

Introduction

This COVID-19 policy and risk assessment is to help Mandy Moore and her clients understand how to work safely during the COVID-19 pandemic. Mandy Moore Counselling and Psychotherapy Service is owned and operated by one individual, Mandy Moore, and there are no employees, trainees, students or associates. The practice operates from a therapy room in Mandy Moore's home.

This document has been prepared by Mandy Moore following the guidance and advice provided by the government. This is a fluid document and is subject to change and amendment as per government legislation and guidelines.

A full COVID-19 risk assessment has been completed to consider the reopening of the practice and the measures that are required in order to reduce the risk of any possible transmission of COVID-19 within the practice.

All information from the government related to COVID-19 can be found on this webpage <https://www.gov.uk/coronavirus>

General Management of Risk

Objective: To reduce risk to the lowest reasonably practicable level by taking preventable measures.

Those in the Vulnerable or Shielded Category

I ask all in the vulnerable and shielded categories to follow the specific government advice. Where advised to stay at home, I ask that they do so and do not come into the practice. Should they be in the vulnerable category and have specific requirements, I ask them to contact me to discuss their requirements as soon as possible should they be looking to return to the practice.

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/guidance-on-shielding-and-protecting-extremely-vulnerable-persons-from-covid-19>

Those Who Have COVID-19 Related Symptoms or Are Living With a Person Who Has COVID-19 Related Symptoms.

Those who have COVID-19 Symptoms or live with a person who has COVID-19 symptoms must not attend the practice and must follow the self-isolation guidelines set out by the government. This applies to all that access the practice.

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/covid-19-stay-at-home-guidance>

<https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/coronavirus-covid-19/check-if-you-have-coronavirus-symptoms/>

<https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/coronavirus-covid-19/testing-for-coronavirus/ask-for-a-test-to-check-if-you-have-coronavirus/>

Limiting the Chances of Transmission Within the Practice

A deep clean has been completed prior to the reopening of the practice.

A hand held steam cleaner is used to clean all soft furnishings in the therapy room at the end of each working day. Frequent cleaning will continue to ensure the practice remains clean and tidy, paying particular attention to 'hotspots' such as door handles and light switches.

I wash my hands frequently and wipe surfaces; door handles; hand sanitiser bottles; card payment machine; front door bell and light switches with antibacterial products with at least 65% alcohol content between each session.

Every client's temperature is checked prior to entering the premises by way of a hand held infrared thermometer.

If the client is wearing an outer layer, ie, a jacket or coat, I request they remove it before entering the therapy room. They can leave it in their car or in the hallway in the practice.

I request clients to bring minimal items into the therapy room. If it is necessary to bring bags into the practice, I ask clients to leave them in the hallway in the practice.

If there are any forms to be completed by the client, I send them electronically. No stationery is shared between me and the client.

Hand sanitiser is provided in the therapy room within the practice.

The tissue box has been replaced with a packet of tissues available on the table next to the client. This number is unlimited and are offered freely as and when needed. The client takes home their used tissues and any remaining tissues from their packet.

The therapy room layout has been altered to obtain a 3-meter distance and the sofas are placed at a perpendicular angle so my client and I can avoid face to face contact, while still being able to look at each other when needed.

I encourage the use of digital and electronic methods for client payments. If a client pays with cash, it is placed in the cash box and quarantined for 72 hours. All receipts are electronic.

Sofa coverings have been purchased and are changed between each session. The coverings are washed at the end of each working day.

Windows are open in the therapy room to aid ventilation during sessions. In between sessions, the windows are opened fully and the door is propped open to allow further ventilation of the rooms for a minimum of 30 minutes.

Refreshments are no longer provided to clients; they are informed to bring a drink with them.

As the practice is in my home, the bathroom facilities are no longer to be used by clients as the only bathroom in the property is upstairs in the family home.

I do not have any physical contact with clients.

For couples that do not belong to the same bubble, work continues online.

What I Will Do If a Client Informs Me They Have Tested Positive for COVID-19 After We Met Face to Face

I will advise them to contact the NHS test and trace service if they haven't already done so
I will follow government guidelines and self isolate for 14 days from the date I was last in contact with the client
I will revert to online therapy sessions for the isolation period

<https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/coronavirus-covid-19/testing-and-tracing/nhs-test-and-trace-if-youve-been-in-contact-with-a-person-who-has-coronavirus/>

What I Will Do If I test Positive for COVID-19 After Meeting Clients Face to Face

I will follow government guidelines and self isolate for at least 10 days
If I am well enough to continue working, I will revert to online therapy sessions for the isolation period

<https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/coronavirus-covid-19/self-isolation-and-treatment/when-to-self-isolate-and-what-to-do/>

I will give the NHS test and trace service names and contact details of the people they ask for.
I have a COVID-19 contingency clause in my client contract. It states that confidentiality will be broken if necessary, for reasons of public interest in the area of public health. I have explained to my clients that this clause may become relevant if I contract the virus and am obliged to inform the NHS of people I've been in contact with. In this case, I may need to share their name and contact details but not the context in which I know them. However, they may be contacted by the NHS.

Personal Protective Equipment (PPE)

I am following the government guidance on Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) which indicates that PPE is not required for my workplace. Covid-19 risk of transmission should be managed by social distancing and good hygiene and not through using PPE such as medical or industrial face masks. However, I have purchased some visors for the sole use of my clients, should they choose to use them. The visors are cleaned with antibacterial products with at least 65% alcohol content after every use. Face coverings are optional. Should a client choose to wear a face covering then they should do so following the government guidelines.

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/face-coverings-when-to-wear-one-and-how-to-make-your-own>

Informing Clients of the New Measures

I inform new and existing clients of my COVID-19 measures. I do this in a number of ways:

- By emailing every client a copy of this document and the COVID-19 contingency clause. Each client signs a statement to say they have read and understood the document and will adhere to it. This can be done electronically or in paper form. The statement is placed in the client's file and locked away securely as per GDPR and ICO regulations
- Verbally when arranging their face to face appointment
- By directing them to my COVID-19 website page where this document can be found
www.mandymoorecounselling.co.uk

Business risk/litigation and mitigation

I have considered the risks to the business and in doing so have carried out a comprehensive risk assessment.

I ask clients to sign a document stating they will adhere to the measures put in place.

I have checked with my insurance company that I am able to practice face to face.

I am following BACP guidance and advice.

I will revert to working online, should it become necessary, in order to maintain a business portfolio.

I keep myself up to date with government changes and circumstances.