



Guidance on COVID-19 V1.0 30.07.2020

Guidance Document on Infection Prevention and Control Practices in Relation to Delivering Face to Face Education during the Global COVID-19 Pandemic

Version	Date	Changes from previous version
1.0	30.07.2020	Original guidance document

This guidance was developed in collaboration between the Office of Nursing and Midwifery and the Antimicrobial Resistance and Infection Control (AMRIC) Team

1.0 Purpose

The purpose of this guidance document is to outline the Infection Prevention and Control (IPC) practices in relation to delivering face to face education in the context of the global COVID-19 pandemic (hereafter referred to as *Guidance Document*).

This *Guidance Document* is underpinned and informed by relevant publications from the Department of Health (DoH), Health Service Executive (HSE), Health Protection Surveillance Centre (HPSC), Health and Safety Authority (H&SA) and the Nursing and Midwifery Board of Ireland (NMBI) professional regulatory body including:

- Return to Work Safely Protocol COVID-19 Specific National Protocol for Employer and Workers (Government of Ireland, 2020)
- HSE Approach to Return to Work Safely Protocol (HSE, 15th of May 2020)
- Scope of Nursing and Midwifery Practice Framework (NMBI, 2015).

2.0 Target Audience

This *Guidance Document* applies to any person delivering and attending education and training programmes facilitated by Centres of Nursing and Midwifery Education (CNME) and Nursing and Midwifery Planning and

Development Units (NMPDU). These programmes may take place onsite in CNME's, HSE facilities and outsourced non-HSE facilities.

3.0 Overall Approach to Management of COVID-19 Risk

Any assembly of people for any purpose is associated with a risk of transmission of infection. This is particularly true during a pandemic. Therefore, the first step in managing the risk is to consider if the assembly of people is required to achieve the teaching and learning objectives. When this is the only or is the optimal way to achieve the teaching and learning objectives and the risk can be managed, therefore the pandemic should not be a barrier to necessary teaching and learning activities.

In any assembly of people, there are three components to managing COVID-19 related risk:

- 3.1 Taking all practical measures to ensure that no one with infectious COVID-19 is present in the group at any time. If the virus is not introduced into the group, it cannot spread. This relates to making sure that facilitators, participants and any supporting staff are not known to be infectious with COVID-19, are not contacts of people with COVID-19 and have no clinical features of COVID-19 (see details below).
- 3.2 Taking all practical measures to reduce the risk that the virus will spread if introduced. This relates to the venue itself, its amenities and to the behaviour of all of those attending the event (see details below).
- 3.3 Taking all practical measures to reduce the harm that will arise if the virus is introduced and spreads. The harm associated with introduction and spread of the virus depends on the age and underlying health status of participants, the speed with which any evidence of transmission is identified and managed and access to healthcare for those who need care (see details below).

4.0 Minimising Risk of Spread of Infection Prior to the Event

- 4.1 Facilitators and learners should be reminded at pre-registration to consider if by virtue of their age or underlying health condition if they are particularly vulnerable to severe disease if they acquire COVID-19. People who are particularly vulnerable to severe disease should generally avoid attending

gatherings and be particularly careful with respect to adherence to all IPC precautions if attendance is necessary.

4.2 Participants should confirm when registering for the event they are familiar with the symptoms of COVID-19 and will not attend if they have symptoms or are contacts of people with COVID-19.

4.3 If the facilitator or learner has been diagnosed with COVID-19 and is in the infectious period, or has symptoms of COVID-19 or other infectious disease, or has been identified as a contact of COVID-19 they should not attend the education/training programme and inform their line manager immediately.

Note: In so far as practical it is appropriate to plan for alternative facilitators to be available at short notice in case this happens.

4.4 If the learner or facilitator is currently working directly in a facility/ward where there is a suspected or confirmed outbreak of COVID-19, they may attend the training provided they confirm they are not in the infectious period of COVID-19 illness, are not a contact of COVID-19 and have been following recommended IPC guidance.

