



COVID-19 Risk Assessment

Assessment completed by: Job title/role: Barry Davies, Practice Director

Date last updated: 01/12/2021

Date of next scheduled review: 01/03/2022 or upon next Welsh Government announcement.

Risk title	Description & consequence	Mitigation	Action by who and by when?
<p>1. Spread of COVID-19 in the firm</p>	<p>This will result in multiple individuals (partners, associates, and staff) becoming infected and possibly seriously or fatally ill</p> <p>Vulnerable workers could be worst affected</p>	<p>Review onsite and offsite work arrangements including remote working and placing staff in teams for onsite working. For example, secretarial staff to be office based, certain support staff (finance) on a rota basis, reception staff to be office based, fee earners to work in accordance with our working from home 2021 policy.</p> <p>Take steps to review work schedules including start and finish times/shift patterns, to reduce the number of people on site at any one time, to include a register of who is on-site at any given time as part of our internal 'track and trace' system.</p>	<p>Practice Director with support of Departmental Heads monthly.</p>

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		<p>Considering reverting to an upper occupancy limit of 50% for our offices at any time in the event of a spike in local cases or new emerging variants. Due to the size of our Head office in sq. feet and branch office network this is adequate in addition to social distance measures, room availability, and clear signage.</p> <p>Consider additional measures for vulnerable staff such as rooms away from open plan areas, where possible.</p> <p>Remind staff of social distancing markers and measures in communal areas or areas that may become congregated.</p> <p>No one feeling ill will be allowed to come to work regardless of the condition.</p>	

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		<p>Communication and awareness-raising posters referring to the above measures</p> <p>Enhanced cleaning regime, including for toilets, and frequent touchpoints such as door handles, light switches, reception area using appropriate cleaning products and methods</p> <p>Hand washing awareness: see the NHS guidance</p> <p>Sanitation products (hand sanitiser, cleaning wipes) widely available.</p> <p>Review HR sickness policies</p> <p>Reminding everyone of the public health advice through posters, leaflets and other materials made widely and prominently available: see the government guidance</p>	

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<p>2. Spread of COVID-19 to clients or visitors</p>	<p>This will result in multiple individuals (Directors, staff, visitors/clients, and contractors) becoming infected and possibly seriously or fatally ill</p>	<p>Measures to prevent people from placing personal item as (such as coats/bags) in places where they may contribute to transmission.</p> <p>Face-to-face meetings discouraged unless essential with conference calls to be used instead. Wherever this is not possible protective masks must be worn in reception areas until behind the safety of a screen.</p> <p>Upper limit on meeting numbers determined by available room size</p> <p>Meetings staggered so no congestion possible</p> <p>Enhanced cleaning regime, including before/between/after each individual meeting</p> <p>Sanitation products (hand sanitiser, cleaning wipes) available inside each meeting room</p>	<p>Practice Director with assistance from Department Heads and reception staff, monthly.</p>

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		<p>Limit catering/refreshments offered inside meeting rooms</p> <p>Pre-meeting notification sent to all attendees asking them to stay away if feeling unwell</p> <p>Temperature checks at building entrance will keep away any external attendee with an elevated temperature</p> <p>Physical distancing in place in reception/waiting area and in corridors, or near communal copying areas.</p> <p>No cloakroom service –visitors should look after their own personal items</p>	
<p>3. COVID-19 case (suspected) in our offices</p>	<p>This may result in the individual staff member experiencing medical distress on-site and could increase the risk of onward transmission of the virus among other people with whom the individual has been in proximity</p>	<p>The single point of contact who will lead the response, including contacting local public health teams will be Barry Davies – Practice Director and in his absence* any other Director.</p>	<p>Practice Director and other Directors, monthly.</p>

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		<p>*Absence meaning not available for work through incapacity and not limited to being physically present in the office.</p> <p>The response plan will be:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Contact the staff member to ensure that he/she gets a test as soon as possible and self-isolates until test result is provided. - Get in touch with the individuals that are part of that staff member's department and ask them to undertake a lateral flow test. - Contact NHS Test and Trace and assist them with the details required. 	

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		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Inform management team <p>If there's more than one case of COVID-19 reported in the office we will contact the local PHE health protection team to report the suspected outbreak</p> <p>If anyone becomes unwell with a new continuous cough, a high temperature or loss of sense of smell in the workplace, they will be sent home and advised to undertake a lateral flow test</p> <p>Directors and managers to increase the frequency of contact with those they supervise during this time</p> <p>Reemphasise that no-one feeling ill can come to the office of any condition and not limited to Covid-19.</p>	

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		<p>Temperature checks at building entrance should prevent anyone with an elevated temperature entering the office</p> <p>Maintaining up-to-date contact information (including emergency contacts) for all Directors and staff</p> <p>Record keeping on who is in and where in the office on a given day to aid potential contact-tracing efforts and processes and keeping this information for 21 days as per the Government's guidance.</p>	
4. COVID-19 transmission via communal resources or areas	This may result in increased risk of transmission, including to/from clients and visitors	<p>Review marketing material (brochures and literature), newspapers and magazines and consider if they should be removed from client reception area</p> <p>Libraries to develop a special protocol for cleaning all books,</p>	Practice Director and Reception staff monthly.

