



St. Michael's House

WORKING SAFELY IN FRONTLINE SERVICES

QUALITY & SAFETY DEPARTMENT
IPC/NURSING DEPARTMENT

ST. MICHAEL'S HOUSE | WWW.SMH.IE



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Introduction: Working Safely in Frontline Service Buildings

Since March 2020, frontline staff members have been faced with unprecedented challenges and change to service provision. The flexibility, commitment and creativity of all in adapting to this new way of working has been outstanding. Your hard work is greatly appreciated by St Michael's House.

The purpose of this handbook is to ensure that all staff working across frontline services have the most up to date information.

This handbook is an important resource to keeping you informed and is designed to provide you with the information you require to work safely in frontline services.

This handbook references a number of resources developed and updated since March 2020 to support safe work practices in frontline services that many of you will be familiar with. These resources are available in the Covid downloads section of the intranet and also on yourotc.

It also references minimum required training that all staff are required to complete every 6 months which can be located on YourOTC.net

There will continue to be uncertainty about COVID 19 and St. Michael's House will continue to respond in line with Department of Health and HSE advice.

We are in this together and can continue to support each other as we have been doing by taking personal responsibility and adapting together.

How to stay up to date with COVID 19?

St Michael's House has a system to ensure that the advice issued from the Government of Ireland is implemented and followed. We monitor updates from the HSE, HSA and HPSC. The Clinical Nurse Specialist (CNSp) in Infection Prevention and Control provides advice and guidance on the control measures relating to COVID 19 to the Director of Nursing and onwards to the Executive Management Team (EMT) of St Michael's House. St Michael's House services implement and follow all national guidance.

St Michael's House recommends that staff use official sources to get information and updates relating to COVID – 19. HSE.ie has detailed information which is updated regularly.



COVID-19 Policy Statement

SMH is committed to highest possible standards of safety. A safe and continued return to work during the COVID 19 Pandemic requires strong infection prevention control measures, solid communication strategies and a shared collaborative approach between employers and staff.

St. Michael's House will:

- ✚ Provide up to date information to our staff and service users on the Public Health advice issued by the HSE and HSA.
- ✚ Display information on the signs and symptoms of COVID-19 and correct hand-washing techniques
- ✚ Provide an adequate number of trained staff who are easily identifiable
- ✚ Inform all staff of essential hygiene and respiratory etiquette and physical distancing requirements
- ✚ Adapt the workplace to facilitate physical distancing, where possible
- ✚ Establish maximum occupancy for our buildings
- ✚ Keep a contact log to help with contact tracing
- ✚ Ensure all staff have completed the necessary steps to returning to work safely.
- ✚ Provide instructions for workers to follow if they develop signs and symptoms of COVID-19 during work
- ✚ Implement a Covid response team
- ✚ Intensify cleaning arrangements in line with government advice
- ✚ Introduce COVID 19 isolation rooms
- ✚ Provide hand sanitisation stations
- ✚ Introduce robust entry/exit protocols for buildings
- ✚ Provide a wide range of service user training material to support those who use the service to understand and implement good hand hygiene, physical distancing, understand and use PPE when required and follow respiratory etiquette.

All managers, staff and service users will be consulted on an ongoing basis and feedback is encouraged on any concerns, issues or suggestions. The Covid-19 pandemic is an evolving and ever changing situation, thus, there is an onus on staff to keep up to date on changes.

This policy will be updated regularly in line with national public health guidance.

Signed:

Date: 25th Sept 2020



Risk Management in the COVID 19 Pandemic

COVID 19 is one of the most significant risks for St. Michael's House and to help manage the risks a COVID 19 risk register was created. Working safely in frontline services also have associated risk assessments which form part of the risk register.

As the advice issued by NPHEt continues to be updated these protocols and the measures employers and employees need to address may also change. A collaborative approach between employers and workers is the key to protecting against the spread of COVID-19 in the workplace. Several risk assessment templates have been created to support PICs to assess the risks in frontline services. These are available on downloads in the Covid 19/ Working Safely in Frontline Services file and on Yourotc.

A comprehensive suite of risk assessments is available in the in downloads on the downloads in the *Covid 19/ Working Safely in Frontline Services file* and on *Yourotc*.

Staff should make themselves familiar with these risk assessments, which will support us all in reducing the likelihood of transmitting the virus throughout St Michael's House Services.



Role of Staff in Implementing the Working safely in Frontline service Protocol

- Ensure you are aware of and comply with the protocol and risk assessments in maintaining a safe workplace during the COVID 19 pandemic

- Ensure you have completed the minimum required training on yourotc.net

- **Do not report for work if you are feeling unwell.**

- Maintain a distance of 2 metres from other staff members during work, alter work practices to ensure that this is applied during handovers, breaktimes etc

- Complete the daily health declaration each day that you attend work

- Sign in and out of centre -remind all other staff to do so also

- Ensure staff sign into and out of the building for contact tracing purpose and if in the event of a fire alarm

- Encourage social distancing at all times throughout the day

- Wear a mask correctly and be prepared to remind other staff to do so also

- Keep a personal log of people they come in contact throughout the day (especially if more than 15 mins)- a diary is usually effective for

- Inform the staff team that the St.Michael's House Safety Statement has been updated in line with COVID 19 and a copy of it and the COVID 19 Policy Statement is available on the Intranet Policy section.

