

Adherence to COVID Guidance

All staff from across Health and Social Care have pulled together to help to respond to COVID 19. Staff have worked tirelessly to ensure patients, clients, service users and colleagues are as safe as possible.

Our learning from every member of staff who has contracted COVID or who has had to self-isolate is that staff must adhere to the NI Executive and Public Health guidance (“the Guidance”) in all circumstances – both in our workplace and in our social/ personal life.

All staff have a duty and responsibility to keep informed about the Guidance as highlighted in the regionally agreed [FAQs](#) so that they can comply with and adhere to the Guidance in order to keep themselves safe to treat patients and clients and to protect their colleagues and team members.

If staff do not act responsibly by fully adhering to the Guidance, this could endanger others (service users and other colleagues). During the COVID pandemic, this could include:

- an employee who is clearly not adhering to self-isolation guidelines, as communicated to them by either Track and Trace (PHA, Trust or the Stop COVID NI App), or Occupational Health.
- an employee attending the workplace and interacting with colleagues during a period where they should be self-isolating
- failure to adhere to social distancing measures in the workplace. Where staff have concerns with the ability to socially distance this should be raised with line managers in the first instance
- failure to wear appropriate PPE in line with applicable relevant guidance in the workplace subject to any relevant exemptions as agreed with Occupational Health
- an employee not taking care when wearing their uniform when not at work or in public. All staff must adhere to infection prevention and control. Staff should not be wearing uniform when running personal errands. Please see the Trust Uniform Policy <http://intranet.belfasttrust.local/policies/Documents/Dress%20Code%20and%20Uniform%20Policy.pdf>

(Please note the above list is not exhaustive)

In the event that the Organisation becomes aware that staff have not adhered to the Guidance, the circumstances will be reviewed, screened and in serious cases investigated under the Trust Disciplinary Policy.

Following this review, and where a breach is confirmed, a number of options will be explored and appropriate action considered which may include one or more of the following:

- Staff should undertake a reflection on why they did not conform to the rules and consider the implications for their colleagues and service users as a consequence of their actions. This is to facilitate learning from mistakes and to provide an opportunity to understand the implications of not adhering to the Guidance
- In the event of repeat and/or serious breaches, formal action in line with the Trust Disciplinary Procedure may be considered

Staff and managers at any stage may seek advice from HR teams if necessary