



Growing Hope |
Registered charity 1176358

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Growing Hope response to COVID-19

12/04/2021

Version 11

This will be reviewed and updated following UK government advice.

Introduction:

At the time of updating this guidance the Government response has changed in accordance with the step plan out of lockdown restrictions.

We are monitoring the situation closely and as of Monday 19th April (after the Easter holidays) we will start back with in-person sessions. This will involve seeing individuals for sessions indoors with good ventilation and social distancing measures where possible. We are continuing to run therapy clinics in order to provide essential services for children, young people and families with additional needs.

We find that we are able to meet therapy goals more easily with session in person, however, if individuals request virtual sessions we will organise these. We will also carry out virtual sessions for any families who are self-isolating or if our therapists need to self isolate. 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 two active clinics – Growing Hope King's Cross and Growing Hope Brockley. These clinic partner with King's Cross Church and the Action for Children Centre (where clinic sessions are held) and St Peter's Brockley (where clinic sessions are being held). Growing Hope's response to COVID-19 therefore maintains and follows the procedures outlined by all three organisations.

Alternative working

- **Working from home**
Employees will be asked to work from home where possible. Therapists are asked to continue to attend clinic in order to support children, young people and families. Where employees do not have a suitable workstation

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at home or shared housing makes working from home difficult they will be able to access the office with Covid-secure measures in place.

- **Clinic reopening**

Face to face clinic sessions will be taking place within indoor well-ventilated rooms with increased health and safety measures in place. Face to face sessions will be available including client groups of up to 6. 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 attend the clinic for assessments.

- **Therapy sessions**

Families are encouraged to attend the clinic for sessions. These are 40 minutes long in order to enable time for cleaning. In some circumstances families may request virtual sessions, all virtual sessions will only be 30 minutes long in order that children can participate on a screen for this length of time. These sessions will be tailored to each child's needs, where children can follow instructions remotely the therapist will use video calls (such as Zoom or Whatsapp) to provide intervention with the parent and child. Please see our safeguarding policy for guidelines around the use of zoom. 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**

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.



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- **Supporting families**

At this unprecedented time we want to be supporting families as much as possible. 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, KX House and St Peter's church. Thorough handwashing with antibacterial soap and warm water is recommended for 20 seconds. All our staff will be adhering to this.

- **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.

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.

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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.

Track and Trace

Growing Hope will have a NHS COVID-19 track and track QR code available at Growing Hope clinic and families will be requested to scan this on arrival at the site. The NHS Track and Trace system will then identify individuals who may have come in contact with a positive case through clinic.

Whether an individual receives notification from Track and Trace or not, if a child, young person, parent or therapist informs the Growing Hope team that they have received a positive test result then staff member or volunteer who has completed a session with this individual must isolate for 10 days from the date they had the last contact with the individual who is positive. Anyone living with or in a support bubble with the staff member/volunteer isolating does not have to self isolate if the staff member/volunteer does not have symptoms.

If a child, young person or parent develops symptoms and informs the Growing Hope team of this then the above guidelines should be carefully followed and social distancing maintained where possible until a test has been completed. If the test is negative clinic will resume as normal. If the test is positive then any member of staff who spent time with the individuals in question must isolate for 10 days from the point of contact.

If a staff member/volunteer is self-isolating due to track and trace and goes on to develop symptoms they should take a test. If the test is negative they should complete the 10 days isolation. If the test is positive they should then isolate for a further 10 days. Individuals in their household should then isolate for 14 days.

If a staff member/ volunteer has a positive test at any point then track and trace should be put into place. Growing Hope will inform any families who have had contact with this staff member within the 48 hrs prior to symptoms developing.

If a staff member develops symptoms they must go home immediately, request a test and stay at home until they have received test results. If the test is negative the staff member can continue work. If the test is positive the staff member must self-isolate for 10 days. Members of their household must isolate for 10 days.

Communication

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



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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 v11

Date - 12 April 2021

What are the hazards?	Who might be harmed and how?	What are you already doing?	Do you need to do anything else to control this risk?	Action by who?	Action by when?	Done
Exposure to COVID-19 in the building and through touching doors/fomites	Staff and visitors may catch COVID-19 if they touch a surface (fomite) that contains the virus.	Our infection control policy is already followed. Action for Children centre Cleaners are specifically cleaning contact points such as doors.	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.	All staff, Lead therapist and clinic manager to monitor	From now on	17/6/20
Exposure to COVID-19 when using the toilet	Staff and visitors may come in contact with the virus through surface contact.	Regular cleaning of toilets is undergone by the Action for Children centre	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.	All staff, Lead therapist and clinic manager to monitor	From now on	17/6/20
Exposure to COVID-19 through interaction with others	Staff and visitors may come in contact with the virus if individuals are asymptomatic and in physical contact with them.	Therapists will social distance and meet outside where there is handover. Social distancing of 2m during sessions will take place as much as possible although it is recognised this will not always occur. Therapists can wear face masks and PPE and parents can also choose to wear PPE if they are concerned about contact and difficulties with social distancing. Therapists will be encouraged to take lateral flow tests twice a week to help reduce risk of asymptomatic COVID-19 cases through the NHS test and trace system.	Contact through instructing parents rather than through professionals will be encouraged. Contact through side to side interaction & avoiding face to face. 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. Therapists have the option to receive the vaccine.	All staff, Lead therapist and clinic manager to monitor	From now on	17/6/20
Exposure to COVID-19 through touching equipment that others have touched	Staff and visitors may come in contact with the virus through surface (fomite) contact.	To avoid contact whilst waiting families will be requested to wait outside the centre until the time of their appointment. Previously sign in has been on a paper form but is now electronic.	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.	All staff, Lead therapist and clinic manager to monitor	From now on	17/6/20



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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. 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/8CPdBBuehdr3f9oQ6> to declare that you are symptom free on the day of your appointment prior to attending clinic.
- All appointments will take place in a well-ventilated room indoors.
- 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 which 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 clinic prior to your appointment time.
- Our therapists are encouraged to carry out two lateral flow tests each week to check for asymptomatic cases.
- We recognise that social distancing will not be entirely possible during therapy sessions, we will endeavour to keep 2m distance, 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 they touch.
- We recognise that face masks can make building rapport in therapy difficult. 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. If you are concerned about contact and social distancing within your child's session you can choose to wear a face mask.

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.

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Appendix 3 – Form to complete before entering clinic

<https://forms.gle/8CPdBBuehdr3f9oQ6>

COVID-19 Declaration form

This form must be completed the day of attending Growing Hope clinics before entering the building. If you answer 'yes' to any of the following questions you will be unable to attend clinic in person.

*** Required**

Full name and child's name *

Your answer

Reason for attending clinic (write name of therapist you are visiting) *

Your answer

Have you or someone in your house hold had a high temperature in the past 14 days? *

☐ Yes

☐ No

Have you or someone in your household had a new continuous cough in the past 14 days? *

☐ Yes

☐ No

Have you or someone in your household had change to your sense of smell or taste in the past 14 days? *

☐ Yes

☐ No

Declaration *

☐ I can confirm that myself and my household are symptom- free of COVID-19 and have been for the last 14 days. I am attending clinic with my child at my own risk and have read the information provided by Growing Hope about health and safety measures in place whilst attending clinic

Submit

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