

Beyond Limits provides policies and procedures to promote safe and consistent practice across the Organisation. The framework laid down within our policies and procedures lets everyone know how we work and reflects our values and mission statement. Our policies and procedures are written to help us, employees of Beyond Limits, to make good, safe decisions.

Beyond Limits expects all employees to be familiar with the contents of all policies and procedures relevant to their role and to understand how to apply them within their daily work.

None of these documents stand alone, all fit within the larger framework of the way we work and any that are particularly relevant will be directly referenced.

# Infectious Diseases and Control Policy

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## Infectious Diseases and Control Policy – what this means to Beyond Limits

Beyond Limits recognises that infectious diseases are generally present throughout the general population. This policy is designed to provide appropriate guidance and support in managing what can be a sensitive issue. Robust infection control is crucial to the management of infectious diseases.

A new coronavirus disease (COVID-19) causing respiratory symptoms was declared a pandemic on 11<sup>th</sup> March 2020 by the World Health Organisation (WHO). This means COVID-19 has spread worldwide.

The government has released a range of guidance around social distancing, wearing of masks in enclosed spaces along with guidance on symptoms and testing. This advice is updated on a regular basis, sometimes daily. Visit this link for the latest information: <https://www.gov.uk/coronavirus>

Beyond Limits will always adhere to these guidelines and as a result significant changes have been made to how we work in our offices and at the homes of the people we support. For the people

we support individual measures are in place around the use of PPE (Personal Protection Equipment), monitoring temperatures, good hand hygiene and cleanliness. Our offices have clear signage and guidance to follow social distancing guidelines, hand sanitizing stations, temperature monitoring on arrival and PPE is also provided. These measures are not exhaustive and will change in line with government guidance. As an employee you must also follow these guidelines.

**General:**

The subject of infections and viruses including blood-borne viruses e.g. hepatitis B, hepatitis C and HIV is an emotive one and many of the fears we hold about them are due to a lack of understanding as to how these diseases are transmitted. Beyond Limits wishes to provide factual information in order that we can feel assured that all our employees and the people we support are safe, recognise the risks and are clear about their responsibilities.

- Types of infection which are present in the general population all of the time include Salmonella, E coli, 'Flu virus (e.g. H1N1 'Swine flu') Hepatitis B, HIV, COVID-19.
- Bodily fluids & tissues such as blood, urine, faeces, human tissue from infectious persons (via coughs & sneezes) can pose a risk of infection, as can direct contact with infected persons or contaminated surfaces e.g. door handles, light switches etc.
- There is a risk of infection if any waste materials (tissues) or soiled laundry are not handled, stored & disposed of correctly.

In all cases, it is important to obtain appropriate medical advice and report the matter or any concerns to Beyond Limits Service Managers at the earliest opportunity.

**● Beyond Limits will**

- Work with the person with the diagnosis to consider ways that support can be provided and put in place
- Keep only appropriate employees informed
- Signpost the person to a relevant Counselling service
- Ensure that any approach or notification of an infectious disease, whether employee or person whom we support, is treated in the strictest confident unless reporting the matter under legislation to Public Health England's Protection Team e.g. Tuberculosis (TB). If there is a known or possible outbreak of an infectious disease Beyond Limits will seek advice and support from Devon, Cornwall and Somerset local Health Protection Team (HPT).

**Health Protection Team for Devon, Somerset and Cornwall:**

**Address:** Follaton House, Plymouth Road, Totnes, Devon, TQ9 5NE

**Phone:** 0300 3038162 (24 hours)

## Procedure: How we follow and work within the Policy:

- In the first instance, the employee is encouraged to contact their Service Leader or Director, at the earliest opportunity, for advice and guidance. This will enable us to respond quickly and positively to provide all possible assistance.
- Any approach made will be treated in the strictest confidence and in the same manner as anyone who has any other progressive or debilitating illness including requests for leave to attend counselling sessions and medical appointments.

## What general precautions should we take to support infection control?

- Ensure good standards of personal hygiene including regular hand washing
- Keep all cuts & abrasions covered with a waterproof dressing
- Wear any PPE (e.g. gloves, aprons) provided and check on condition before use
- Ensure all surfaces likely to come into contact with potentially infected materials are regularly cleaned & thoroughly disinfected
- If you are suffering from an infectious disease report it to your Team Leader/Service Leader
- Use disposable cloths and separate cloths for kitchen, bath/shower, toilet if directed
- Ensure razors, toothbrushes, flannels are not shared and that they are regularly changed/renewed.

## What action should we take in the event if an incident?

- If the skin is punctured by a sharp object encourage the wound to bleed
- Wash thoroughly with copious amounts of water
- Report incidents immediately to line management
- Seek medical advice and offer reassurance
- Complete an accident form and follow the procedure for recording the incident.