



BABTAC

BRITISH ASSOCIATION OF
BEAUTY THERAPY & COSMETOLOGY

Back to Work Guidelines

GUIDANCE FOR PREPARING
BEAUTY & HAIR SALONS

POST COVID-19 LOCKDOWN

INTRODUCTION

This suggested guidance is intended for planning purposes. Employers and staff should use this guide to help identify risk levels in their workplace settings and to determine any appropriate control measures to implement. Additional guidance or changes to current guidance may be needed going forward as COVID-19 outbreak conditions change, including as new information about the virus, its transmission, and impacts, becomes available from government or health organisations.

An important note: While we fully understand our members eagerness to ensure they are 100% prepared for the lifting of lockdown and are able to return to work with immediate effect thereafter, with their safety protocols as comprehensive as they can possibly be - there are two very important factors that **MUST** be taken into consideration:

- Currently there are NO Government Guidelines or timeframes in place. Our own guidelines may need adjusting over the coming weeks in line with any new recommendations or changes from Government. ****These guidelines are advisory only and do not represent legal requirement. They are here as a guide - each salon is different and will have its own unique requirements and challenges. Ultimately the protocols and procedures you decide on need to best minimize the risk to you and your clients.**
- Without an official date yet for when lockdown will be lifted or how that lift will be implemented (i.e. phased or immediate) it is exceptionally hard to advise members when they should start implementing plans and stock up on necessary supplies. PPE items in particular are an area of concern - while we have no doubt that PPE will be required when Salons do open their doors – our Frontline Workers should **ALWAYS** be first in line for stock. We strongly urge our members to ensure they are not stockpiling items that are currently not accessible to our frontline workers first and foremost.

COVID-19 TRANSMISSION

Understanding how COVID19 spreads & the implication to our Industry.

In developing best practice guidelines, it is firstly particularly important to understand how COVID19 is spread. As you are well aware COVID19 is a new Virus and thus research is still in its early stages and remains ongoing – it is important to remember that this could result in guidelines being updated.

Current research however suggests it is mainly from person to person:

- Between people who are in close contact with one another (within about 6 feet).
- Through respiratory droplets produced when an infected person coughs or sneezes.
- There is also a possibility that a person can get COVID-19 by touching a surface or object that has SARS-CoV-2 (the virus that causes COVID-19) on it and then touching their own mouth, nose, or possibly their eyes - this is not thought to be the primary way the virus spreads but definitely must be taken into consideration.

People are thought to be most contagious when they are most symptomatic (i.e. experiencing fever, cough, and/or shortness of breath). However new reports suggest that the virus can be asymptomatic on up to 80% of carriers and they are still able to pass on the virus even although they are not presenting any symptoms.

When considering the facts of how this virus is spread it presents a very daunting problem for our industry - in particular when it comes to maintaining social distancing protocols. For this precise reason most disciplines in our field will unfortunately, but quite correctly, sit in the category of non-essential work with maximum risk. This needs to be considered in all our decisions and responsibilities and will undoubtedly be considered by government when formulating their strategies for ending lockdown.

The advantage our industry does have, over many others, is that because we do work in close proximity to our clients, and have covered health & safety requirements and infection control in our training, we are far better equipped and experienced at managing the spread of infection than so many other industries. Many of us also already have a good understanding of PPE equipment and how to use it correctly.

INFECTION CONTROL

**For an infection to spread there must be a continuous chain of events known as the chain of infection. To prevent the spread you must first understand the reservoir (where infectious agents can live, grow and reproduce) and its mode of transmission (how it spreads). You can break the chain, to reduce the spread of COVID-19, by cleaning and disinfecting frequent touch points /surfaces, equipment, fomites, observing good respiratory hygiene and washing your hands. For these interventions to be effective, they must be carried out in line with evidence based Infection Control guidelines."*

Sharon Egdell, RGN, BSc Infection Control & Author of Introduction to Infection, Prevention & Control for Beauty and Aesthetics Practitioners ([link to course](#))

By managing this very thoroughly and continuously your salon should be able to effectively offer as safe an environment as you possibly can for both your staff and your clients.

