned perhaps through travelling or multiple users of a practice setting.

Naturally all UKAHPP registrants will be concerned to meet the needs and wishes of their clients. However, given the inherent risk to self and client and others, in-person sessions should only be offered when it is considered essential for clients' well-being.

Further, all registrants are encouraged to be prepared to prioritise their own safety over the wishes of their clients and not undertake in-person work when they do not feel safe and comfortable to do so.

Should a registrant or an in-person client test positive or have been in contact with someone who has tested positive, registrants should follow government guidelines and stay at home and work at home. For therapists who routinely work from home this would mean working only remotely for the required period of isolation.

During Covid 19 there is an increased risk of sudden illness and incapacitation for everyone and registrants are therefore encouraged to consider identifying at least two people to act as their therapeutic executors.

Below are links to useful sources of information and guidance

<https://www.gov.uk/guidance/new-national-restrictions-from-5-november?priority-taxon=774cee22-d896-44c1-a611-e3109cce8eae#meeting-others-safely>

<https://www.bacp.co.uk/news/news-from-bacp/coronavirus/>

<https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/coronavirus-covid-19/>

<https://www.psychotherapy.org.uk/ukcp-news/coronavirus-hub/>

<https://acto-org.uk/self-care-when-working-online/>

With best wishes in these difficult times

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