- Ensure that additional cleaning rotas are followed and that communal work areas are frequently cleaned when leaving and dispose of waste appropriately including cleaning staff room/sleepover/shared facilities, i.e. clean phone receivers/computer keyboards



Role of the Safety Representatives

SMH have Staff Safety Representatives who work with us to promote and enhance work place safety. They have also completed the workplace appointed representatives training.

The role of the safety representatives as COVID -19 appointed representatives is to:

- Apply what was learned at the COVID-19 Workplace Appointed Representatives course to workplace scenarios
- Support the implementation of working safely in frontline service buildings and offer advice on matters of workplace safety relating to COVID-19 processes and procedures
- Identify and report gaps in the system
- Make representations from the staff to the employer on matters of Safety, Health and Welfare at Work.
- Support inspections where required and lead the SMH COVID-19 challenge by proactively reminding and communicating to staff the need for diligence
- Consult with the Health and Safety Manager on advice given and log the advice in writing.

COVID 19 Outbreak Management Team

As part of the risk management strategy, SMH have established an Outbreak Management Team. The purpose of the Outbreak management team is to ensure there is a robust plan for the management of a person who becomes symptomatic, tests positive or is a close contact of a positive case. The outbreak management team comprises of:

- Clinical Nurse Specialist (Infection Prevention Control)
- Head of Medical Dept
- Director of Nursing
- Assistant Director of Nursing/ NMOC
- Health & Medical Trainer
- Contact Tracing, Public Health & Corporate Health Ireland (CHI).
- HR Representative
- The outbreak management team also includes the PIC and Service Manager and Director for frontline service involved in the outbreak.



Key Tasks For All Staff Working in Frontline Services by End of December 2020:

The 4 tasks to be completed by end December 2020 are:

1. All staff in frontline services must complete the minimum required training on YourOTC; as outlined in this handbook, and to complete this on a 6 monthly basis.
2. All staff must read this handbook
3. To read the PPE Policy (2020)
4. All staff must wear the necessary PPE in line with the SMH PPE Policy (2020).

Minimum required training (MRT) for employees

The Table below outlines the SMH staff groupings and the Minimum Required Training that applies to them. The refresher cycle for COVID-19 Minimum Required Training is 6 months, which means that each staff member is required to complete the training every 6 months. The completion of this training will be monitored by the Staff Education and Training and Development Department (SETDD) and the information will be made available to managers through the 'training reports' request system.

The training will take 60 minutes to complete.

- A review of the Public Health, HSE and St. Michael's House information, procedures and guidance with regard to COVID-19
- Hand Hygiene
- Coughing and Sneezing (Etiquette)
- Correct use of Personal Protective Equipment (PPE)
- Cleaning in the Work environment
- Physical distancing

Staff Groupings required to complete Minimum Required Training in this Resource

	1. Policies and up to date PH/HSE/SMH information	2. Physical Distancing, Hand Hygiene, Coughing & Sneezing, PPE,	3. COVID-19 Symptoms and How it Spreads	4. SMH procedures when Symptoms appear	5. Assessment of learning
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		Cleaning			
Staff Grouping					
All existing and new staff (OO)	X	X	X	X	X
Any redeployed or reassigned staff	X	X	X	X	X
Ongoing Refresher - Residential and Day	X	X	X	X	X
Clinical Staff	X	X	X	X	X
Admin and Shared Services staff	X	X	X	X	X

The Training resources are available online on yourotc.net in the St.Michael's House Minimum Required Training area.

If you have issues accessing the area or need to receive your username and password for yourotc.net; email the Staff Education, Training and Development department at:

online learningsmh@opentrainingcollege.com

Keeping Safe While Attending Face to Face Training

It is essential to minimise the spread of infection before and during training sessions so you must undertake to adhere to all IPC precautions during the training session and for the venue in which the training is being delivered in.

Please prepare for your attendance at 'in person' training sessions by reading carefully all guidance sent to you by SMH Staff Education, Training and Development Department well in advance. Guidance might be slightly different depending on the type of training being delivered. Do not be complacent and assume guidance will remain the same for all training sessions.

Staff are required to be familiar with the symptoms of COVID-19 and not attend training if they have symptoms or are contacts of people with COVID-19. Please



adhere to SMH's guidelines here and ensure that the Staff Education, Training and Development Department (SETDD) is informed promptly.

Staff are required to complete a 'Infection Prevention and Control Checklist for Participants'. You will be required to sign a declaration and return to the trainer on the day. This form confirms that you will undertake to abide by the IPC precautions as described by the SETD Department, the Trainer and Venue signage, which includes the following:

- Bringing own lunch/refreshment.
- Arriving on time.
- Having your temperature taken and recorded.
- Sharing contact details, such as your mobile number for the purposes of contact tracing
- Following the directional signage to the training room, toilets and lunch areas
- Abiding by break times.
- Wearing assigned PPE such as a mask and/or gown during training. Following the correct doffing and donning of this PPE into a bin for breaks and upon re-entry to the room. Three masks / gowns are provided by St. Michaels House to each participant, one arrival and one for after each break.
- Using hand sanitiser provided and as appropriate during training.
- Bringing your own notepad and pen
- Maintaining social distancing, (including not moving furniture).
- Using correct cough/sneeze etiquette.
- Cleaning of desk, seating area and equipment with wipes provided and disposal of same in bin.
- Not visiting other SMH centres on campus throughout the training session.
- Informing the trainer if unwell during training. Ensuring to continue to wear a mask, leaving the room to go to the designated isolation area/room and contacting direct line manager to inform them and seek support.
- Communicating any concerns with regard to any infection control arrangements OR ability to manage any of above, to the attention of the trainer **BEFORE** training starts.

