



## ACTON HOMELESS CONCERN CORONAVIRUS GUIDELINES FOR STAFF AND VOLUNTEERS

6<sup>th</sup> March 2020

**We have prepared these guidelines as we know you will be concerned about the rise in the number of cases of Coronavirus in the UK.**

### **Prevention:**

At the present time we are concentrating on prevention as we have had no confirmed cases of Coronavirus amongst clients, volunteers or staff. We are continually monitoring the advice issued by the government and we are following all available guidance on preventing the spread of infection as issued by Public Health England.

### **Hand Hygiene:**

If you are a kitchen volunteer, you will already be used to thorough, regular handwashing and for all other staff and volunteers you should read and follow the handwashing guidance in toilets and kitchen areas. You should wash your hands when you arrive, after using the bathroom and before leaving the centres. Hand sanitizer is also available for use throughout the buildings but hand washing is more effective at killing germs than hand sanitizer put onto unwashed hands. You should avoid touching your eyes, nose or mouth if your hands are not clean. Cover your mouth and nose with a tissue or your sleeve (*not your bare hands*) when you cough or sneeze. If you do accidentally use your hands, wash immediately with soap and water in accordance with the guidance posters. Dispose of used tissues in the bin immediately after use.

### **Additional cleaning:**

Both centres are cleaned thoroughly and rigorously every day and staff have received 5 STAR recognition of this from London Borough of Ealing inspectors. We will increase the number of people used and the time spent on additional cleaning if we feel it is necessary.

### **Facemasks:**

We will not issue face masks at either Emmaus House or The Damien Centre as they are not recommended as protection against the virus.

### **Thinking about who is coming into the building:**

All clients will be asked if they have returned from a category 1 or 2 (see chart below) country in the past two weeks. If a client has recently returned from a category 1 region (see chart below), they will be placed in a designated room (the small front office on the first floor) and instructed to telephone 111 for medical advice. If the client does not speak English we will call 111 but we will not enter the room. Any advice received will be strictly adhered to. If the advisers at 111 think the client could have coronavirus, they will put them in touch with the local health protection team who will direct them to a testing location. They will not be allowed access to services. We will make sure that bottled water and paper cups are available in the room as well as tissues and a bin for disposal.



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### **Clients:**

If a client has returned from a category 2 country (see chart below) and is displaying symptoms, the same procedure as above will be followed. If they are not displaying symptoms they will be allowed access but monitored

### **Volunteers:**

**Please do not come to Acton Homeless Concern to volunteer if you have been in contact with a confirmed case of Coronavirus especially if you are showing any of the symptoms yourself.** Inform the office of your absence and the reason as soon as you can. Call 111 and their team will advise you about what to do and whether anyone you have been in contact with needs to be contacted. As this may include other volunteers, staff or clients please let us know as quickly as possible - especially if you have had contact with clients. The symptom of Coronavirus are:

A cough

A High temperature

Shortness of breath

It is important to remember that these symptoms do not necessarily mean that you have the illness, they are similar to illnesses that are much more common such as cold or winter flu

If however you are feeling well and have not recently returned from a specified area in the last 14 days, please continue to volunteer as you normally would but do ask yourself "Who have I been in contact with?" "Have they returned from a category 1 or 2 area in the past 14 days **and** are they displaying flu like symptoms?"

Obviously you could unknowingly come into contact with someone who has returned from an affected area, but if you know for sure that you have come into contact with someone who has returned from a category 1 or 2 area in the past 14 days **and** are they displaying flu like symptoms, then do not come into volunteer and inform us as quickly as you can. There are no additional measures you need to take for yourself as advised by Public Health England, unless the person you have come into contact is confirmed as having Coronavirus. *If you are aged over 60 years old or have an underlying health condition that compromises your immune system and you are worried about Coronavirus and coming into contact with lots of people at The Charity when you volunteer then, of course, please do not come in.*

It should be noted that contacts are not considered cases and if people are well they are very unlikely to have spread the infection to others. However, as most of our clients fall into the category of adults with compromised immune systems (due to rough sleeping, lack of food, poor hygiene, sleep deprivation, stress and in some cases, substance misuse), this a precautionary measure for The Charity.



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**If a client, volunteer or staff member is confirmed as having Coronavirus**

It is probable that the whole of the charity – Emmaus House and The Damien Centre - will close for a period and a thorough deep clean will be performed. Volunteers will be asked not to come in and you will be notified of this. Public Health England and Ealing Council will be notified immediately. The local Health Protection Team will discuss the case with us, and advise on any actions or precautions that should be taken for people who have been in contact with the confirmed case.

The trustees and management of Acton Homeless Concern are aware of how committed our staff and volunteers are to deliver the best possible service to our clients. We want to assure you all of our appreciation. Your health and wellbeing are of paramount importance to us and that we will continue to monitor and share with you any new guidance if, and when it becomes available.

If you have any questions about the above, please contact : Ian Breen on 020 89925768 in the first instance or

Anne Gray through the office number above or email [admin@actonhomelessconcern.org](mailto:admin@actonhomelessconcern.org)

**THIS INFORMATION IS SUBJECT TO CHANGE. PLEASE ALSO REFER TO GOVERNMENT WEBSITE**

<b>Category 1 countries/areas</b>	<b>Category 2 countries/areas</b>
Wuhan city and Hubei Province (China)	Cambodia
Iran	China*
Daegu or Cheongdo (Republic of Korea)	Hong Kong
Italian towns under containment measures	Italy: north*
	Japan
	Laos
	Macau
	Malaysia
	Myanmar
	Republic of Korea*
	Singapore
	Taiwan
	Thailand
	Vietnam

\*Except areas of the country specifically referred to in Category 1.