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		<p>journals and other publications held in the open areas.</p> <p>Communal use pens to be limited in meeting rooms and open plan areas.</p> <p>If a member of staff or visitor has tested positive for COVID-19 and was recently on the premises the firm will follow the action plan set in section 3.</p>	
5. COVID-19 transmission via mail/packages	This may result in increased risk of transmission by handling of objects	<p>Cleaning protocol is in place for all incoming mail and courier packages</p> <p>Staff advised to clean any mail/post items delivered to their desks (wet wipes to be provided)</p> <p>Drop off and drop on zones should be used such as central mail baskets clearly marked.</p>	Practice Director and mail room staff monthly.
6. Mental health problems and poor wellbeing	This may result from increased stress caused by home-working and the lockdown, potential bereavements, increased caring responsibilities, elevated incidence of anxiety and depression associated with isolation,	<p>Signpost to LawCare resources and the Law Society's mental health resources</p> <p>Increase volume of guidance materials and resources available</p>	Practice Director as Mental Health First Aider (Wales), quarterly.

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	<p>concerns about personal and family circumstances and job security</p>	<p>Raise awareness on any Employee Assistance Programme (EAP) offering access to additional resources and support</p> <p>Adjust policies around home working and leave-taking to support working parents</p> <p>Regular internal communications from senior leadership emphasising self-care and regular and inclusive communication. The emphasis should also be on honesty and transparency about the difficulties the firm is facing and how to best manage these together</p> <p>Regular communication of mental health information and an open-door policy for those who need additional support</p> <p>Provide assurance over measures taken to protect employees' health and safety</p>	

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7. Ergonomic injuries	<p>Insufficient chairs, screens, footstools, desks etc. may be available in the office in the event staff have taken equipment home.</p> <p>It may be difficult to perform workspace risk assessments whilst maintaining physical distancing or if people sit in different locations each time, they are in the office</p>	<p>Where possible, people to be asked to bring their more portable ergonomic equipment (such as keyboards, wrist supports or mice) with them when working in the office</p>	<p>Practice Director, quarterly.</p>
8. Public transport virus transmission	<p>Crowded and unsanitary conditions on public transport services</p>	<p>Staff to consider the bike to work scheme that makes buying a bicycle very cost-effective.</p> <p>If staff members need to travel (for example to courts or to do site visits) they should not share vehicles or taxis, unless suitable distancing can be achieved.</p> <p>Staff members should avoid car sharing during the working day, such as lunchtime, unless they live in the same household.</p>	<p>Practice Director and Directors, quarterly.</p>

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9. Car/bike park virus transmission	Narrow spaces in the firm's carpark or bicycle storage area may elevate the risk of person-to-person transmission	Set a 75% of occupancy limit	Practice Director and reception staff, quarterly.
10. Safety and security at building entrance	There is a risk that individuals waiting for extended periods of time at building entrances due to physical distancing and temperature checks experience adverse weather-related health impacts or could be subject to opportunistic crime/harassment	<p>Staggered arrival times for those attending the office should limit congestion</p> <p>Staff encouraged to arrive early before temperatures rise and decrease.</p> <p>Reception staff to attend to visitors to the office without delay.</p>	Practice Director and reception staff, quarterly.
11. COVID-19-related stigma and harassment	Risk that there is an increase in targeted harassment or stigma directed at individuals who have been ill or are from a specific ethnic background	<p>Reporting channels to permit investigation and where proven appropriate misconduct procedures followed</p> <p>Directors and managers to offer support to staff who are affected by COVID-19 or have a family member affected</p> <p>Review the organisation's bullying and harassment policy and remind managers of the same.</p>	Practice Director and Heads of Department, quarterly.

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		<p>Publish or signpost colleagues to facts about COVID-19 to dispel myths</p> <p>Ensure senior figures in the organisation issue and support messages about values and diversity and inclusion</p> <p>Reminder training on unconscious bias</p>	
12. Non-compliance with government regulations	Risk that a member of the firm ignores firm's guidance	<p>Communicate the importance of the adherence to the rules</p> <p>Stricter enforcement of rules against people continuing to attend the office while feeling unwell</p>	Practice Director, and other Directors, quarterly.
13. Impact on protected characteristics	<p>Be aware of the impact measures you are taking might have on protected characteristics and take appropriate action to mitigate that impact.</p> <p>Some examples: New traffic flows through the building may affect accessibility.</p>	<p>Liaise with staff groups to inform the measures you are taking.</p> <p>Conduct an equality impact assessment on new measures.</p> <p>Refer to best practice guidance available through various sources</p>	Practice Director and Heads of Department, quarterly.



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	<p>Reduced room capacity due to social distancing might limit how many people can access a faith or quiet room.</p> <p>What might the impact be on those who are pregnant or new mothers.</p>	<p>including the Law Society, Law Works, EHRC and other bodies.</p>	