

Penny Brohn UK Visitor/Client Policy on Novel Coronavirus (COVID-19) – updated 18/3/2020

We have suspended all face to face cancer services at the National Centre until further notice and the centre is currently closed to all external visitors.

These measures have been implemented following a statement by the Prime Minister on Monday 16 March which advised that everyone in the UK should now avoid non-essential travel and contact with others to fight coronavirus.

NEW GUIDANCE INCLUDES:

- If one member of your family shows symptoms with the virus the whole household should self-isolate for 14 days.
- To avoid pubs, clubs, theatres and restaurants and to stay away from small and large gatherings
- To work from home where possible

Please be aware that the main change to the guidelines is that the whole household must self-isolate for 14 days if any one person in the household develops symptoms. These include a new persistent cough, high temperature or cold like symptoms. This supersedes the 7 day rule for households with multiple occupants.

The health and safety of our clients, staff and visitors is our absolute priority. We are continuing to follow all guidance issued by Public Health England and to ensure we comply with best practice.

Public Health England (PHE) has changed the status of the Coronavirus outbreak risk in the UK from moderate to high. There are a growing number of confirmed cases of COVID-19 in the UK and this number is changing daily. **It remains an illness which is mild or even asymptomatic in most people. The vast majority of people recover spontaneously without any long term effects.**

What is COVID-19? COVID-19 is a new illness that can affect your lungs and airways. It's caused by a virus called coronavirus.

What are symptoms of coronavirus? The symptoms are:

- a cough
- a high temperature
- shortness of breath

But these symptoms do not necessarily mean you have the illness.

The symptoms are similar to other illnesses that are much more common, such as cold and flu.

How is the virus transmitted?

The virus is thought to be largely transmitted via inhalation of airborne droplets. The fatality rate is estimated to be around 1% (which is less than SARS which was around 10%) but even this may be an overestimate because many infected people may not have symptoms and therefore not be tested or aware. However the number of cases looks very likely to increase and advice and guidance from PHE will now be updated daily.

Who is most at risk?

Frail and vulnerable people seem to be at highest risk of serious consequences. This is highly relevant to Penny Brohn UK as a cancer charity supporting cancer clients face-to-face. This policy has been

adapted from the government Health Protection Agency's advice to reflect this. **It will be regularly updated in line with changes in the situation and government guidance.**

Advice to clients/visitors to the National Centre

1. A notice will be placed on the front door and at reception reminding people that many visitors to the National Centre have reduced immunity and advising them that they must inform reception if they have any symptoms of an infectious disease or have recently been in contact with someone who is known to be contagious. ***This is standard Penny Brohn policy and relates to all infectious diseases, not just to the novel coronavirus.***
2. All visitors will be asked to use hand sanitiser on arrival (in the event of a shortage of appropriate hand sanitiser visitors will be asked to wash their hands on entering the building)
3. All visitors and clients will be asked to complete the following self-assessment on arrival and for clients, at time of booking

Question 1

Have you visited or resided in any of the following countries in the past 90 days?

Wuhan City and Hubei Province, Cambodia, Iran, China, Daegu or Cheongdo (Republic of Korea), Hong Kong, Italy, Japan, Laos, Macau, Malaysia, Myanmar, Singapore, Taiwan, Thailand, Vietnam

Question 2

Have you had contact with any individual who has been diagnosed with coronavirus?

"Contact" may be defined as any of the following:

- Living in the same household
- Direct personal contact or contact with an affected individual's bodily fluids
- Exposure within 2 metres of the affected individual and for longer than 15 minutes

Question 3

Have you experienced any of the following symptoms in the past 14 days?

- Acute respiratory infection of any degree of severity
- Shortness of breath or difficulty breathing
- Persistent cough
- Fever (with or without other symptoms)

If you answer YES to any of these questions you will be asked to leave the National Centre.

5. Visitors who have travelled to any of the 'at risk' countries within the last 14 days must inform Reception, even if they are asymptomatic. ***This is different from the standard Department of Health advice and reflects our vulnerable client group.***

[This policy is put together using guidance from Public Health England and will be subject to change. It will be adapted as the situation changes and led by PHE's guidance for social /community care and residential settings which can be found here](#)

Risks to people with compromised immunity

Visitors and clients who visit the National Centre should be aware that there are likely to be other visitors present whose immunity is compromised because of cancer or cancer treatment. If they have any symptoms of an infectious disease or have had any recent contact with someone who is known to be highly contagious, they should ideally delay their visit until they are better or the risk of infection has passed.

This is standard Penny Brohn policy and relates to all infectious diseases, not just to the novel coronavirus. If a visit is unavoidable, they should ideally telephone reception ahead of their arrival for advice.

If someone develops symptoms of an infectious disease while on the premises at Penny Brohn UK, they should inform the Reception or Night Staff team and follow the advice given to safeguard other visitors. *This is standard Penny Brohn policy and relates to all infectious diseases, not just to the novel coronavirus.*

Public Health England's Guidance

Returning travellers

Stay indoors and avoid contact with other people immediately if you've travelled to the UK from:

- Hubei province in China in the last 14 days, even if you do not have symptoms
- Iran, lockdown areas in northern Italy or special care zones in South Korea since 19 February, even if you do not have symptoms
- other parts of mainland China or South Korea, Hong Kong, Japan, Macau, Malaysia, Singapore, Taiwan or Thailand in the last 14 days and have a cough, high temperature or shortness of breath (even if your symptoms are mild)
- other parts of northern Italy (anywhere north of Pisa, Florence and Rimini), Cambodia, Laos, Myanmar or Vietnam since 19 February and have a cough, high temperature or shortness of breath (even if your symptoms are mild)

[Maps of the affected areas](#)

Use the 111 online coronavirus service to find out what to do next.

Do not go to a GP surgery, pharmacy or hospital.

Visiting Penny Brohn UK National Centre

Any visitor to Penny Brohn UK should be aware of and follow general government guidance for the public regarding reducing the risk of transmission of novel coronavirus

<https://www.gov.uk/guidance/coronavirus-covid-19-information-for-the-public>

Building resilience

As there is no treatment yet available, the principle of improving our resistance is one of the most important precautionary steps we can take. There are many simple and positive resilience-building self-care strategies available to anyone and the Bristol Whole Life Approach is useful in this context (not only for people with a diagnosis of cancer) see <https://www.pennybrohn.org.uk/why-choose-us/what-we-do/> The College of Medicine has a new [coronavirus page](#) on their self-care website [Our Health Directory](#). This offers simple home remedies that have evidence for improving defences against respiratory viral infections. If people are taking any regular medication they should always check for any possible interactions before taking any supplements.