Growing Hope response to COVID-19
03/06/20
Version 4

This will be reviewed and updated following UK government advice.

Introduction:
At the time of updating this guidance the Government response has changed with some lockdown restrictions lessened, in relation to the current level of COVID-19 cases (www.gov.uk/coronavirus).

This means that as of Wednesday 17th June 2020 we will re-open our King’s Cross therapy clinic with additional health and safety measures in place.

All staff and families will have the choice to continue sessions virtually if they prefer to, or to attend sessions in person. A full risk assessment has been undertaken in addition to this response document (see appendix 1).

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 is 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 reopening
  Face to face clinic sessions will be available again if families choose to access these. These will take place in the outdoor area of the Action for Children centre with increased health and safety measures in place. Face to face sessions will only be available on a 1:1 basis. We have outlined our procedures for face to face sessions with families in a document which will be sent out to all individuals who currently have appointments with Growing Hope (appendix 2). Before entering clinic, families and clinicians will be required to complete an electronic form declaring that both themselves and their household are symptom free (appendix 3). We will be following our health and safety measures and risk assessment in a strict manner in order to protect the health and wellbeing of our employees.
freelancers, volunteers, trustees, as well as the families and children we serve.

- **New assessments**
  Children who are expecting a therapy assessment will have the option to receive this in person or virtually. These will take place as follows:
  
  - 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.
  - A 30 minute session with the parent and child either in clinic or via a video call (such as Whatsapp) where the therapist will carry out an assessment.
  - If the assessment is virtual, each therapist will communicate to parent’s the items they will need for the assessment activities.

- **Therapy sessions**
  Families are able to choose whether to attend these in person (appendix 2) or virtually. All virtual sessions will only be 30 minutes long in order that children can participate on a screen for this length of time. 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.

- **Cancelation of sessions**
  24 hours notice must be given for cancellations. If a family does not attend a session without prior warning this session will be missed. Where sessions need to be cancelled due to illness these will be rearranged. Families must ensure that Growing Hope has up to date contact details.

- **Staff working arrangements**
  All our staff will continue to work remotely when they do not have sessions planned in clinic. When they have gaps within their working day between clinic sessions they will work socially distanced from others or from their own homes.

- **Meetings**
  Meetings will generally take place remotely using video conference facilities. This applies to all fundraising, event planning and trustee meetings for the foreseeable future. If government guidelines are followed meetings could take place socially distanced outdoors.
• **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.

**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**
The following measures continue to be in place:

  * **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. All our staff will be adhering to this.

  * **Travel**
    Staff, freelancers and volunteers are to avoid unnecessary use of public transport where possible. If staff, freelancers or volunteers do need to use public transport they are required to wear a face covering in accordance with Government advice.

  * **Cleaning**
    Staff, freelancers and volunteers will ensure they are following the [infection control policy](#) and use antibacterial wipes to wipe down all surfaces, toys and laptops following each session and at the end of each day.

Providing tree therapy for children and young people with additional needs and their families in partnership with local churches across the UK.
Families attending clinic
- Each family attending clinic will be asked to complete an online form (appendix 3) on the day they come to clinic before they are able to enter the building. If themselves or someone in their household has any coronavirus symptoms, they will be asked to return home, and their session for this day will not take place.

Future Steps
- Growing Hope will continue to follow UK government guidelines to inform future steps. In person sessions will become virtual if there is an increase in cases or a local outbreak of COVID-19.

Events
Growing Hope events are currently postponed, and planning of future events will take place in line with government guidelines.

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 and guidelines considered
- Government [current guidelines are here](#)
- Government guidelines for [working safely during COVID-19 are here](#)
- NHS guidelines for [community healthcare services for individuals with autism and learning disabilities are here](#)
- NHS guidelines for [psychological first aid for children and young people](#)
- Government Latest Update (daily news): [Number of coronavirus (COVID-19) cases and risk in the UK](#)
- 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 Centres of Disease Control and Prevention can be found [here](#)
## Appendix 1 - Risk Assessment