We all have an important role to play in ensuring essential training can continue to take place in a safe environment.

Protocol for Wearing a Mask in St Michael's House Services

All St Michaels House staff are required to wear face masks as per *Masks - Guidance on the Use of Masks in St. Michael's House during COVID-19 Pandemic* and the *SMH PPE Policy (July 2020)*



All staff should wear a **medical grade** face mask, **not** face coverings, **not** visors or face shields when at work. Wearing a mask will not only protect you but also your colleagues, service users and your family.

Surgical masks will be supplied to you for your use when working, which can be ordered from the PPE department. The masks you will be supplied with meet the required standard for quality assurance. SMH have made the decision, for everyone's wellbeing, to require all staff, irrespective of their role as frontline, admin, clinical, support services to use facemasks as the safest option to ensure quality controlled PPE is used. These are not provided for personal use.

Masks can only protect you and your colleagues/service users if they are worn correctly.



Please refer to minimum required training on YourOTC for information on donning and doffing surgical masks. Masks should be removed for eating/ drinking and a new mask put on. Never reuse a surgical mask. They are single use only.

If you have an illness or impairment that would make wearing or removing a face mask upsetting or uncomfortable please speak to your line manager regarding a referral to Corporate Health Ireland in relation to this.

How to order your supply of PPE for your centre:

- St Michaels House will provide a supply face masks and other necessary PPE to the frontline services. It is important to ensure that you use this supply for work purposes only.
- PPE can be ordered by emailing : PPE@smh.ie
- Address :
**Castle Industries,
Unit 36A
Newtown Ave,
Malahide Road Ind Park,
Coolock,
Dublin 17
Eircode: D17 X782**



- Two days notice is required for all orders
- The PPE Department can be contacted between the hours of 9 to 4pm Monday to Friday
- The PPE department are responsible for all PPE in SMH for all locations so be mindful of the significant demands on the service. All requests are dealt with in the order they are received.

Reminders:

- **Staff must not attend for work if they are feeling unwell.**
- **All staff must maintain 2 meter social distance while at work, where possible.**
- **All frontline staff must wear their mask. Where there are suspected or confirmed cases of Covid-19 all staff must wear full PPE, at all times.**



Travelling To Work In St Michael's House

When travelling to and from work you should minimise the risk of contracting the COVID 19 virus and therefore reducing the likelihood of cross contamination to your work colleagues.

- Pre-plan your journey, looking at the route to take and the transport you need.
- Wear a face covering when using public transport unless you have an illness, special needs or impairment that would make wearing or removing a face covering upsetting or uncomfortable
- Wash your hands with soap and water or an alcohol-based sanitiser before travelling and take sanitiser with you

Public transport

- If you're using public transport, clean your hands regularly with an alcohol-based sanitiser and wear a face covering
- Where possible, use seats facing the same direction. Keep a distance of 2 meters away from other passengers at all times.
- Do not face other passengers in case they sneeze or cough
- If possible, avoid using your hands to open and close doors and instead use your elbows and shoulders. Where you must touch handles or buttons - clean your hands afterwards.
- Wash your hands when you have arrived at work

Using your own private vehicle

- If you're using your own vehicle, you should travel on your own. Carpooling is not advised during the COVID-19 outbreak
- Make sure that your vehicle is roadworthy and you have enough fuel to avoid unnecessary stops. If you do have to refuel your vehicle, use a contactless service station if possible. Use gloves when handling the fuel pump and clean your hands when you've finished.
- Wash your hands before and after using your vehicle.

Keeping vehicles virus-free

Keep disinfectant wipes in your vehicle to clean frequently-contacted surfaces.

These include:

- door handle and key or fob
- steering wheel and dashboard
- inside door buttons
- seat belts



- gear stick
- touch screens

Use soap and water to clean surface materials that may be affected by disinfectant.

You should clean frequently-contacted surfaces before and after your journey. Keep waste in a suitable lidded container and remove from the vehicle at the end of each journey.

Entering a Frontline Service

When you come in to work in the frontline service building **you must Not enter the building if you feel unwell**. Stay in your car/outside and contact your manager and await their advice and guidance.

Before entering the buildings there are **5 requirements**:

- 1. Sanitise your hands when entering the building**
- 2. Wear a Face Mask**
- 3. Take your temperature**
- 4. Complete the self declaration health form**
- 5. Sign in for the purposes of contact tracing**

Be aware of:

- ✓ Different routes of access and egress
- ✓ One way systems in the building
- ✓ Maintaining 2 meter distance from colleagues/service users where possible
- ✓ Ensure other staff and visitors to centre are aware of the above measures.
- ✓ All staff/ visitors/contractors must sign in and out of the building

Face Masks

Please ensure that you put on a facemask before you enter the frontline building. This can be removed if you are in the office on your own. It is not recommended that more than one staff uses the office at any given time.

