



Growing Hope |
Registered charity 1176358

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Growing Hope response to COVID-19 17/03/20

Version 3

This will be reviewed and updated following UK government advice.

Introduction:

At the time of updating this guidance (17th March 2020), there were 1,950 cases of coronavirus (COVID-19) in the UK ([Gov UK March 2020](#)). Of these, there were 480 cases confirmed in London, with 11 confirmed cases in the borough of Islington and 22 confirmed cases in Camden. Prior to this, on 3rd March, the UK Government published its UK-wide Action Plan, based on three phases of response, Contain, Delay, Mitigate, supported by ongoing research.

On 16th March 2020 the government updated their response (www.gov.uk/coronavirus) to include social distancing and reduced travel.

Scope of Growing Hope's response

The situation regarding the outbreak of COVID-19 is continuously evolving and as an organisation we are taking it very seriously. Our priority is to ensure the health and wellbeing of our employees, freelancers, volunteers, trustees, as well as the families and children we serve.

We are monitoring the situation closely and following the guidance as it's updated and issued by the UK government and public health authorities. We are regularly providing information and advice to all our employees, to follow precautions and stay safe and healthy.

Growing Hope currently has one active clinic – Growing Hope King's Cross. This clinic partners with King's Cross Church and the Action for Children Centre (where clinic sessions are held). Growing Hope's response to COVID-19 therefore maintains and follows the procedures outlined by both organisations.

Alternative working

- **Clinic closure**

Face to face clinic sessions will end for the foreseeable future at the end of the day on Thursday 19th March 2020. This decision has been taken to protect the health and wellbeing of our employees, freelancers, volunteers, trustees, as well as the families and children we serve, and is in line with the UK government guidelines about social distancing and non-essential travel.

- **New assessments for occupational therapy**

Children who are expecting an occupational therapy assessment will now receive an assessment virtually.



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This will involve:

- Parents being sent an online questionnaire one week prior to the assessment taking place, which they are requested to complete before the assessment.
 - A 30 minute phone call with the parent to talk through the child's needs.
 - This will be immediately followed by a 30 minute session with the parent and child via a video call (such as Whatsapp) where the occupational therapist will carry out as much assessment as is possible on a remote basis.
 - For this 30 minute session parents are asked to have a table and chair that they can sit at and a piece of paper and a pencil. Where possible, parents are requested to also have some cutlery, playdough, a shirt or cardigan with buttons and some scissors present.
- **Occupational therapy sessions**
These will now continue virtually. Children who are expecting occupational therapy sessions will have 30 minute virtual sessions starting at their usual appointment time unless informed otherwise. Where children have been booked in for group sessions these will be carried out on an individual basis instead. These sessions will be tailored to your child's needs, where children can follow instructions remotely the therapist will use video calls (such as Whatsapp) to provide intervention with the parent and child. Where children will struggle to participate within activities remotely these sessions will be done on a consultation basis via a phone call with the parent.
 - **Cancellation of sessions**
Where a parent, child, or clinician is self isolating due to illness, sessions, consultations and assessments will not take place, but will be rearranged. In this instance families will be contacted via a text to the mobile number they provided at the time of the referral. Parents must please ensure Growing Hope has your up to date contact details.
 - **Staff working arrangements**
All our staff will now be working remotely (from Thursday 20th March 2020) for the foreseeable future for their own health and wellbeing, as is in accordance with government guidelines.
 - **Meetings**
Meetings will now take place remotely using video conference facilities. This applies to all fundraising, event planning and trustee meetings for the foreseeable future. In light of the evolving situation further communications and guidance pertaining to individual meetings will be issued from the CEO and/or Chair of Trustees closer to the time.



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- **Supporting families**

At this unprecedented time we want to be supporting families as much as possible, particularly with the increased likelihood that parents will now be at home with their children as social distancing and isolation measures come into effect. We will be posting updates and activity ideas on our Growing Hope Instagram and Twitter accounts @growinghopeuk during this time.

Pay for staff members and freelancers

Growing Hope are committed to fairly supporting their staff and freelancers:

- **Employees**

All our employees will receive full pay, as normal, during this time. Where it's not possible to schedule virtual sessions, employees are expected to turn efforts to fundraising and other administrative tasks of benefit to Growing Hope. If employees need to self isolate due to illness Growing Hope will continue to support them and provide full sick pay.

- **Freelancers**

Growing Hope has taken the decision to extend the four week notice period for cancellation of sessions for freelancers to eight weeks in order to support our freelancers who may experience financial hardship at this time. Freelancers will be paid for up to eight weeks of planned sessions irrespective of whether they themselves or their clients become unwell. If freelancers are able to provide services on an ongoing basis remotely, then they are encouraged to do so, and as such they will then be paid beyond an eight week period and must invoice for sessions completed remotely as per the usual guidelines for pay.

Growing Hope team measures

We are not aware, at present, of anyone within the Growing Hope team including clinicians, freelancers and volunteers who have visited an affected area. The following measures will continue to be in place whilst clinicians see families face to face until Thursday 19th March 2020.

- **Handwashing**

Posters about handwashing have been installed in kitchens and toilets throughout the Action for Children centre and KX House. Thorough handwashing with antibacterial soap and warm water is recommended for 20 seconds.

- **Travel**

Staff, freelancers and volunteers are to avoid all travel to heavily affected areas, and notify Line Managers if you are living with or close to anyone who has returned from those areas recently. The up to date list of affected countries is [here](#).

- **Cleaning**

Staff, freelancers and volunteers should ensure they are following the



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[infection control policy](#) and use antibacterial wipes to wipe down all surfaces, toys and laptops following sessions and at the end of each day.

Families attending clinic

- Following NHS guidelines anyone who has travelled to the UK from the following places in the last 14 days (Iran, Hubei province in China, Special care zones in South Korea (Daegu, Cheongdo, Gyeongsan) or Italy since 9 March 2020 will be asked to not enter the building.
- If any individual attending a group or clinic has common cold symptoms, a cough, fever, however mild, we would request that they do not attend any Growing Hope services in order to reduce the risk to others. If individuals attend clinics with visible symptoms they will be asked to return home.

Future Steps

- Growing Hope will continue to follow UK government guidelines to inform future steps.

Events

The next Growing Hope event is the Growing Hope Gala Dinner Celebration on Saturday 20th June 2020. It is hoped that this will be able to go ahead. However, if the trustees or government advice suggests that the risk is too great, then the event will be cancelled with a 2 week notice period and a full refund will be issued.

All other event planning will continue, but will reference up to date advice as to whether each event continues.

Communication

This policy is accessible via the Growing Hope website and will be updated regularly.

This policy will be directly sent to all staff members, freelancers, volunteers and trustees. It will also be sent to all families currently accessing clinic and with appointments in the foreseeable future.

Hope in Jesus

We believe that Jesus brings hope in every situation. In this moment as a Growing Hope team we are praying for those who are most vulnerable and impacted by COVID-19. We want to encourage anyone who is part of the Growing Hope family to consider how they can love their neighbour in the face of this outbreak.

Relevant Documents

- Government Action Plan is here [Coronavirus action plan: a guide to what you can expect across the UK](#)
- Government Latest Update (daily news): [Number of coronavirus \(COVID-19\) cases and risk in the UK](#)



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- Church of England Guidance: [Coronavirus \(Covid-19\) Guidance Update - 11 March](#)
- Information about 2019 Novel Coronavirus (2019-nCoV) can be found [here](#)
- Advice for the public from WHO can be found [here](#)
- Technical guidance from WHO can be found [here](#)
- Novel Coronavirus (2019-nCoV) from CDC can be found [here](#)