

Coronavirus (COVID-19) Infection Prevention & Control Policy

For

Pura Vida Holistic Therapies

July 2021

All of us have been affected by the Coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic and I am committed to ensuring my service is as safe as possible moving forward.

During the time of enforced closures, I completed a number of infection control courses specifically aimed at the control of Coronavirus. These include:

- Coronavirus (COVID-19) Infection Prevention and Control - accredited by the Guild of Professional Beauty Therapists Ltd, the UK trade body for the Beauty industry.
- Gateway Workshops COVID-19 Certification – Year 2020.
- Putting on and removing PPE for contact and droplet precautions for COVID-19 – accredited by the World Health Organisation.
- Standard Precautions – Hand Hygiene – accredited by the World Health Organisation.
- Barbicide Certification for COVID-19 in a Professional Beauty/Spa.
- Barbicide Certification in Sanitation and Disinfection practices.
- Think Tree Hub Preparing to Return to Work in a COVID-19 World.
- Think Tree Hub Risk Assessment Checklist for Returning to Work in a COVID-19 Environment.

I have also been researching extensively throughout the pandemic and I've been through the Government Guidelines for Close Contact Work and also the guidance for Working Safely in Other People's Homes with a fine tooth comb, along with more detailed and massage specific guidance set out by various Professional Associations. I've attended multiple Zoominars speaking with a variety of leading industry professionals from the General Council of Massage Therapists (GCMT) and The Complementary and Natural Healthcare Council, through to advanced massage training schools and Balens insurance.

Working on a mobile basis carries higher risk of virus transmission than working from a treatment room or salon and these extra risk factors need mitigating in order to keep both you and I as safe as possible. Additionally, there are not only new COVID-19 related risks associated with massage therapy itself that we need to consider, but massage is usually a skin-on-skin prolonged treatment type and we now need to work in a different manner to which we are used to.

My priority is to keep you and I, and our families as safe as possible, and throughout the pandemic I've been constantly reassessing my risk assessment as new information has been made available and to keep in line with the ever changing government guidance and restrictions. Therefore, having considered all of the information I have received from the Government, Professional Associations and my insurance company, I have consequently implemented the following protocols and procedures which I would like to make you aware of. I pride myself on offering a very professional and high standard service and therefore you'll see that I've often gone above and beyond the Government Guidelines, which have always been the minimum requirements necessary. This is to ensure I work best practice and to the highest ethical standards and to ensure your treatments are as safe as possible.

Appointments

If I, a member of my household, or a person I have recently been in close contact with starts to feel ill or display any symptoms of COVID-19, or I am contacted by Test and Trace, I will self-isolate immediately and cancel all upcoming appointments that fall within the recommended isolation period. I will access a COVID-19 test and follow Test and Trace protocols. This may mean that I have to cancel your appointment at short notice. I appreciate that this may be inconvenient and disappointing for you, but it is done entirely for your own safety. If your appointment is cancelled, you will be able to re-book again once I have completed the required isolation period.

If you, anyone in your household, or a person you have recently been in close contact with starts to feel ill or display any symptoms of COVID-19, or you're contacted by NHS Test and Trace, please contact me to cancel your appointment immediately.

For your information, the most commonly reported symptoms associated with COVID-19 include:

- High temperature/Fever
- New, continuous cough
- Loss of or change to your sense of smell or taste
- Shortness of breath
- Fatigue
- Muscle aches and pains
- Headache
- Sore throat
- Cold like symptoms (particularly if you have been vaccinated)

I have amended the booking terms and conditions and you will not be charged for any appointments which you need to cancel at last minute due to illness.

Clinically Extremely Vulnerable and Clinically Vulnerable Clients and Household Members

Unfortunately, it is impossible to undertake physical therapies and bodywork whilst following strict social distancing rules and therefore there is a higher risk of virus transmission associated with this type of work.

As per the Government Guidance on Working Safely in Other People's Homes, extra consideration and caution needs to be given to households with any Clinically Vulnerable members. Non-urgent work may be carried out in the home at the discretion of the householders. This will be taken into consideration through my risk assessment and my pre-appointment questionnaire to ensure we can proceed as safely as possible.