Do remind your colleagues of correct way to wear a mask, ensure that the mask covers both mouth and nose.

Sanitise your hands on entry

When entering the building all staff must sanitise their hands at the nearest dispenser.

Temperature Checks

On arrival, all staff should take their temperature and record the reading.

Leave the building immediately and contact your line manager if your temperature is at or above 38°C.



If you present with a low grade fever above 37.5, a repeat temperature can be taken a half hour later. Please distance yourself from all contacts in the location by moving to the isolation room, or return to your car while waiting for a repeat temperature.

Clean the thermometer before and after you use it. Please refer to *SMH Policy on Taking Staff Temperature During Covid 19*. This can be found on the intranet downloads in the Covid 19/ Working Safely in Frontline Services file and on Yourotc.

Self Declaration Form

Please self-check and record your temperature on *the Daily Health Self Declaration Form*. A self declaration form should be completed by all staff members on a daily basis. You are responsible for retaining your form for 28 days. Your manager will review these periodically.

You may also be required to sign another declaration if you travel to another building also.

The *Staff Self Health Declaration Form (Easy Read Version)* can be found on the intranet downloads in the Covid 19/ Working Safely in Frontline Services file and on Yourotc.

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Sign in Book for the Purpose of Contact Tracing

Everyone must sign in to the building using the staff sign in sheet- this will be used as a contact tracing log. Please use your own pen to sign in, if possible. A record of garden visits must also be kept (where applicable).

All staff must keep a personal record of people with whom you have been in close contact throughout your day. You can do this in whichever way this best suits you (a notebook/diary)

If you are travelling to other places for work, you must sign in to those buildings too for purposes of contract tracing.

Risk of Transmission in Staff Room and Office Spaces

The latest guidance from SMH occupational health advisors, CHI, is that the safest arrangement for staff is to have one person in an office at any given time. If there are occasions when more than one person is required to be in an office, it should be for the shortest amount of time possible (under 2 hours cumulatively over the day) and windows should be open.

This advice is issued by CHI to ensure that, in the event a staff member tests positive, their work colleagues are protected from becoming infected while in the staff office.



How does this affect the way I work?

In light of this guidance we must change how the staff room is currently used within all residential and day centres and to ensure we know what measures can be applied to make sure it is used in as safe a manner as possible.

The staff office is an area where staff members spend a lot of time to carry out essential duties. We also know that it has also been a place where staff may 'relax' and maybe remove their mask/ goggles for a short period of time. However this has resulted in staff becoming a 'close contact', which means they are asked to restrict their movement for 14 days and are referred for testing.

What are the things you must do?

Staff Rooms/ Sleepover rooms

- Keep the room well ventilated with window open.
- Only **one staff** member in the office space at any one time.
- Ensure a cleaning rota in place that includes guidance to clean all surfaces in the staff room and staff bathroom, e.g. light switch, door frame, bed frame, shower, toilet, taps etc
- Remove any unnecessary furniture.
- Bedclothes must be fully changed before next sleepover including the mattress protector
- Source pillows and mattress covers that can be wiped clean after each use.

- Staff should enter the staff office to carry out a particular task (e.g. medication administration) and then leave the staff room.
- If the staff bathroom has an extractor fan/mechanical ventilation it should remain switched on to help with ventilation. The window should also remain open during the day.

Staff Support Meetings/ Handover Meetings

- Make alternative arrangements to complete handovers. Most staff rooms do not permit the required space to ensure that 2m distance can be applied
- Conduct supervision meetings/ staff meetings online or over the phone. Where face to face is required, can this be done in a garden (in privacy) or in a large room wearing a mask? Keep time to a minimum.



Consider the following and implement what is possible:

- Staff bring their own pillow/duvet to work.
- Are there other rooms that could be used as sleepover rooms, so that they could be alternated between? This would mean that there would not be 2 people sharing a room on consecutive nights.
- If the office/sleepover room cannot be relocated can we reduce footfall and risk of transmission by saying only one staff member per shift can access the room e.g. Staff on sleep over / shift leader?
- Ideally the staff sleepover room should remain unused for 8 hours following a sleepover. EG: staff member vacates it at 10am, next staff member enters it at 6 pm.
- Move the desk to another room to reduce footfall in the staff room.











St Michaels House Framework Levels



St Michaels House has developed a framework to provide information at the various levels of restrictions. This was developed in line with National guidance and HPSC/ HSE guidance.