### Growing Hope COVID-19 Risk Assessment

**Date - 3rd June 2020**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>What are the hazards?</th>
<th>Who might be harmed and how?</th>
<th>What are you already doing?</th>
<th>Do you need to do anything else to control this risk?</th>
<th>Action by who?</th>
<th>Action by when?</th>
<th>Done</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Exposure to COVID-19 in the building and through touching doors/fomites</td>
<td>Staff and visitors may catch COVID-19 if they touch a surface (fomite) that contains the virus.</td>
<td>Our infection control policy is already followed. Action for Children centre cleaners are specifically cleaning contact points such as doors.</td>
<td>Therapists to open all doors for families to reduce contact. Families to move straight through building to outside space without touching anything as much as possible.</td>
<td>All staff, Lead therapist and clinic manager to monitor</td>
<td>From now on</td>
<td>17/6/20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Exposure to COVID-19 when using the toilet</td>
<td>Staff and visitors may come in contact with the virus through surface contact.</td>
<td>Regular cleaning of toilets is undergone by the Action for Children centre</td>
<td>Therapists will use clinical grade wipes to wipe contact points in the bathroom at the start and end of the day and in between sessions.</td>
<td>All staff, Lead therapist and clinic manager to monitor</td>
<td>From now on</td>
<td>17/6/20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Exposure to COVID-19 through interaction with others</td>
<td>Staff and visitors may come in contact with the virus if individuals are asymptomatic and in physical contact with them.</td>
<td>Since lockdown commenced all sessions have been virtual. In opening clinic we will only have one therapist working with one child at a time. Therapists will social distance and meet outside where there is handover. Social distancing during sessions will take place as much as possible although it is recognised this will not always occur.</td>
<td>Contact through instructing parents rather than through professionals will be encouraged. All individuals will be asked to wash their hands for 20 seconds with soap in the visitors toilet at the start and end of their session. All individuals will be asked to complete an electronic declaration of their lack of symptoms and awareness of risk (on their own device) prior to entering the clinic.</td>
<td>All staff, Lead therapist and clinic manager to monitor</td>
<td>From now on</td>
<td>17/6/20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Exposure to COVID-19 through touching equipment that others have touched</td>
<td>Staff and visitors may come in contact with the virus through surface (fomite) contact.</td>
<td>Since lockdown commenced all sessions have been virtual. To avoid contact whilst waiting families will be requested to wait outside the centre until the time of their appointment.</td>
<td>All equipment that children touch within their session will be wiped down with clinical grade wipes in between sessions. Sessions will be limited to 40 minutes to enable sufficient time for cleaning of equipment in between sessions.</td>
<td>All staff, Lead therapist and clinic manager to monitor</td>
<td>From now on</td>
<td>17/6/20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Exposure to COVID-19 coming in contact whilst on public transport</td>
<td>Staff and visitors may come in contact with the virus through surface (fomite) contact.</td>
<td>Since lockdown commenced all sessions have been virtual.</td>
<td>It will be recommended that families and staff avoid public transport where possible and where this has to be taken they follow social distancing guidelines as much as possible and wear a face covering.</td>
<td>All staff, Lead therapist and clinic manager to monitor</td>
<td>From now on</td>
<td>17/6/20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Exposure to COVID-19 through signing in.</td>
<td>Staff and visitors may come in contact with the virus through surface contact.</td>
<td>Previously sign in has been on a paper form.</td>
<td>Attendance to clinic will be noted within Canopy - Growing Hope's clinical database. Therapy staff will accompany families whilst they are in the centre.</td>
<td>All staff,</td>
<td>From now on</td>
<td>17/6/20</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Appendix 2 - Information for parents

Attending clinic during the COVID-19 pandemic
As a charity we have been carefully considering both the risks and benefits to children being able to attend clinic sessions in person. We are aware that this is a difficult time for families of children with additional needs and therefore want to be able to offer as much support as possible. As of Wednesday 17th June our clinic will be open for 1:1 sessions only. You can choose whether to attend clinic or continue your sessions virtually. We ask you to carefully read and follow the following guidelines if you choose to attend clinic:

- You must complete this form: https://forms.gle/ACPd8Buehdc3f9oQ6 to declare that you are symptom free on the day of your appointment prior to attending clinic.

- All appointments will take place in the outside secure garden at the back of the Action for Children Centre. There is a sheltered area which will be used in the event of rain. Please bring your child’s coat if necessary.

- Therapy staff will open all doors for you in order to reduce contact points.

- On arrival to the centre you will be asked to wash your hands and your child’s hands for 20 seconds with soap and warm water in the visitors toilet at the entrance.

- You will not be required to sign in and the therapist will remain with you at all times. We will record your attendance electronically.

- If you or your child needs the toilet you must use the visitors toilet next to the office, this will be disinfected after each individual use.

- All equipment used by the therapists will be disinfected after each session. (For this reason appointment times will be no longer than 40 minutes in order that therapy staff have sufficient time to clean the equipment).

- You are requested to wait outside the centre prior to your appointment time.

- Please do not use public transport unless absolutely necessary to attend clinic, if you need to use public transport please follow the government guidelines and social distancing where possible.

- We recognise that social distancing will not be entirely possible during therapy sessions, we will avoid contact and ask parents to do as much of this as possible, however, in order to support your child their therapy session may include physical contact. We will ask everyone to wash their hands before leaving clinic.

- We ask that your child only attends clinic with one adult and no other children. Where it is not possible for only one adult to safely travel with a child two adults will be permitted. In exceptional circumstances where no alternative childcare is available parents may bring one additional child to clinic in a pushchair as long as the child remains in their pushchair or on their parent’s knee whilst at the clinic. At present we cannot allow younger children to also play as our therapists cannot safely monitor which surfaces two children touch.

- We recognise that face masks and gloves may be distressing for children and therefore our staff will not be wearing PPE, but will be observing extra stringent infection control and will be washing their hands in between each session.

Please note clinic may close at short notice if there is a local outbreak of COVID-19 or if the number of London cases increases to a point that remaining open would be unsafe.
Appendix 3 – Form to complete before entering clinic

https://forms.gle/8CPdBBuehdr3f9oQ6