Personal Protective Equipment (PPE)

Many therapists treatments already required the use of PPE Equipment in terms of general hygiene and also for the avoidance of Airborne viruses (such as COVID19) or Blood Born Viruses (BBV) such as HIV and Hepatitis - which already needed to conform with EN standards so for many this is a continuance of what you do already.

PPE should be worn in accordance with HSE guidelines Members should carry out a detailed risk assessment of the treatments they offer and decide themselves what appropriate PPE and cleaning protocols they implement based on guidelines below.

The following items will most probably be required by beauty therapists, barbers & hairdressers

- Medical Grade Gloves
- Surgical Masks
- Disposable aprons, & gowns

All PPE equipment should be purchased and worn in accordance with HSE Regulations and removed and disposed of in line with HSE guidelines.

Implementing Infection Prevention Measures

All Staff

- Frequent handwashing (following NHS Guidelines) should take place before, during treatment (when required) and after each client, before putting on and after removing PPE equipment & cleaning equipment and environment, each time you use the toilet, and arriving at work and home. Hands should be washed thoroughly, remembering to use the disposable towels to dry hands and turn the taps off. Washing with soap is better than using a sanitiser or wipes and sanitiser should only be an option when handwashing facilities not convenient (note – sanitisers active ingredient must be effective against COVID19 or contain a minimum of 60% alcohol)
- Staff should not wear their uniforms at home or to and from work, furthermore uniforms should be changed on a daily basis and washed immediately after use (on highest temperature possible – minimum 60`)
- Where possible a change of footwear would be good practice when working in the salon
- Staff should consider going completely jewellery free to minimize risk further
- Always keep hair tied back to avoid unnecessary touching.
- Maintain short nails – no acrylics
- Avoid touching face & hair, or other areas on the body, and ensure you wash hands thoroughly if you do, following NHS guidelines
- Staff should sneeze into tissues, which are binned immediately (in air tight bin with lid) and hands are washed thoroughly afterwards.
- Use of PPE Equipment (relevant to treatment)

Clients

- Clients should be encouraged to wash their hands on entering the premises. A notice can be displayed explaining why. Having extra disinfectant wipes (suitable for viruses) for clients to wipe their hands should also be offered.
- Skin (& Nail) prep of clients is very important – where applicable use reputable topical antiseptic agent with at least 70% isopropyl alcohol or chlorhexidine or equivalent.
- Determine what, if any, client's PPE needs are decide whether you will provide these for an additional included cost, or whether you will require your client to provide their own. We believe it is acceptable to charge your client to provide them with required items
- Ensure the client is aware of all salon safety/hygiene expectations before entering the salon - confirm this via email prior to appointment (and ask them to send acknowledge back)
- Ask client to arrive alone (unless not possible) with as little personal property as possible e.g. leave handbags/scarfs jewellery etc at home

Tools & Supplies

- Use disposable single use tools and supplies wherever possible & dispose in line with local council safe waste disposal
- Empty all wax pots and disinfect before refilling them with new wax or use disposable pots. As already adopted by majority as good practice, disposable spatulas must not be reused during waxing procedure and never double dip back into wax after being in contact with client. Spatulas should be deposited of in an airtight bin. The airtight bin should have a lid and should be lined with a disposable plastic bag. Waxing waste should be treated as contaminated waste and disposed of in line with local miscellaneous provisions acts, bye laws and licences.
- Investing in more single-use, disposable equipment, such as nail files, will also help reduce the risk of cross contamination, as well as investing in more sterilising equipment and being vigilant in keeping these processes up. If purchasing autoclaves ensure it reaches the correct temperature to kill all virus & bacteria
- Check to make sure all products such as lotions, creams, waxes and scrubs have always been in a closed container, if not you must discard and replace
- Non disposables must always be thoroughly cleaned, then sterilised after each client, ensuring contact for immersion is correct and sterilisation used, is a suitable method.
- We would advise the use of disposable towels if at all possible, if using non disposable towels they must be changed after every use and washed at a temperature of at least 60`
- Clean and disinfect all towel/linen hampers and bins and only use such container that can be closed and use with liners that can be removed and discarded
- PPE equipment must be removed (safely in accordance with HSE guidance) after each treatment, & disposed of in line with HSE requirements - washing hands thoroughly before and after
- Wear disposable gloves to clean and disinfect and be careful when using sprays not to ingest any product
- If possible, a UV cabinet should be used to sterilise implements and keep hygienic after cleaning and after other means sterilisation