St Michaels House Framework*					
	SMH LEVEL 1	SMH LEVEL 2	SMH LEVEL 3	SMH LEVEL 4	SMH LEVEL 5
 Visitors to SMH Houses and Centres	4 visitors to 1 service user Up to 2 visits per week Outdoor and window visiting permitted Social drive in private/ family car	1 Visitor to 1 service user Up to 2 visits per week Outdoor and window visiting permitted Social drive in private/ family car not permitted	<i>NO VISITORS</i> <i>Except on compassionate grounds**</i> Outdoor and window visiting permitted Social drive in private/ family car not permitted	NO VISITORS Except on compassionate grounds. Outdoor or window visiting permitted Social drive in private/ family car not permitted	NO VISITORS Except on compassionate grounds Outdoor or window visiting permitted Social drive in private/ family car not permitted
 Visits from Important Service Providers e.g. hairdressers, massage therapists, entertainers.	Yes with protective measures	Yes with protective measures	Suspension of access may be required. To be assessed on a case by case/ house by house basis	NO VISITORS Except on compassionate grounds.	NO VISITORS Except on compassionate grounds



 <p>Visits to family households</p>	<p>Service user can visit home for a longer period</p>	<p>Service user can visit family home (risk assess) in a well ventilated room with members from only two other households</p>	<p>Service user visit home to one nominated household only for 1 hour with social distancing (15 minutes if no social distancing). Protective measures apply before and after visit. Risk assessment to be completed. Service user can visit in family garden for max. 2 hours Virtual contact is encouraged.</p>	<p>No visit to family homes Virtual contact is encouraged</p>	<p>No visit to family homes Virtual contact is encouraged</p>
St Michaels House Framework*					
	SMH LEVEL 1	SMH LEVEL 2	SMH LEVEL 3	SMH LEVEL 4	SMH LEVEL 5
 <p>Hairdressers</p>	Yes with protective measures	Yes with protective measures	Yes with protective measures	No	No
 <p>Shopping</p>	Yes with protective measures	Yes with protective measures	Yes with protective measures	Primarily outdoor Essential retail/services	Essential retail only
 <p>Essential Clinical appointments</p>	Yes with protective measures	Yes with protective measures	Yes with protective measures if essential	Telehealth – with appointments if deemed urgent	Telehealth – with appointments if deemed urgent
 <p>Day Service</p>	Yes with protective measures	Yes with protective measures	Yes with protective measures	Yes with protective measures	Yes with protective measures
 <p>Respite</p>	Yes with protective measures	Yes with protective measures	Yes with protective measures	Yes with protective measures	Yes with protective measures
 <p>Maintenance</p>	Yes with protective measures	Yes with protective measures	Yes with protective measures	Necessary maintenance only (with protective measures)	Necessary maintenance (with protective measures)
 <p>Restaurants/Cafe</p>	Open with protective measures	Open 6 people from 3 households	Range of restrictions Up to and including no indoor dining	Outdoor only Max: 15 persons Takeaway/ Delivery	Takeaway/ Delivery only



 Day Service Transport	Yes with protective measures	Yes with protective measures	Yes with protective measures	Yes with protective measures	Yes with protective measures
 Public Transport	Off peak hours-walk if possible (masks mandatory)	Off peak hours 50% capacity (masks mandatory)	Only if necessary (masks mandatory)	Avoid Public transport 25% Capacity (masks mandatory)	Avoid Public transport 25% Capacity (masks mandatory)
 Working Safely in HQ Buildings	Yes with protective measures	Yes with protective measures	Remote Working except for essential work	Remote Working except for essential work	Remote Working except for essential work

**The rights and the risk of each situation will be assessed on an individualised and “house by house” basis.*

**** Critical and compassionate circumstances**

Critical and compassionate circumstances are difficult to define and of necessity require judgement. The term should not be interpreted as limited to circumstances when the death of a resident is imminent.

Subject to a risk assessment in each case, other examples of critical and compassionate circumstances may include

- *circumstances in which a resident is significantly distressed or disturbed and although unable to express the desire for a visit there is reason to believe that a visit from a significant person may relieve distress*
- *when there is an exceptionally important life event for the resident (for example death of a spouse or birthday)*
- *when the visitor may not have another opportunity to visit for many months or years or never (for example because they are leaving the country or are themselves approaching end of life)*
- *increased visiting is recommended by their doctor as a non-pharmacological therapeutic alternative to an increased dose of an existing agent or introduction of a new anxiolytic or sedative agent*
- *a resident expresses a strong sense of need to see someone whether for personal reasons, to make financial or other arrangements or to advocate on their behalf*
- *a person nominated by the resident expresses concern that a prolonged absence is causing upset or harm to a resident*



- *other circumstances in which the judgement of the medical or nursing staff or social care worker caring for the resident is that a visit is important for the persons health or sense of well being*

NOTE: For further details of definitions and visitations please see HSE/ HPSC COVID-19 Guidance on visitations to Long Term Residential Care Facilities on downloads in the Covid 19/ Working Safely in Frontline Services file and on Yourotc.

If You Become Unwell/ Show Symptoms of COVID 19 in A Frontline Service

1. If you feel unwell before work commences stay at home and inform your line manager
2. If you become unwell while at work or have any signs or symptoms of COVID 19 then you must remove yourself from your colleagues (to your car or to a designated area in the unit if you are too unwell to drive/ need a lift home.

Symptoms may include

- Cough
 - Temperature $\geq 38^{\circ}\text{C}$
 - Breathing difficulties/ shortness of breath
 - Any loss or change or their sense of smell or taste
3. If are well enough and are able to drive home you should do that and contact your GP for advice.
 4. **Do not** use public transport if you have any signs or symptoms of COVID 19
 5. Your line manager will inform the COVID response team of your symptoms and take the necessary steps to ensure your work space and isolation area are deep cleaned after you leave.
 6. Your personal information will not be shared with your colleagues.
 7. In the event you are confirmed with a positive diagnosis of COVID 19; please ensure you have a list of close contacts of the people you encountered in the previous 48 hours prior to your symptoms.