5.0 Minimising Risk of Spread of Infection During the Event

The facilitator must identify any levels of risk associated with the proposed training/education activities and include the necessary controls to manage the risk.

5.1 Education facilities and venues

5.1.1 A risk assessment of the venue is recommended in line with the type of education session running to determine if the venue supports measure to limit the spread of infection and to identify additional measures that can be implemented (see Appendix 2).

5.1.2 Erect appropriate signage that promotes social distancing/respiratory etiquette/hand hygiene. These should be clearly displayed in all areas.

5.1.3 Ensure appropriate hand hygiene facilities are in place to accommodate facilitators and learners to adhere to hand hygiene practices.

5.1.4 Ensure tissues, alcohol gel, and pedal bins are in place to accommodate facilitators and learners to adhere to respiratory hygiene and cough etiquette.

- 5.1.5 All classrooms/teaching spaces should allow for the recommended social distancing both on entry to, and occupation of, as per HSE/HPSC guidelines. Where necessary, floor marking may be considered.
- 5.1.6 Promote good ventilation where possible.
- 5.1.7 All frequently touched surfaces should be cleaned at the end of the day or end of each session (e.g. prior to and immediately after each session if more than one session with different learners is taking place in one day).

5.2 Equipment

- 5.2.1 Single use items for simulation training should be used where possible.
- 5.2.2 All reusable teaching equipment including mannequins and any medical devices should be cleaned before and after each training session/training day as per manufacturers' guidelines.
- 5.2.3 Any type of training involving contact between the mouth and other types of equipment are not encouraged.
- 5.2.4 Additional PPE including gloves and aprons are generally not required in training sessions in line with standard precautions.
- 5.2.5 Where Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) is required normally as part of the training e.g. teaching a skill, this practice is to be continued, no additional PPE is required.
- 5.2.6 Where people must be in shared space for more than 15 minutes and social distancing cannot be maintained face covering are recommended.

5.3 Facilitators

- 5.3.1 Select a venue/classroom that can facilitate the anticipated number of learners with adequate distance between each learner.
- 5.3.2 All persons are required to perform hand hygiene on entering and leaving the facility.
- 5.3.3 The facilitator needs to reiterate the importance of social distancing guidelines, hand hygiene and cough etiquette at the commencement and during all sessions.
- 5.3.4 The facilitator needs to reiterate that if a learner becomes unwell during an education/training session s/he must inform the facilitator immediately.

- 5.3.5 The facilitator should adhere to the guideline in the section 5.6 if a learner reports that s/he has become unwell with suspect COVID-19 symptoms during the session.
- 5.3.6 Classroom session should commence on time to avoid congregation of learners.
- 5.3.7 The facilitator must maintain an attendance record with contact details of everyone present. The list should be maintained for a minimum period of 4 weeks for potential contact tracing purposes.
- 5.3.8 The facilitator may liaise with local catering department to manage and arrange breaks (including staggering these if necessary) to maintain social distancing.
- 5.3.9 The facilitator cleans contact surfaces of all podiums, electronic equipment and devices as per HSE instructions on how to clean PC and desks using approved cleaning materials at start and end of each teaching session.

5.4 External Facilitator

- 5.4.1 External facilitators need to be briefed on the above by a member of the CNME team in advance of their teaching session.

5.5 Learners on arrival to the venue

- 5.5.1 Learners should maintain current social distancing recommendations on entering the classroom/training venue and avoid any congregation at venue entrance.
- 5.5.2 Learners will be directed to undertake hand hygiene on entering classroom/training venue.

5.6 In the classroom/training room

- 5.6.1 Learners should bring their own essential personal items only and use these including pens to sign in. All items to remain within personal space where practical.
- 5.6.2 Learners will be directed to their learning space and should remain within this area in so far as practical unless directed by the facilitator.
- 5.6.3 Learners will be provided with frequent breaks during education/training sessions. Where practical, consider staggered breaks and a sequenced

process for exit of the room to avoid congregation at the exit. Generally, it will be appropriate for those seated nearest the exits to leave first and for others to follow in sequence. Current social distancing recommendations should be maintained during break times. Where an outdoor space is available and weather permits, breaks may be taken outdoors.