Equipment

- All Equipment utilised during treatment- should be thoroughly cleaned (in line with manufacturers guidelines). Before and after each use using appropriate disinfectant/cleaner
 - Consult with providers of equipment utilised to ensure proper cleaning/disinfecting methods or updated protocols are in place and to identify if they have new/amended resources available to assist with educating staff
- Touch screens, phones, iPads, tills, card machines should be disinfected/ cleaned after each use handwash basins, taps, soap dispenser, toilets etc should be cleaned and disinfected after every use with appropriate disinfectant/cleaner

Environment

Prevention is key to reducing the spread of germs and viruses. When it comes to salon surfaces, ensure you have highly effective cleaning agents to hand, such as a bleach or isopropyl alcohol. (if bleaching solution is not already diluted make sure to follow manufactures guidelines and never mix cleaning chemicals together)

- Wipe down all surfaces (floors, worktops, trolleys, couches etc) with medical grade disinfectant & cleaner following guidelines and air dry - redo any surfaces used between clients
- Where feasible use disposable cloths or when using non disposable cloths they must be changed after every use and washed at a temperature of at least 60° All touch points should be cleaned with medical grade disinfectant & cleaner frequently during the day hourly or less, this includes door push plates/handles, light switches, fridge handles, touch points on any shelving, toilet flush
- Disinfectants and disinfectant cleaners – If you use a disinfectant, (disinfectant, disinfectant/cleaner, disinfectant spray or wipe) use a product such as a bleach-based product, which is active against respiratory viruses.
- Avoid if at all possible using any materials or furniture etc in the salon that are hard to clean (blankets, carpets, material couches)
- Salons should consider how to provide best possible levels of ventilation. Where possible keep windows open to allow for air to circulate or if there is a ventilation system check the number of air changes from the manufacturer's guidance For beauty salons recommended air changes are between 6-10 changes per hour. However, this will depend on the size of the salon/treatment rooms.
- Spas - Communal Locker Rooms/Storage Facilities/Showers/ Hydro Areas and Wet Areas etc – give considerations as to how to manage these communal area with regards to social distancing and cleaning/disinfecting in line with government and HSE current regulations. You will also need to consider having alternatives for clients not wishing to use communal areas.
- If water in tanks and the pipework have been 'standing' for the period of closure and weather has been fairly warm - conditions for legionella to grow (20-45c) may have been reached. It would be good practice for the owner of the salon to 'flush the system through' by letting the taps run for approximately 5 minutes. When flushing through showers, to ensure no aerosol particles escape, run it through a container of water. The showerhead should be disinfected in a mild solution of bleach (follow manufacturers' guidance). In hot water tanks raise the temperature to at least 60c. It would be good practice to wipe all water outlets down with a mild bleach solution once they have been flushed, this includes sinks and wash hand basins. Seek advice from a water specialist if you are concerned.

OPERATIONAL CONSIDERATIONS & PLANNING

Employer

Do a comprehensive risk assessment & strategic plan ahead of opening including (but not limited to):

- Ensure you remain up to date on all government policies, regulations and guidelines affecting you
 - BABTAC will advise members on these as government guidelines become available
- Consulting with HR & staff to assess personal situations, present health & wellbeing and feeling about returning to work and provide education of new regulations
- Review HR resources (e.g. job descriptions, staff handbooks, sickness policies) in line with new legislation and amended company policies
- Understanding correct government & HR procedures to bring back any furloughed staff & HR guidance on recruiting new/laying off current staff if necessary
- Do full assessment on financial standing & cashflow (& access processes to grants/loans where needed)
- Supplier Orders: check current inventory, estimate new required stock levels & get reliable information on expected lead times for deliveries:
 - Review and update cleaning/sterilisation material requirements