8. Do not return to work until the mandatory 14 days have elapsed or if you still feel unwell after this time continue to stay at home. Follow the advice of your GP at all times. Keep your line manager updated.



The Role of the Contact Tracing Team in St Michael's House

A contact tracing team has been established within St Michael's House. The purpose of this team is to identify staff who are close contacts and remove them from the workplace to prevent further spread of COVID 19.

➤ The contact tracing team will help to identify staff who have been working with someone who has Covid 19 and will determine if they are close contacts.

➤ If you are identified as a close contact of a person that tests positive for COVID-19 you must **restrict your movements for 14 days**.

➤ Restricting your movements means staying at home to avoid contact with other people

➤ Do not use public transport.

➤ Do not have visitors at your home.

➤ Do not visit others, even if you usually care for them.

➤ Do not go to the shops or pharmacy unless it's absolutely necessary - where possible, order your groceries online or have some family or friends drop them off.

➤ Contact tracers will only contact work colleagues of a confirmed case – not family/friends/service users

➤ Contact tracers will inform COVID line of any staff positive case so follow up for service users can be arranged.

➤ Public health will contact trace family/friends of positive cases

➤ The contact tracing service operates from 9-4 Monday to Friday and 11-2 Sat and Sunday

➤ The contract tracers will ask you some questions in order to confirm if you are a close contact. They are trained staff of SMH and all information is handled in line with GDPR and in strict confidence.

The contact tracing team have a designated email address

contacttracing@smh.ie



Support for Managers who have a staff member or Service User who is suspected or confirmed as positive of COVID 19

Support information sheets have been developed to support managers with this; available on downloads in the *Covid 19/ Working Safely in Frontline Services* file and on *Yourotc*.

DAY SERVICES:

Support Information for Staff

A support sheet has been developed in response to queries from families regarding reintroduction of day services. This is available on downloads in the *Covid 19/ Working Safely in Frontline Services* file.

Frontline Day Services- Steps To Take If Service User Arrives With A High Temperature

Guidance on steps to be taken are available on downloads in the *Covid 19/ Working Safely in Frontline Services* file and on *Yourotc*.

RESIDENTIAL SERVICES

Have you completed your HIQA Self Assessment Pre populated IPC tool? You can find this on downloads in the HIQA/thematic visits file: LINK http://b-cms01.smh.ie/index.php?option=com_phocadownload&view=category&id=158:thematic-visits&Itemid=129 and is also available on *Yourotc*.



Other Frontline Services

All St Michaels House staff are required to wear PPE appropriate to their work task. All staff must wear face masks as per *SMH PPE Policy (July 2020)* and *SMH Guidance on the Use of PPE*.

Technical Services

- It is vital to ensure that technical services staff, as well as external contractors, are safe when entering SMH frontline services.
- All Technical Services staff and contractors must complete the sign in sheet for purposes of contact tracing.
- Staff and Contractors' temperatures will be taken upon arrival.
- Please ensure that you phone in advance of entering any centre, as restrictions may be in place relating to Covid 19.
- Surgical face masks to be worn by contractors and staff in centres. PPE will be provided by SMH.
- Entrance and Egress should take place through separate doors, where possible.
- Suitable PPE to be worn according to the task. Please refer to SMH PPE Policy. Contractors will follow the advice of the PIC regarding local measures in place also.

The Transport Department

- Transport is an integral part of St Michael's House in supporting people to access their day service and social and community supports. Transport and transport staff are an essential component for St Michael's House Service.
- It is crucial that the manager (Transport Manager for Central Transport and External Agency Transport e.g. Vantastic/ Service Source; PIC for a bus that belongs to a specific unit) ensures that the appropriate cleaning items are available to staff who use the bus.
- Please ensure the bus is cleaned before commencing journey using disposable wipes and place used wipes in bin liners provided on bus. Ensure that the bin liners are placed in bin on arrival back to centre/ base.



- A cleaning checklist must be completed after each use and includes a sign off sheet to ensure accountability.
- There are risks of infection/transmission of Covid 19 for those who travel on SMH transport. It is the the responsibility of the Transport Department to assess these risks.
- Guidance and generic risk assessments regarding use of transport are available on the downloads in the Covid 19/ Working Safely in Frontline Services file and on Yourotc. The risks can be significantly reduced by following the Guidance on Appropriate Cleaning of the Bus, before and after use, and ensuring that the checklist is followed. Both are available on the downloads in the Covid 19/ Working Safely in Frontline Services file and on Yourotc.
- The maximum capacity on buses must continue to be assessed by the Transport Manager (PIC- if bus belongs to unit) based on size of bus, numbers of seats and the ability of the passengers to wear PPE. This will ensure that the robust systems, already in place, will continue to keep people safe while travelling on SMH buses.
- Planning should include contingencies regarding problems transporting service users to day service- how will the service user be transported home in the event that they become unwell? Consider if an emergency bus is available to transport the person home if a family member is unable to collect them.