For your information, people at high risk (considered Clinically Extremely Vulnerable) include:

- Anyone who has had an organ transplant
- Anyone who is having chemotherapy or antibody treatment for cancer, including immunotherapy
- Anyone who is having an intense course of radiotherapy (radical radiotherapy) for lung cancer
- Anyone who is having targeted cancer treatments that can affect the immune system (such as protein kinase inhibitors or PARP inhibitors)
- Anyone with blood or bone marrow cancer (such as leukaemia, lymphoma or myeloma)
- Anyone who has had a bone marrow or stem cell transplant in the past 6 months, or is still taking immunosuppressant medicine

- Anyone who has been told by a doctor they have a severe lung condition (such as Cystic Fibrosis, severe Asthma or severe COPD)
- Anyone with a condition that means they have a very high risk of getting infections (such as SCID or Sickle Cell)
- Anyone taking medicine that makes them much more likely to get infections (such as high doses of steroids or immunosuppressants)
- Anyone who is pregnant and has a serious heart condition
- An adult with Down Syndrome
- An adult who is having dialysis or has severe (stage 5) long-term kidney disease

For your information, people at moderate risk (considered Clinically Vulnerable) include:

- Anyone 70 years of age or older
- Anyone with a chronic lung condition that's not severe (such as Asthma, COPD, Emphysema or Bronchitis)
- Anyone with chronic heart disease (such as heart failure)
- Anyone with diabetes
- Anyone with chronic kidney disease
- Anyone with chronic liver disease (such as hepatitis)
- Anyone with a chronic neurological condition affecting the brain or nerves (such as Parkinson's disease, Motor Neurone disease, Multiple Sclerosis or Cerebral Palsy)
- Anyone with a condition that means they have a high risk of getting infections
- Anyone with a condition which weakens their immune system (such as HIV or AIDS)
- Anyone taking medicine that can affect the immune system (such as low doses of steroids)
- Anyone who is very obese (a BMI of 40 or above)
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Client Restrictions/Assessments

Therefore, due to the higher risks associated with mobile working and taking into consideration all of the advice, when it comes to treating people who are considered at higher risk of COVID-19, I will be assessing this on a case-by-case basis in order to make a decision as to whether it's safe to proceed and whether any additional safety measures need to be put into place. Please understand this is for your own safety and for that of your household members.

Prior to your treatment

The Government Guidance for Close Contact Work recommends that therapists ask COVID-19 related screening questions to clients ahead of their appointment.

Therefore, an online screening and consultation process has been implemented. You will be sent an electronic consultation form prior to your appointments. This will cover COVID-19 specific screening questions as well as general health and wellbeing questions for new clients or clients who I have not seen recently. This form will be very straightforward and is designed to be completed online and returned to me electronically at the push of a button. You will not need any particular computer software, printers or scanners, and it also avoids any need for the exchange of pens or paperwork between us at the time of the appointment.

The reason it's important to screen for COVID-19 is the fact that we can be asymptomatic and carry it unknowingly (even if we've had both vaccinations). Additionally, COVID-19 related Coagulopathy (blood clotting) is a part of the disease process that unfortunately affects some people who contract the virus. However blood clots can remain for months after the initial isolation and recovery period

has passed. Blood clotting in general is contraindicated with massage and therefore it's very important to try to identify whether there is a risk that a client has any underlying blood clots.

These additional screening questions have therefore been devised in order to help identify any risk factors and symptoms that:

1. You have been exposed to the virus and are unknowingly carrying it.
2. You may have residual underlying blood clots following a known or unknown COVID-19 infection.

All clients will be required to complete this screening questionnaire prior to each and every treatment.

Mobile Working

One of the biggest risks of working on a mobile basis is the risk of cross-contamination and transmission of the virus through the movement of both the therapist and their equipment from one household to the next. Additionally it is near impossible for mobile therapists to control the working environment in a way that is possible when working from a treatment room or salon. Therefore, in order to minimise these risks and make my own mobile service as safe as possible, I will be implementing the following measures:

1. Ventilation

Good ventilation of the treatment area is one of the primary methods of reducing the risk of virus transmission. We know rate of transmission is much lower outside then in indoor areas. Therefore, the better the ventilation, the lower the risk is of virus transmission. Therefore, I will be asking the following of my clients:

- Please choose a treatment area that offers the best possible ventilation.
- If possible, please have windows and/or doors open throughout the treatment to allow a supply of fresh air.
- Please note, in the absence of a fresh air supply, please do not use fans in the treatment area as they will simply re-circulate the potentially infected air within the enclosed space.
- Some people have expressed an interest in having their treatments in an outdoor area of their home. This is very much welcomed, obviously weather dependent, and as long as you are warm and comfortable enough to do so. The risk of transmission to you and your household members would be much reduced through working outdoors and due to myself not spending time within your home.

