

Name:

Date: 19/06/2020

Ref: 20-21 061

Dear

Freedom of Information request

Thank you for your request for information under the Freedom of Information Act 2000, which was received by our Freedom of Information team on 08/06/2020.

Q1. Please state (yes or no) whether your trust has carried out a risk-assessment of staff at potentially greater risk of COVID-19, including people from Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic backgrounds. [If answer to Q1 is yes, please answer questions 2-5]

Yes. In light of the NHS England guidance on risk assessments, a work health assessment has been developed with BAME network members, and issued for all BAME staff to complete with their managers and return to the occupational health service. Consideration will be given to any underlying health conditions and adjustments needing to be made to roles or working environments in order to keep staff safe whilst at work.

In addition and in line with government guidelines, assessments have also taken place for those required to shield, those over the age of 70 or those who are pregnant. Alternative working arrangements, where appropriate have been put into place, such as home working or deployment to non-Covid patient areas.

Q2. Please state when this risk assessment was carried out.

As from 23rd March 2020 work health assessments were completed for staff at a higher risk of Covid-19. The requirement for all BAME staff to have a work health assessment completed began 22nd May 2020.

Q3. Please provide a short summary of what the risk assessment entailed.

Please find a copy of the Work Health Assessment attached.



Work Health
Assessment Form.pdf

Q4. Please provide a copy of the findings of the risk assessment.

- Total number of risk assessments completed 1,006
- Total number of staff needing further assessment 312

Q5. Please list and provide brief details of any measures that your trust has subsequently put in place to offer protection to staff who are at higher risk from COVID-19.

Support for Staff Shielding

All staff who have received letters from the Government have been shielded in accordance with national direction.

All staff who Occupational Health believes should be shielding, but for some reason did not get a government letter, have been shielded.

All staff who Occupational Health believe should have a change in role, be working in a non patient facing role, should be working at home etc. have been accommodated.

Support for Pregnant Staff

The pregnancy advice has changed three times, since the pandemic started. The Trust has revised our advice accordingly and the current advice is that pregnant workers, fewer than 28 weeks gestation, should avoid working in areas with patients with suspected or confirmed COVID19 infection. We have recommended to staff that they do not work in a patient facing role. Therefore we have made arrangements to redeploy them to an alternative non-patient facing role, including stringent social distancing. Should they choose to continue to work in a direct patient facing role they must complete the Pregnancy Risk Assessment with support from Occupational Health. At the time of reaching 28 weeks pregnancy, staff are no longer permitted to attend work in any capacity and are advised to work at home or if no work is available placed onto Special Leave until they commence their maternity leave. The Managers' Support Line maintains contact with all staff who inform us that they are pregnant to review their options and continue to update if and when the national guidance changes.

Support for BAME Staff

A work health assessment has been developed with BAME network members, and issued for all BAME staff to complete with their managers and return to Occupational Health. Consideration will be given to any underlying health conditions and adjustments needing to be made to roles or working environments in order to keep staff safe whilst at work.

Additional Support

A Staff Support Line and Manager Support Line was introduced, this meant that professional staff from HR and Occupational Health are available to all staff and managers from 6am to 7.30pm, 7 days a week.

Staff use the support line to request additional support available to them and to report their absence from work, rosters are amended and staff receive information regarding COVID-19 testing if appropriate. In addition to this, the Trust has introduced the new Employee Assistance Programme which offers 24 hour support for all our staff i.e. counsellors and information specialists to provide support with practical and emotional issues.

All staff, whether at work or not, have received a Staff Wellbeing Booklet and staff who are absent either through sickness, shielding, self-isolation or other reasons receive regular wellbeing calls.

The Trust constantly adds to our wellbeing offer as additional options become available. For example, we have advertised the NHS England and NHS Improvement free access to psychological and practical support.

In summary we have also:

- Communication with the 115 Mental Health First Aiders to remind them that the management of PTSD recommends active monitoring of people who have been exposed to traumatic events in order to identify whether early symptoms resolve and where to signpost for help.
- The Trust has requested that Mental Health first aiders and Trim Practitioners to provide drop in sessions or attend wards at the manager's request.
- Salary Finance, which provides pay advances, and relatively cost effective loans has been introduced which has been especially useful for staff that may have had a partner made unemployed at this time.
- Counselling for staff, which is experiencing high levels of stress or anxiety.
- Wellbeing practitioners at Solent Mind are now providing a phone line to support individuals who experience anxiety and/or depression
- Well-being Boards being populated in appropriate areas.

Please accept this letter as completion of your request. Please note that copies of this request will be held on file for three years before being confidentially destroyed.

If you are dissatisfied with the outcome of your request, please contact our Head of Information Governance on Information.Governance@porthosp.nhs.uk or write to the above address and we will conduct an internal review. Upon review, if you are still dissatisfied, you may appeal our decision by contacting the Information Commissioner's Office; for more information please visit the [ICO's website](#).

Please be aware, if we do not receive an appeal within 30 days of you receiving this letter, we will assume that you are satisfied with our response. If you have any further queries, please do not hesitate to contact us.

Yours sincerely

Freedom of Information Team