Supporting Service Users with Travel

Day services are now considered an essential service and will remain open under the current national guidance. Given the ongoing presence of Covid 19 in our community, staff should familiarise themselves with the Guidelines on Infection Control Measures for Transport in Day Services. These are to reduce the risk of infection to ourselves, our service users, families and those with whom we are working. These are available on downloads in the Covid 19/ Working Safely in Frontline Services file and on Yourotc.

Prior to embarking on bus journey there are steps to be taken-

- Bus Staff Temperature checks to be undertaken prior to shift. Where a staff member presents with any of the Covid related symptoms; the staff will be required to stay at home. Please refer to guidance above on what to do if you become ill.
- At service user's home before departure – ideally temperature is checked by the bus staff and family and handover is given regarding any health concerns. Where a service user presents with any of the Covid related



symptoms; the service user will be required to stay at home. Please refer to guidance above on what to do if a service user becomes ill. Bus staff can call on the support of the Transport Manager, PIC or Service Manager if they encounter any problems in the delivery of this information.

- If you need to enter a centre please ensure that you wear a mask, sanitise your hands and complete the sign in for contact tracing purpose if required.
- Transport staff are vital in supporting service users with travel and are part of the wider team for supporting service users. Transport staff are not considered visitors to centres and should have access to unit facilities. Nonetheless, it is important that transport staff are informed if there is an outbreak in a centre, as every effort must be made to reduce the numbers of staff who may come into contact with the virus.

Transporting Service Users in Cars

It is always preferable that service users are transported in SMH buses or vehicles where social distancing can be maintained. However this is not always possible, so in the event a car must be used for transporting service users you must consider the guidance as advised by Infection Control , available on downloads in the Covid 19/ Working Safely in Frontline Services file and on Yourotc.

- Where possible, larger taxis whereby social distancing is possible and perspex screens are fitted, should be booked. It is not recommended that service users travel in the front seat of cars.
- Use of PPE in taxi's - Face masks must be worn by staff and, where possible, service users, in cars.

Using Public Transport

Please follow national guidance in relation to the use of public transport. This is available at www.Gov.ie

For some levels of restrictions, the government advises on the use of public transport only for essential purposes. Where service users require transport to access their day service (or during day service), place of work or college, and do not have any other means to travel, then this may be deemed essential travel.

Face masks must be worn, and social distancing must be observed where possible on transport, in line with national guidance and the guidance of the public transport body (e.g. CIE/ Bus Eireann). Avoid peak times where possible to reduce the risk of infection.



Face masks will be provided for all staff travelling by public transport to and from their place of work. Every effort must be made to support service users to wear face coverings for their safety. Support programmes may include service users choosing their own pattern or making their own face mask. *Face mask exemption cards* are available on the downloads in the *Covid 19/ Working Safely in Frontline Services* file for service users who cannot tolerate wearing face masks.

Dealing With A Fire Emergency In Your Unit During Covid 19:

Fire drills will continue unless there is a suspected or confirmed COVID case in your unit.

- Should a COVID outbreak occur, the Fire Officer, has consulted with the Infection Control Nurse Specialist and the Nursing dept to ensure all are satisfied with evacuation procedure if a fire evacuation was required during this time.
- Please review your evacuation plan to include Covid 19 protocols and Personal Evacuation Emergency Plan.

- If a COVID outbreak was to occur on your site the following arrangements should be followed if a fire evacuation was required:
 1. Fire emergency takes precedence over everything due to an immediate threat to life, if the unit who normally support in this instance has COVID 19 a staff member can, when the fire alarm sounds doff their PPE (properly), sanitise hands and go to assist in the evacuation.
 2. If the COVID outbreak is in the unit on fire, the staff member coming from a different location to support, should don basic PPE such as gloves, apron and face mask to assist in the evacuation.
 3. When appropriate (and depending on service user need) once in a safe place, staff should implement social distancing measures ASAP.
 4. When contacting the emergency services inform them that there is a COVID case (suspected/confirmed).



If fire evacuation was required in any other unit with a suspected or confirmed case of COVID

1. Fire emergency takes precedence over everything due to an immediate (or unconfirmed e.g. alarm activates at night and I initiate evacuation) threat to life.
2. Put on mask and evacuate all non confirmed cases first then confirmed case(s). Unless fire location dictates evacuation order then do your best and get everyone outside as quickly as possible. You should only be in close contact with the person for a short period of time (less than 15mins) and once outside can implement social distancing/PPE.
3. Once in a safe place, depending on service user need, staff should implement social distancing measures/don PPE when possible.
4. **Inform the emergency services there is a confirmed/suspected COVID case.**

Put a set of PPE in your emergency bag so you have it once outside and don PPE as needed.

First Aid Response (FAR) in the Workplace

First Aid Response (FAR) is the standard of care required by the Health and Safety Authority (HSA) for the provision of first aid within the workplace. FAR responders are an important component of the provision of first aid within the workplace. All frontline staff are required to complete this training.

Responders have been taught the importance of standard infection control precautions as part of their training. To date, this has primarily involved the wearing of gloves and hand-washing.

With the increased threat of droplet transmission, because of COVID-19, additional personal protection may be used (consisting of gloves, surgical facemask, eye protection and clinical apron). If such PPE is provided or used, it is important that the FAR has received training in the use of this, including how to don and doff safely, preventing contamination to themselves.