2. PPE

Please don't be surprised or upset that I choose to wear Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) throughout the duration of my visit, despite this no longer being a legal requirement.

- I will be wearing a clean scrub top at each household. I will be donning and doffing the scrubs outside of your home, before and after your appointment, so as to avoid any risk of contamination of my car and subsequent transfer on to the next household. These will be put into a washable sealed laundry bag inside a sealed plastic laundry bin inside the car ready to be laundered upon my arrival home.
- I will be wearing a clean mask/face covering to each household for the entirety of the appointment. This will be donned and doffed along with the scrubs outside of your house, before and after the appointment, and subsequently placed in the sealed laundry bag and box to be laundered.

As of 19th July 2021, the legal requirement for clients to wear a face covering when visiting a massage, beauty, nail or hair salon (apart from when necessary to remove it during the treatment) was lifted. However, whilst it is not mandatory, given the close contact nature of this work, I would still strongly recommend that you continue to wear a face covering as much as possible.

3. Equipment

All equipment has to be cleaned before and after each household and made from a non-porous washable/wipeable material. Therefore, in order to reduce the amount of equipment and as such the possible sites of cross-contamination going into and out of each house and my car, I will be implementing the following protocols to ensure only essential equipment is used.

- I will now be asking clients to provide their own linen/towels. I will provide a clean couch cover for each household, but you will need to provide two large bath sheets or towels for your treatment. It is highly recommended that these be laundered at 60 degrees immediately after our appointment. On completion of your treatment, the couch cover will be sealed in a washable laundry bag along with my scrubs and mask before being placed into the sealed plastic laundry bin in my car.
- My couch will be removed from its protective carry case as this is not easily washable between households.
- My kit bag will be made of hard clear PVC so that it can be cleaned and wiped down thoroughly between each household.
- Only essential items will be brought into the house in the kit bag, including oils, cleaning products, cloths, PPE, and my water bottle etc as all items touched will need to be cleaned between each household.
- If you usually make use of my foot bolster, please provide your own washable alternative (a rolled up towel works well).

4. Social Distancing/Reducing Face-to-Face Exposure Time

Although as of July 19th 2021 social distancing rules were lifted, this still remains one of the primary ways to reduce the risk of virus transmission. Further mitigating actions include further increasing the frequency of hand washing and surface cleaning and limiting the time of close contact as much as possible.

Therefore, the following protocols and procedures will continue to be implemented for the foreseeable future:

1. Pre-appointment electronic screening consultation to be sent within 48 hours prior to the appointment. Please note your appointment cannot go ahead without this being completed.
2. On arrival outside your home, I will sanitise my hands and arms before donning a clean scrub top. I will then sanitise my hands again before donning a face mask and subsequently sanitise my hands and arms once again (as per WHO donning and doffing guidelines).
3. I respectfully ask that you ensure your hands are also washed with soap and hot water prior to your treatment. Please also ensure all make-up is removed so as to protect the integrity of the new waterproof head cradle covering.
4. I will then proceed to enter your home. For your safety and to maintain social distancing as much as possible, please direct me to the room in which you would like the treatment to take place, ensuring all doors are open on route so I don't need to touch any handles or common surfaces.
5. Where possible, please maintain social distancing whilst I set up my equipment and I also respectfully request that any other members of your household should remain outside of

the selected treatment room to maintain social distancing and avoid any direct interaction with myself.

6. Once all equipment is set up, we will then commence the treatment utilising your own linen/towels.
7. On completion of the treatment, I will carefully fold your towels with as little disturbance as possible and it is highly recommended that these be laundered at 60 degrees immediately after the treatment.
8. Where possible, please maintain social distancing whilst I sanitise all equipment and pack up. Protocols for removing used laundry (couch covers/cleaning cloths) and any waste materials will be followed.
9. I will then proceed to leave your home. As on entry, please ensure all doors are open on route so I can avoid touching any handles or common surfaces.
10. Once outside of your home, I will then follow WHO guidelines for doffing my face covering and scrubs, placing them in a washable sealed laundry bag and then into the sealed plastic laundry bin in my car.

