



Healthcare Worker COVID-19 Casual Contact Information Leaflet V11.0, 02 Oct 2020

PLEASE NOTE: Because the Novel Coronavirus (COVID-19) is a new virus in the human population, new information is becoming available as doctors and scientists study the virus and how it affects people. While the information contained in this pack was accurate at the time it was printed, we advise you to check the Health Protection Surveillance Centre (HPSC) website at www.hpsc.ie for the most up-to-date information. The HPSC website is updated frequently as new information about the COVID-19 becomes available.

Please read this letter and the enclosed information leaflets carefully.

You have been identified by your line manager as a casual contact of a case of Novel Coronavirus (COVID-19) as you have had **protected exposure** to an infected patient to self-monitor for symptoms. (I.e. appropriate PPE was worn).

As a result, you require passive casual contact monitoring for 14 days after your last potential exposure to a case of COVID-19 under the supervision of the Occupational Health Service (OHS). The aim of casual contact monitoring is to identify casual contacts who develop symptoms consistent with COVID-19 at the earliest opportunity, to help prevent the further spread of the virus to family, friends and colleagues and to fast track symptomatic casual contacts to the appropriate medical facility for further assessment, appropriate isolation and treatment if necessary.

Prevention of Transmission of Coronavirus :

All staff should attend the Infection Prevention and Control Team training sessions which provide information on:

- Education, instruction and training specific to Coronavirus
- Information on the mode of transmission.
- Information on steps that healthcare workers are required to take to protect themselves.
- Appropriate work practices including standard, contact and airborne precautions.
- The use of personal protection equipment (PPE) appropriate for the risk and tasks.

After receiving training, staff should be able to demonstrate competency in performing all Coronavirus-related infection control practices and procedures, specifically in donning and doffing proper PPE.

Casual Contact Passive Monitoring:

As you have been identified as a casual contact, self-monitoring is required for the 14 days after your last potential exposure to a case of COVID-19.

You should self-monitor for any respiratory symptoms. This includes the usual Covid-19 symptoms such as **Fever, cough, shortness of breath, difficulty breathing, loss or change in sense of smell or taste and also milder respiratory symptoms such as sore throat or runny nose.**

If asymptomatic,

- No additional restriction on movement, interactions with others or work is advised, although you must adhere to national requirements for social distancing and restricted movement
- You should continue to attend work.
- You must report any possible 'unprotected exposure' i.e. without PPE, to your manager.
- You should always engage in regular hand washing and cover your mouth and nose with a tissue or the bend of your elbow when coughing and sneezing to prevent the spread of infection. Strictly follow Infection Prevention & Control guidance.
- Avoid the use of anti-pyretics, (for example paracetamol, ibuprofen) while undertaking monitoring in case they mask symptoms

If you Develop Symptoms:

If you develop a **fever, a cough, shortness of breath, difficulty breathing or loss or change in sense of smell or taste**, or any other respiratory symptoms you should do the following:

- Immediately **isolate** yourself from others (for example stay in a different room from the rest of your family with the door closed or if in work, go to an office).
- You **should not attend your** GP, including the out-of-hours/on-call service or the local Emergency Department unless told to do so by the Occupational Health Service, Public Health or your GP.
- You should phone the **Occupational Health Service (see below link for contact numbers)** and identify yourself as a **symptomatic casual contact** of the Novel Corona Virus. If acutely unwell you should phone your local GP service or, if necessary, the ambulance service. **(Please check local GP out of hours contact details and add below).**
- If in the workplace, please inform your manager and they will assist in making contact with the Occupational Health service to arrange testing if possible.

Contact Details:

Occupational Health Service: _____

See <http://workwell.ie/contact-list/contact-your-local-occupational-health-service/>

GP Out of Hours: _____

Employee Assistance and Counselling Service: Local Contact Details: _____

See <https://healthservice.hse.ie/filelibrary/staff/employee-assistance-programme-contact-details-for-counsellors.pdf>

Further Information

Further information including frequently asked questions is available at the following link:

<https://www.hpsc.ie/a-z/respiratory/coronavirus/novelcoronavirus/frequentlyaskedquestions/>

Or you can contact the COVID-19 HCW helpdesk – **1850 420 420**

9 am-6 pm Mon-Fri;