

EDCCA and coronavirus – March 2020

A Guide for EDCCA staff, volunteers and users

What is the coronavirus?

A coronavirus is a type of virus. As a group, coronaviruses are common across the world. This strain, covid-19, is a new strain of coronavirus first identified in January 2020.

What are the symptoms?

The following symptoms may develop in the 14 days after exposure to someone who has covid-19 infection:

- A cough
- A high temperature
- Shortness of breath

If you are worried about symptoms, please call NHS 111 [or go to the NHS 111 coronavirus advice website](#). Do not go directly to your GP or other healthcare environment.

[The latest advice and developments on the covid-19 situation can be found on the GOV.UK website.](#)

What's the best way to prevent the spread of covid-19?

- Wash your hands often with soap ([or soap substitutes](#)) and water for at least 20 seconds or use an alcohol-based hand sanitiser. This is particularly important after taking public transport.
- Use an alcohol-based hand sanitiser that contains at least 60% alcohol if soap and water are not available.
- Cover your cough or sneeze with a tissue, then throw the tissue in a bin.
- Clean and disinfect frequently touched objects and surfaces in the home and work environment.
- Avoid touching your eyes, nose, and mouth with unwashed hands.

- Cleaning regimes: Viruses can live on hard surfaces for up to eight hours. Frequently clean key areas including keyboards and door handles.
- Our Staff may be required to work from home. Our IT and phones are organised in such a way that you can ring the same telephone numbers during working hours and speak to our staff as normal.

Will our staff take sick leave?

- There is no need for most staff or volunteers to avoid the workplace. However:
 - The government has listed high risk areas/countries by [category 1 \(highest risk areas\) and category 2 areas](#).
 - Employees or volunteers who are symptomless but have returned from category 1 areas within the last 14 days should [self-isolate](#) for 14 days from their return.

- Employees or volunteers who have returned from a category 2 area within the last 14 days and who develop symptoms should self-isolate.
- Employees who are recommended to self-isolate are entitled to sick leave in accordance with EDCCA's Policies or SSP subject to meeting eligibility requirements.

What about our volunteers?

- It is up to our volunteers on an individual basis whether they wish to temporarily suspend their activities for EDCCA. We will respect their decision however they should make this known to us as soon as possible and contact us as and when they are able or wish to resume volunteering.

Should we cancel our events?

- Currently the advice is for most people to continue to go to work, school and other public places.
- As we are planning some events over the coming weeks which will bring together numbers of people, we will keep our plans under review and advise those involved accordingly. We are aware however that some volunteers, may prefer to stay at home. We fully understand this position.

How will we support our beneficiaries/service users?

- Service Users to please report any changes to their health to their doctor and to keep EDCCA informed
- Generally, infections can cause more severe symptoms in people with weakened immune systems, older people, and those with long-term conditions like diabetes, cancer and chronic lung disease.
- Some of our service users or beneficiaries may be more at risk or highly concerned about the virus.
- We have provided clear and updated information to raise awareness of prevention measures like handwashing and will do everything possible to maintain our normal service and activities.
- If volunteers need to self-isolate or contract the virus please let EDCCA know as soon as possible.

How are charities helping to deal with covid-19?

- Diabetes UK has provided an [updated information page](#) for people living with diabetes.
- Asthma UK has released a [blog post with advice for people with asthma](#).
- The British Heart Foundation has published [guidance for people with health problems](#).
- The National Eczema Society has offered [advice on handwashing techniques](#) for people with eczema and other skin conditions.
- SignHealth has created [British Sign Language \(BSL\) videos](#) to help deaf BSL users either working in charities or receiving support.
- Carers UK has produced [recommendations for carers](#).
- Housing Justice has issued [specialised advice to homeless shelters](#). Glass Door is emphasising the importance of handwashing and has [boosted their stock of hand gels](#) kept in their vans that move between shelters. [Pathway](#) and [Crisis](#) have called on the government for guidance on how best to protect homeless people against coronavirus.
- Full Fact has generated a [fact check page](#) on covid-19 to help dispel any false information.

- The [Cystic Fibrosis Trust](#), [Primary Immunodeficiency UK](#) and the [Mental Health Foundation](#) have all issued advice and support.

Resources

Key up-to-date information from the government: Refer to link for constant changes

- [GOV.UK: COVID-19 latest information and advice](#)
- [NHS coronavirus advice](#)

Sector-specific guidance

- [GOV.UK: Guidance for social or community care and residential settings on COVID-19](#)
- [GOV.UK: COVID-19 guidance for educational settings](#)
- [NHS England: Coronavirus information for health professionals](#)

Risk management

- [GOV.UK: Guidance on charities and risk management](#)
- [Zurich: Organisational resilience guidance on pandemic planning](#)
- [Charities Facilities Management Group: Business continuity for charities](#)

Travel advice

- [GOV.UK: COVID-19 travel advice](#)
- [GOV.UK: COVID-19 specified countries and areas with implications for returning travellers or visitors arriving in the UK](#)

Further Information

This guidance is not exhaustive. This information is intended to provide an overview of the covid-19 virus and how it may impact charities and the voluntary sector.

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