- give consideration to the potential increase in disposable supplies you will need to order and possible increased lead times
- Also consider the amount of additional disposal you will be doing & if you will have sufficient disposal units
- Engage with technology suppliers to determine touchless solutions available
- Reorganisation of your Salon with regards to layout, flow & optimising social distancing
- Complete your own risk assessment for each treatment you offer against HSE guidelines in order to decide which treatments you feel comfortable offering initially and assess stock & PPE required for those. Government guidelines could also have an impact on these decisions
- Managing client demand and expectations within any new strategic constraints (financial or H & S)
 - Communicate new protocols and procedures guidelines to clients with inclusion of their responsibility for their own health and that of your staff
- Consider possible amended times and staff rotas
 - this may well require ongoing adjusting based on developments and experience of the new normal
- Holiday allowances & implications to the company
- Ensure you have the correct procedures & protocols if a staff member or client gets sick
- Update protocols for staff kitchen, eating areas and communal areas in light of social distancing and additional H&S requirements

Staff

- Communicate amended strategic plan & health and safety protocols (with HR considerations taken into account) and request for feedback/agreement ahead of implementation.
- Provide training & educational material for all staff to cover any new procedures or processes and have regular updates to enforce this.
- Establish treatment guidelines for staff, to include:
 - Policies regarding wearing gloves, masks or other personal protective equipment (PPE) during treatments, Protocols and scripts for clients exhibiting symptoms of illness during treatments
 - Verbal or visual indication of washing hands prior to and following treatments.
 - Encouraging clients to wash hands prior to and after treatments (verbally & through posted signage)
- Provide staff with a FAQ list and talking points on how to handle client inquiries regarding sanitation, new policies, clients not abiding by new protocols etc.

OPERATIONAL PROTOCOLS & CONTROLS

Staff

- Any Staff displaying even the slightest symptoms must be instructed to self-isolate according to government guidelines and contact NHS Helpline if they have breathing difficulties. They must NOT come into work under ANY circumstances
- Consider taking temperatures of every person entering the building each day (staff, clients and deliveries) - with proper cleaning/hygiene protocols of thermometer observed. Infra-Red Thermometers are recommended however these should be used with caution – e.g. accuracy of the thermometer reading; some clients/staff maybe ovulating where there is a natural spike in body temperature, if some is anxious or stressed, or if the person is experiencing a 'hot flush' so have a general chat if there is a slight range in temperature.
- When antibody tests become widely available, (once frontline workers have had sufficient access) consider offering to have each staff member tested (so no team member needs to be quarantined unnecessarily)
- Ensure staff are being vigilant and do not touch face eyes etc when treating clients

- Meetings or employee training should be reduced to the bare minimum or postponed. Alternatively, technical solutions such as telephone or video conferences should be used as far as possible. If face-to-face events are absolutely necessary, there must be sufficient distance between the participants.
- The occupancy density of work areas and shared facilities is to be equalised in terms of time - for example, by shifting working hours and breaks or shift work. With shift plans, care should be taken to divide the same people as possible into common shifts. At the beginning and end of working hours, suitable organisational measures should be taken to avoid that several employees come together closely - for example, when recording time, in changing rooms, washrooms and showers, etc.

Clients (& Suppliers)

- Salon entrance to be controlled by staff strictly only app only - no walk ins
- Virtual skin consultations could be conducted prior to appointment via zoom or alternative. This would further limit contact time in the salon
- Ask each client entering the shop the following questions:
 - Have you had a cough?
 - Have you had a fever,
 - Have you been around anyone exhibiting these symptoms within the past 14 days?
 - Are you living with anyone who is sick or quarantined?
- Client Communications & Management
 - In line with new business operation plans & procedures, daily revised routines and any restrictions on treatment offerings
- Make sure that health questionnaires are being completed by visitors online (including suppliers and contractors) before entering the premises. You may wish to add on a question asking if they have travelled recently and where to? Although this question will not apply immediately, it will become relevant after lockdown has been lifted for a period of time
 - Avoid use of written documents if you can, where possible get these completed online ahead of your client coming to the salon (e.g. and not limited to Client consultation, aftercare advice, next appointment details etc)

