



For up to date information on Covid-19, log on to www.hpsc.ie or www.who.int

Updated Public Health Information about COVID-19

For all Dentists, Dental Hygienists, Dental Nurses, Orthodontic Therapists, and Clinical Dental Technicians

COVID-19 cases have been detected across mainland China and in over 30 other countries. Further global spread is likely. Risk assessment of people attending dental clinics/practices must be carried out to reduce the possibility of further spread. All dental healthcare workers are encouraged to have a high level of clinical suspicion. Pre-appointment, if a clinic/practice makes contact with a patient, it should be established if the patient is well and free from known risks. Clinical triage should be used for all people attending dental clinics/practices.

Common Signs of Infection

- Respiratory symptoms i.e. cough, shortness of breath and breathing difficulties
- Fever
- In more severe cases, infection can cause pneumonia, severe acute respiratory syndrome, kidney failure and even death.

Guidance on PPE

- Wear Mask with Goggles that have side protection, gloves, gown
- If goggles are not available, use mask as above with visor, gloves, gown
- Do not use a facial shield/visor without a mask - face shields should not be used as solitary face/eye protection, but rather as adjunctive to other PPE (protective facemasks, goggles, etc.).

Clinical Guidance

What should I do if a symptomatic person arrives or makes contact?

- The primary care algorithm must be followed, see below.

What should I do if someone has been in an affected area recently?

- If a well person who attends a clinic has returned from mainland China/affected area in the previous 14 days, it is prudent to defer the appointment until at least 14 days after last known exposure.
- In general, a generic travel question for everyone on the consultation form is always useful, e.g. *Have you travelled abroad in the last month? If yes where?* This would help gather this information without singling out any particular group or individual.

Infection Control and Waste Management

- The IPC guidance on waste management is available here: <https://www.hpsc.ie/a-z/respiratory/coronavirus/novelcoronavirus/guidance/>
- The HSE's IPC Guideline for Dental and Orthodontic Services is available here: <https://www.hse.ie/eng/about/who/healthwellbeing/our-priority-programmes/hcai/resources/dental/>

Recommendations to prevent spread of infection include:

- Regular hand washing. Training should be provided for any staff members who require an update – this is available at www.HSELand.ie registration is required
- Supply of Alcohol Based Hand Rub should be readily available in all areas
- Respiratory etiquette: cover mouth and nose when coughing and sneezing, poster available from www.hpsc.ie should be on display in all waiting rooms, reception and surgeries
- Foot controlled bins should be available in all waiting rooms
- Avoid close contact with anyone showing symptoms of respiratory illness
- If you are unwell on return from travel to an affected area, contact your healthcare provider and tell them of recent travel.

1 CLOSE CONTACTS:

Any individual who has had greater than 15 minutes face-to-face (<2 metres* distance) contact with a laboratory confirmed case, in any setting.

Click [here](#) for further details on the definition of close contacts.

*A distance of 1 metre is generally regarded as sufficient to minimise direct exposure to droplets however, for Public Health purposes, a close contact definition of 2 metres has been specified.

CONTACT DETAILS:

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