5. Cleaning and Hygiene Protocols

I understand the importance of hand hygiene and cleaning protocols and whilst this has always been a high priority for my service, with fresh linen and full couch cleaning having always been used and undertaken at every household anyway, this will be further enhanced to help protect against COVID-19.

- I will ensure that my hands and arms are cleaned in accordance with NHS and hand hygiene guidelines. This will be done for the donning and doffing protocols and before and after your treatment, as well as during where required. I respectfully ask that you ensure your hands are also washed with soap and hot water prior to your treatment. Where possible, please shower immediately before and after your treatment.
- All tools and equipment will be cleaned with a safe anti-viral cleaning spray (the active ingredient proven effective on Covid-19) and a clean cloth before and after your treatment.
- I will avoid as much as possible the unnecessary touching of any surfaces within your household. In the event that I do touch any surface, I will wipe clean these areas with the anti-viral spray. Any surfaces where products such as massage oil have been placed will also be cleaned before my departure.
- All used linen and PPE will be sealed in a washable laundry bag and placed inside a sealed laundry box inside my car and laundered immediately on my return home. A clean laundry bag will be used at each household so no bag needs to be unsealed throughout the day. The laundry box will be sanitised at the end of each day.
- As I will not be using any disposables, it is unlikely that I will create any waste materials, but in the event that I do, waste materials will be sealed in a bag and disposed of following waste disposal protocols.

6. Multiple Clients at the Same Household

A lot of my work involves treating multiple household members consecutively at the same appointment. Although I am able to continue to do so, I respectfully request that only one client is in the treatment area at a time so as to keep the overall contact time with each client to the minimum.

The treatment time per client remains at 90 minutes maximum.

Treatments

I have carried out a full risk assessment on all treatments and services and from the 19th of July, all treatments will be available.

However, the following services will be unavailable until further notice:

- **Corporate Massage Clinics** – Due to the large number of employees usually seen at a clinic, I do not feel it is currently safe to offer this service. This will be continually reviewed.

Payment

In order to avoid handling cash, preferred method of payment is by bank transfer in advance or at the time of your treatment. If you are unable to pay by this method, please ensure you have the exact amount of cash ready as I will not be carrying a float to avoid the risk of cross-infection through the transfer of money from one client to the next.

Test and Trace and GDPR

Please note that I am required to be compliant with any request for data from the Government or the NHS for Test and Trace purposes. As such, this means that I may need to share your own personal data as part of these requests. Please note, as this is a Public Health issue, if you are not happy for your data to be shared for Test and Trace purposes, I will not be able to treat you at this time.

Green and Environmental Statement

Pura Vida or 'Pure Life', if you like, was built around a passion to be environmentally friendly and sustainable. With the pandemic, there has been a massive increase in the use of disposable and single use plastic items, completely unnecessarily in some cases. I am very keen to avoid adding to this problem and to maintain Pura Vida's ethics and principles, and as such I have outlined below how I will be achieving this.

- All PPE, uniforms, face coverings etc will be reusable and washable.
- The medical scrubs I have purchased have been made out of recycled plastic bottles.
- The proven anti-viral disinfectant I will be using for cleaning purposes is environmentally friendly, eco-friendly, not harmful for humans, animals or plants, refillable, cruelty free and vegan. It can even be used to disinfect water for human consumption!
- The hand sanitiser I will be using is ethically and sustainably made in the UK by Neal's Yard Remedies and is also refillable.
- All cleaning cloths are made from bamboo and washable. Bamboo is the world's fastest growing plant and a big solution to a world with stretched resources. These cloths are also naturally antibacterial.
- Pillowcases have been up-cycled into sealable laundry bags.
- If required, any wet wipes or tissues used will also be biodegradable and made from Bamboo by The Cheeky Panda. This company is also carbon balanced and invests back into protecting the rainforests.
- As always, all of my massage oils and skincare products are ethically made, sustainable, and cruelty free. Many are refillable and if not, fully recyclable, and the majority of them are also Vegan friendly.

All of these protocols and procedures have been implemented to ensure my service is as safe as possible for you and I, and our families. I will continue to take advice from the Government, the NHS and my Professional Associations regarding safe practice and will review and amend protocols and procedures as necessary going forward. Thank you for your patience, support and understanding at this tricky time.

Lindsay

Owner and Massage Therapist