5.6.4 If a learner becomes unwell during an education/training session, they must inform the facilitator immediately and remove themselves to a suitable area outside the classroom/training room and go home. If there is a delay in time to leave, the learner must go to a separate room. Thereafter, the advice is to self-isolate and contact their General Practitioner (GP) and their local Occupational Health Department without delay.

5.6.5 Local arrangement should be in place to manage cleaning after a possible COVID-19 case, refer to the cleaning and decontamination in the following guidance link:

Acute Hospital Infection Prevention and Control Precautions for Possible or Confirmed COVID-19 in a Pandemic Setting

<https://www.hpsc.ie/a-z/respiratory/coronavirus/novelcoronavirus/guidance/infectionpreventionandcontrolguidance/Infection%20Prevention%20and%20Control%20Precautions%20for%20Acute%20Settings%20-%20COVID-19.pdf>

6.0 Monitoring and Evaluation

6.1 Each service area/organisation implementing this *Guidance Document* must ensure robust governance and accountability processes for monitoring and evaluation is in place.

Appendix 1

Membership of the group to develop a 'Guidance Document on Infection Prevention and Control Practices in Relation to Delivering Face to Face Education during the COVID-19 Pandemic'

Name:	Title	Representation
Marissa Butler (Chair)	Director, CNME Galway	ADCNME
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Fiona Hurley (Secretary)	Specialist Coordinator, CNME Limerick	ADCNME
Kathleen Leahy	QQI Coordinator, CNME Galway	ADCNME
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Philippa McGavigan	Nurse Tutor, CNME Donegal	ADCNME
Carmel McGrath	Nurse Tutor, RCNME Tullamore	ADCNME
Mary McKenna	IPC Nursing Lead on National AMRIC Team	IPC
Mary McNamara	Interim Director, CNME Kerry	ADCNME
Mary O' Regan	Nurse Tutor, CNME Kerry	ADCNME
Karen O' Sullivan	Education Officer, RCNME South East	ADCNME
Mary Reilly	Midwifery Specialist Coordinator, Dublin North East	ADCNME
Gillian Whyte	NMPDU Officer, HSE North East	IPC

Appendix 2: Sample Risk Assessment Form for Classroom

(Adapted from the HSE National Health and Safety Function (NHFS) Risk Assessment Document)

Example: Risk Assessment Prompt List for the Teaching Environment

Has the requirement for face-to-face teaching been assessed and identified as necessary?

Yes /No? If yes, please consider the following:

	Hazard controls to be considered	YES	NO	Comments/Outcome
1.	Is there a cleaning schedule that allows cleaning of rooms used at least twice daily if in use? i.e. prior to and immediately after each session if more than one session with different learners is taking place or at the end of the day			
2.	Are there appropriate supplies of hand washing facilities/gel/tissues and appropriate bins?			
3.	Are the rooms well ventilated? Can a window and a door remain open?			
4.	Are there posters and signage prominently in place reminding participants and staff of social distancing and other measures to prevent transmission? i.e. hand washing/respiratory etiquette			
5.	Are breaks staggered with other groups to avoid gathering of groups where social distancing may be breached?			
6.	Can the teaching environment/classroom accommodate current social distancing requirements for the entire class? Yes/no If no, i.e. skills demonstration/ scenarios are measures in place to limit transmission such as; -where social distancing can't be maintained is there surgical face masks available?			
7.	Is equipment that will be used for teaching cleaned appropriately in line with manufacturer's recommendations prior to and at the end of each class? i.e. manikins, limbs, defib. machine			
8.	Are arrangements in place to clean and disinfect the venue in the event of an attendee becoming unwell with symptoms of a respiratory illness as per HPSC guidance?			

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