There are particular groups considered to be at risk of severe COVID-19 illness. This risk assessment will assist managers in assessing and controlling the risks to health specifically for colleagues in these groups.

These groups are:

1. **Those at INCREASED risk of severe illness**

This includes people who are:

* **aged 70 or older (regardless of medical conditions)**
* These colleagues should be advised to work at home or to stay at home
* **Pregnant**
  + under 28 weeks gestation should not work with COVID-19 or suspected COVID-19 patients or undertake aerosol generating procedures
  + over 28 weeks gestation should be advised to work from home or stay at home if this is not possible
* **under 70 with an underlying health condition** including:
* chronic (long-term) respiratory diseases, such as asthma, chronic obstructive pulmonary disease (COPD), emphysema or bronchitis
* chronic heart disease, such as heart failure
* chronic kidney disease
* chronic liver disease, such as hepatitis
* chronic neurological conditions, such as Parkinson's disease, motor neurone disease, multiple sclerosis (MS), a learning disability or cerebral palsy
* diabetes
* problems with spleen – for example, sickle cell disease or if spleen removed
* a weakened immune system as the result of conditions such as HIV and AIDS, or medicines such as steroid tablets or chemotherapy

**Whether or not individuals in this group can remain in the workplace and what duties they can do, will depend on risk assessment.**

**However**, **within this group there is a subgroup of certain conditions with very little additional risk from COVID-19. These include:**

* Type 2 diabetes controlled by diet and/or tablets and with no complications
* Stable asthma only needing a reliever inhaler and not requiring hospital admission
* High blood pressure without complications and controlled by a single medication
* Treated viral hepatitis without fibrosis
* Treated epilepsy
* Splenic dysfunction or spleen removed
* Dyslexia
* Learning difficulties but able to follow hygiene precautions
* Treated HIV with undetectable viral load and CD4>350
* Low dose immunosuppressant drugs
* Uncomplicated obesity BMI>40

**This subgroup may be able to continue to provide face to face clinical work, including work with Covid-19 patients or those suspected to be, provided infection prevention and control measures are strictly implemented. The attached risk assessment form should be completed and an Occupational Health referral made to confirm this and any restrictions.**

1. **Those at HIGHER risk of severe illness**

There are some clinical conditions which put people at even higher risk of severe illness from COVID-19. Conditions in this higher risk group include:

* Organ transplants
* Specific cancers
* **Severe** respiratory conditions such as cystiic fibrosis and **severe** asthma as would require regular hospital admissions
* Rare diseases and specific genetic disorders of metabolism that increase the risk of infections such as sickle cell disease
* Immunosuppressant treatment sufficient to increase the risk of infection **(see below for more information)**
* Pregnancy in whom the mother has significant congenital or acquired heart disease at any gestation

**Those in this group should be advised to work from home for the duration of the outbreak. If this is not possible , they must stay at home.**

**RISK ASESSMENT**

**It is essential, for colleagues with underlying conditions , that a managerial risk assessment to determine suitable duties/deployment is completed.**

As can be seen, the risk across the “increased risk” group in particular is not uniform. Furthermore, in the context of strict infection prevention and control in health and social care work, the risks are considered lower than for those with the same conditions in the public setting. As such, many colleagues in the “increased risk” group will be able to remain at work. There is specific technical medical guidance which guides fitness to remain at work for colleagues with these conditions. Due to its technical nature and for the confidentiality of the colleague’s medical information an Occupational Health referral is recommended to inform the manager’s risk assessment**.**

**Any OH referral must be made using the dedicated OH COVID email address:**

[High-UHB.OHCOVID@nhs.net](mailto:High-UHB.OHCOVID@nhs.net) **which is answered Monday to Friday 9am -5pm.**

**The referral MUST use the attached OH COVID referral form which must be fully completed.**

Once OH have made an assessment of the colleague’s fitness for duties, the manager will receive advice by email as soon as possible.

The manager should then incorporate the OH advice into their risk assessment. The manager will decide with the colleague about their remaining at work, altering work location and/or duties, including home working, if possible.

The document attached below is the Scottish Government advice which includes some more detailed information, however, we would strongly encourage managers to link in with Occupational Health to ensure the correct approach is taken.

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**The manager’s risk assessment form is on the following page.**

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| 1. Manager’s name |  | | | |
| 1. Colleague’s name |  | | Role |  |
| 1. Date of risk assessment |  | | | |
| 1. Colleague broad risk group | In which risk group category is the colleague? **(Refer to lists above. If in doubt, refer colleague to OH** [High-UHB.OHCOVID@nhs.net](mailto:High-UHB.OHCOVID@nhs.net)**)** | | 1 – **increased** risk of severe COVID-19 illness  **(go to 5)** | 2- **higher** risk of severe COVID-19 illness  **The colleague must be advised to stay at home and work from there if possible. (go to 11)** |
| 1. Hazard | Is there reasonable and foreseeable exposure to COVID-19 infected patients and/or specimens? | | Yes  **(go to 6)** | No (e.g. works in an admin office in a site with no patients)  **May continue at work only if risk controls 7, 8 and 9 below can be met.**  **(go to 7)** |
| 1. Risk group refinement | Is the colleague in the “little additional risk” **subgroup** of the increased risk group? **(Refer to lists above. If in doubt, refer colleague to OH** [High-UHB.OHCOVID@nhs.net](mailto:High-UHB.OHCOVID@nhs.net)**)** | | Yes, **in** subgroup  **May continue to work as normal with strict infection control precautions (go to 10)** | No, **not in** subgroup  **Refer colleague to OH** [High-UHB.OHCOVID@nhs.net](mailto:High-UHB.OHCOVID@nhs.net)  **(go to 10)** |
| 1. Risk control | Can the colleague be removed from a role where they are physically working with patients? | | Yes.  **Consider alternative duties/roles/location such as telephone/vc patient contact, administrative duties, work from home.**  **(go to 8)** | No  **Must be advised to stay at home and work from home if possible.**  **(go to 11)** |
| 1. Risk control | Can “social distancing measures” be reliably implemented at work?  **(See NHS Inform website)** | | Yes  **(go to 9)** | No  **Must be advised to stay at home and work from home if possible. (go to 11)** |
| 1. Risk control | Can handwashing and respiratory hygiene be reliably implemented at work?  **(See NHS Inform website)** | | Yes  **(go to 11)** | No  **Must be advised to stay at home and work from home if possible. (go to 11)** |
| 1. OH advice | |  | | |
| 1. Decision on adjustments reached with colleague | |  | | |
| 1. Agreed actions to progress | |  | | |
| 1. Date of review | |  | | |

**The Occupational Health referral form is on the next page**

**COVID-19 Occupational Health Advice template for COVID-19 queries**

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| --- |
| **Reason for referral (please tick):**  **Guidance following risk assessment for underlying health condition □**  **Employee absent with symptoms of COVID19 □** |
| **Employee details**  First Name |
| Surname |
| DOB |
| Job Title |
| Email address |
| Mobile number |
| **Manager details:**  Name:  Email:  Telephone Number: |

***Please complete template below and email to:*** [***high-uhb.ohcovid@nhs.mail***](mailto:high-uhb.ohcovid@nhs.mail)