

## Statement of Accredited Registers about COVID-19 (Coronavirus)

16 March 2020

The Government has said the COVID-19 (Coronavirus) outbreak is an increasingly significant threat.

As holders of accredited registers, our key purpose is to protect the public. We also support registrants in the safety of, and the continuity of, their practice. We hold the registers of over 80,000 health and care practitioners in the UK. We want our registrants to maintain services to patients, clients and service users, keeping safe and healthy as you do so.

For registrants and members of the public there is a lot of information about this outbreak and how to keep safe. Go to [NHSUK/coronavirus](https://www.nhs.uk/coronavirus) for information about the virus and how to protect yourself. Use the 111 online coronavirus service to check if you need medical help.

For those practitioners on Accredited Registers that frequently come into contact with members of the public, the UK Government have produced extensive guidance for healthcare professionals. Go to: [gov.uk/government/wuhan-novel-coronavirus](https://www.gov.uk/government/wuhan-novel-coronavirus).

It is important that you wash your hands more often, especially:

- ✓ when you get to work or arrive home
- ✓ after you blow your nose, cough or sneeze
- ✓ before you eat or handle food

You should wash your hands for 20 seconds, using soap and water or hand sanitiser. Washing hands for 20 seconds is central to preventing and slowing the spread of coronavirus (COVID-19). You should cough or sneeze into tissues and immediately dispose of them.

Everywhere in the UK, it is imperative that everyone follows clinical advice by contacting NHS 111 and not going to A&E if you develop symptoms.

Registrants and your co-workers should be sure you have the best information, environment and equipment to do your job. You should be ready to give clear and helpful advice to your patients, clients and service users.

We recognise the challenges that this outbreak brings for registrants in maintaining high-quality services. Our regulatory standards are designed to be flexible and to provide a framework for decision-making in a wide range of situations.

Registrants need to work cooperatively with colleagues to keep people safe, to practise in line with the best available evidence, to recognise and work within the limits of your competence, and to have appropriate indemnity arrangements relevant to your practice.

Where a concern is raised about a registrant, it will always be considered on the specific facts of the case, taking into account the factors relevant to the environment in which the professional is working. We would also take account of any relevant information about resource, guidelines or protocols in place at the time.