Patients in cardiac arrest should have compression only CPR applied. An AED should be used as normal.



Self Care and Your Wellbeing

Returning to/working in a frontline service building safely is going to feel different for all of us, some will be keen to get back and some maybe wary. Wherever you are with this change, St Michael's House will support you through this. As ever, throughout this extremely difficult period, you should talk to the person you are most comfortable talking to.

Some additional supports available to you:

- SMH developed a three level support resource for Staff Wellbeing and Mental Health. This resource provides useful links to a variety of resources you can access depending on the level of support required. You can access this resource at https://rise.articulate.com/share/R8VkeUoYU7yMtydrh3uSG_P8K66BYzHZ#/lessons/QEtm0UBsHfZ5LPsV1-66Ea-nlxioTYUL Use of this resource is anonymous.
- Employee Assistance Programme (EAP) VHI Healthcare at www.wellbeing4life.com Ph: 1800 995955
- Healthcare worker COVID 19 Helpline: 1850 420420 (Mon-Fri 9am-6pm).
- Work place Health & Wellbeing: www.workpositive.ie
- HSE Self Help Resources
- Yourmentalhealth.ie

Take regular breaks during working hours

- Please ensure you comply with physical distancing during break times.
- If possible, open the windows and door to the office when you leave for a break to ensure ventilation.
- Staff should be mindful of hydrating/ drinking well during break times - remove your face mask to have a drink, dispose of the face mask in a bin, have your drink and then put a new face mask on.
- It is important to note that washing cutlery etc. in a dishwasher is sufficient to kill the virus. Shared use of kettles/ microwaves and other appliances are all acceptable, as long as those who use them follow good hand hygiene practices.



Annual Leave

It is important that all staff take annual leave throughout the year. Annual leave provides us all with the opportunity to refresh and re-energise. Like most areas of life now; there are also changes to be mindful of when planning leave. The guidance from the HR department may help you to make decisions regarding annual leave.

Travelling Abroad

Please follow the National advice regarding travelling abroad during the Covid 19 pandemic. This is available on gov.ie at <https://www.gov.ie/en/campaigns/75d92-covid-19-travel-advice/>

For leave related queries regarding travel please contact the HR department.

Sick Leave During Covid 19

- If you are unwell you should not come to work in any of the buildings, regardless if the symptoms you are experiencing are not listed as Covid symptoms. Rather, you should seek medical advice and remain at home until your symptoms have subsided and you are deemed fit to resume work.
- Some changes to how sick leave is reported/recorded can be expected. Sick Leave forms are available via yourotc as well as the HR section of the intranet download.
- Normal sick leave provisions apply if a staff member is absent on non-covid related sick leave. You must notify you manager and follow the sick leave policy requirements during your absence.
- You are not required to sign and post them back to HR department the forms can now be emailed to: sick@smh.ie
- If you wish to speak to a member of the HR department then please contact Catherine Daly – Catherine.daly@smh.ie / 086 0356915
or
Khushbu Singh – khusbhu.singh@smh.ie / 086 0358658



Covid Related Leave

COVID related leave is defined as “when a person is absent, is symptomatic and is being tested for Covid-19”. The HSE has also provide that other situations, while not Covid leave, are paid leave – these include close contacts who are required to isolate on medical advice, people who are cocooning or parents of children who are symptomatic and being tested – contact HR to clarify the status of leave in any particular situation.

If you develop symptoms which relate to Covid (temperature, cough, breathlessness), you should remain out of work and notify your line manager who can support you. Your line manager will contact HR; and HR will then consult with the Occupational Health service (CHI) and provide guidance back to the line manager on the appropriate courses of action.

It is important that we retain the information related to Covid as the HR department is required to make returns to the HSE every two weeks on any Covid-19 or Paid leave arrangements which are in effect.

The organisation is also required to ensure that positive cases of COVID 19 are reported to the States Claims Agency via NIMS



Do You Have Any Concerns?

St Michael's House wants to hear from you if you have any concerns about working safely during COVID 19 pandemic arrangements. Please contact your line manager to discuss your concerns or contact your safety representatives or any member of the Quality and Safety Department.

Key reminders to “Working Safely in Frontline Buildings”

There is a lot of information in this handbook which demonstrates the necessary work that has gone into planning to keep us safe. You are a valued staff member and St Michael's House want to thank you for all your hard work during these difficult times.

Key Reminders:

- **Staff must not attend for work if they are feeling unwell.**
- **All staff must maintain 2 meter social distance while at work, where possible.**
- **All frontline staff must wear their mask. Where there are suspected or confirmed cases of Covid-19 all staff must wear full PPE, at all times.**
- **Regularly review the Covid 19 folder on the downloads for the latest updates**
- **Follow the advice contained in SMH Framework regarding levels of restrictions**
- **The 5 steps to coming in the frontline service building safely are:**
 1. **Sanitise your hands and put on your face mask (while in your car)**
 2. **Sanitise your hands when entering the building**
 3. **Take your temperature**
 4. **Complete the self declaration health form**
 5. **Sign in for the purposes of contact tracing**

A final note to remind us all that it is important to **BE KIND** to each other. This is a difficult time for many people.