Salon Administration

- Consider layout in terms of optimising Social Distancing between clients and staff members and adjust accordingly, to what works best and is feasible for your staff and clients
- Alter opening times, shifts and days to limit numbers of people in the salon at any one time
- Consider perspex screens for nail workstations and reception (if applicable – i.e. if manned by separate receptionist) note – screens can present their own challenges (e.g. dust accumulation)
- Provide visual guides throughout the salon promoting H & S guidelines and new protocols (should also be sent to clients prior to then visiting salon)
- Provide a comprehensive Cleaning/Disinfection Timetable & Checklist for all communal areas, storage facilities, treatment rooms, workstations, tools kits, equipment, stock, touch points etc in the Salon and make sure it is adhered to & monitored on a regular basis
 - allocate responsibilities or days to each staff member
 - remember to adjust appointment scheduling to include time to implement this
- No waiting area – advise clients to only arrive just before their appointment (this will be easier if they have completed an online consultation in advance)
- Provide warm verbal welcomes without handshake or hugs
 - Consider including new ritual of soothing hand wash instead
- Consider eliminating reusable copies of the salon treatment lists/retail pricelists etc and transition to single-use disposable copies or a digital or no-touch promotional display of available services
- Magazines should not be offered
- Consider reviewed cancellation policies in line with new health considerations (i.e. not penalising clients who are sick)

- Space appointments to avoid clients coming into contact
- Avoid offering refreshments other than water through a cooler & dispenser with single use cups and bin provided and sanitised wipes provided
- Provide Online Client Consultations ahead of coming in and include additional appropriate health questions and also any new concerns or preferences they may now have
- Take Online or phone bookings only (communicate this in advance to clients and display this rule at the entrance to your salon to avoid walk-ins)
- Card payments only (if at all possible) or online payment options in advance (communicate this in advance to clients)
- Send next appointment details electronically and avoid using appointment cards
- Record names, contact details and date of treatments for all clients tracing infections if required
- Gift vouchers should also be supplied electronically
- Aftercare advice should be sent to the client electronically and not given as a leaflet
- Courier & Deliveries should be scheduled only and booked outside of client times
- Provide area for outdoor deliveries & storage (if feasible)
 - If financially viable consider larger orders of supplies less often
- Remove all product testers to avoid cross contamination

Other Considerations

Therapists working alone from home or in single room salons still need to apply all protocols and precautions relevant to their situation.

Mobile Therapists need to strongly consider advising clients to come to their own place where they can control the environment in accordance with above protocols and guidance. If this is not possible, client would need to prove that all hygiene protocols have been carried out prior to visit to a client's home – e.g. extensive checklist could be sent to client electronically for completion and signature ahead of arrival.

Renting of rooms and chairs - Anyone working in a salon on a self-employed basis should follow the same protocols that have been set for employed staff, in addition they should be included in any staff training delivering new procedures/protocols.

Insurance note for BABTAC Members

If government confirms beauty and hair salons may open then your current BABTAC Insurance policy does cover you against third party claims and allegations of negligently causing accidental bodily injury, which includes illness, in the course of your business. The onus will be on the claimant to prove you were negligent. Any claim will be individually judged by insurers and subject to the full policy terms and conditions.

Important note: If you opened before Government advice however this could be deemed as a breach of policy conditions.

Credit

1. Hygenisys for contribution to Health & Safety Measures
2. British Beauty Council for working inclusively with us to promote all guidelines ([link to website](#))

** Disclaimer

These guidelines have been created with experts in each industry field and are advisory only. They do not constitute legal requirement, have not been agreed with Government and do not imply or incur any liability to BABTAC. These guidelines are written with a view of protecting our partners, their staff and customers with their health & safety being the number one priority and are based on expert and public knowledge as of 06.05.20.

Businesses should continue to check local government websites and guidelines for the most up to date recommendations.

Sharon Egdell did not contribute to information in these guidelines but for more information on Infection Control we recommend her comprehensive CIBTAC Endorsed Infection Control Course ([link to course](#))