

COVID-19 Back to Practice Plan for patients

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Welcome back

I hope you and your families have been keeping well these last few months.

I'm delighted to be offering appointments at the clinic again soon and will keep you informed as to when this will be. In the meantime, I would like to inform you about some new procedures that will be introduced. The safety of my patients is of utmost importance, as is that of the staff and patients I work alongside within Speedwell Pharmacy and Lincoln House GP Surgery. These new protocols will ensure that a safe and effective service can still be provided to patients whilst maintaining a safe working environment for myself and colleagues at the pharmacy.

I have drawn up this guidance based on advice from the

government, Public Health England (PHE) and professional bodies for Acupuncture and Chinese herbal medicine. This has been further enhanced with my own additional measures to ensure maximum protection for patients and colleagues. These protocols will continue to be reviewed as new government directives are published.

I'm confident that these procedures will provide patients with the best possible protection whilst still receiving acupuncture and Chinese herbal medical treatments.

Thank you for your continued support in my practice and I look forward to welcoming you at the clinic again soon,

Lily
June 2020



The key principles in my back-to-practice plan are:

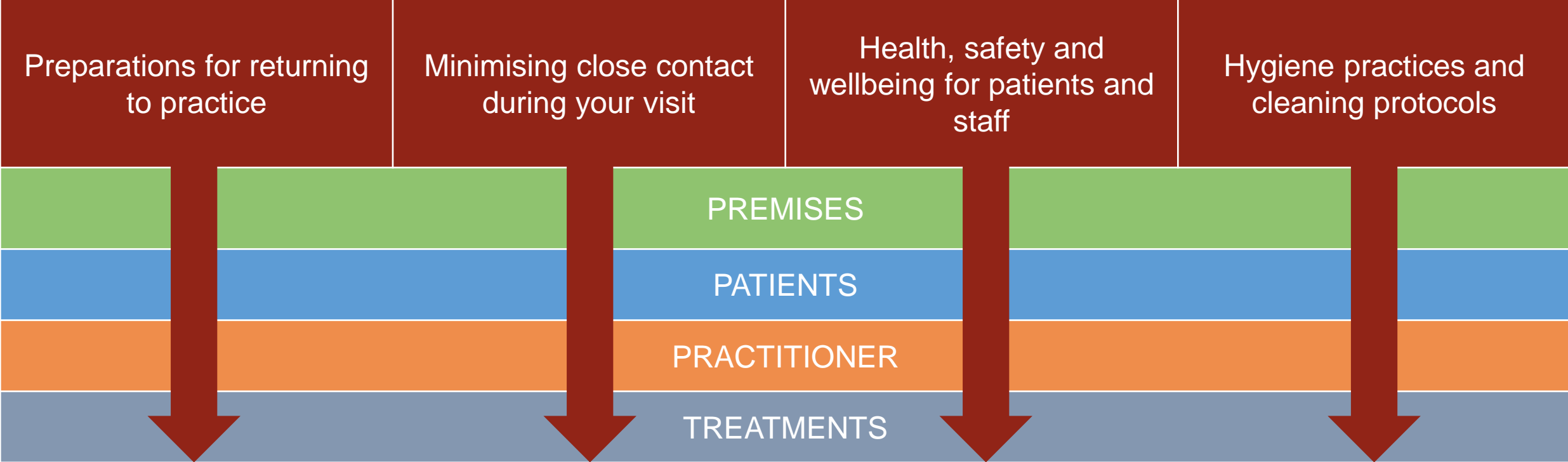
Preparations for returning
to practice

Minimising close contact
during your visit

Health, safety and
wellbeing for patients and
staff

Hygiene practices and
cleaning protocols

These principles will apply to four distinct areas within the clinic in order to protect patients, myself and other staff.



PREMISES

- A deep clean of the clinic and waiting areas will be carried out before patients will be seen.
- The treatment room will be cleaned thoroughly following PHE recommendations at the beginning and end of each working day, and between patient appointments.
- All cleaning and sterilisation will take place on a daily basis and a record will be displayed prominently.
- Commonly-touched areas will be sterilised such as door handles, chairs, taps, soap dispenser, table and drawer handles.
- The treatment room will be appropriately ventilated between appointments.
- All soft furnishings have been replaced and only equipment and furnishings that are easy to disinfect remain in the treatment room.

PATIENT

- Please only attend your appointment if you are **symptom-free** and if you are not currently self-isolating.
- Owing to the close-contact time during your appointment, you will need to wear a face covering for the duration of your treatment. Please ensure that you are wearing your face covering before you enter the pharmacy.
- Please let me know if you are allergic to certain cleaning products or latex, owing to the increased frequency in cleaning that will take place.
- Wherever possible, you should travel to your appointment alone, ideally using your own transport and avoiding public transport.
- If public transport is necessary, please take extra care of current guidance regarding social distancing and use of face coverings.
- Please avoid bringing anyone else other than a carer with you to your appointment.
- To avoid using the waiting area, please arrive at the time of your appointment or wait in your car.
- Please let me know if you have a health issue that means you are considered at higher risk from coronavirus. This may unfortunately mean that I cannot treat you, but we can discuss this before you make a booking.

PATIENT

- A container or drawer for your clothes and possessions will be provided. This will be sterilised between appointments.
- Towels will continue to be available and will remain single-use as before. These will be stored in a lidded container in a separate room and laundered at the highest temperature cycle permitted.
- Owing to the increased time spent on cleaning and having reduced access to email, please book your appointment and provide payment online prior to your appointment.
- Please consider using the NHS Test and Trace app.

PATIENT RISK ASSESSMENT

- If you are undergoing testing for COVID-19, please let me know prior to your appointment.
- If you develop symptoms related to COVID-19 within 14 days of attending your appointment, please let me know.
- If you develop symptoms related to COVID-19, please isolate at home in line with government guidelines. I will unfortunately not be able to see you for a follow-up appointment until the isolation period is over and you are no longer symptomatic.

PRACTITIONER

- I will only attend work:
 - if I am free of symptoms and if my temperature is normal. I will be taking my temperature on a daily basis and recording this.
 - if I have not been in close contact with someone currently suffering from symptoms of COVID-19 or who is self-isolating. I will be using the NHS Test and Trace app to ensure I am contactable for this reason.
- Work clothing will be changed every day and laundered at the highest temperature cycle permitted.
- I will be using PPE during your appointment which will be compliant with current government and PHE guidance as well as industry-specific guidance.

PRACTITIONER

PRACTITIONER RISK ASSESSMENT

- If I need to self-isolate or undergo COVID-19 antigen testing (the 'Have I got it' test), I will follow government guidance and notify patients as soon as possible.
- If I need to self-isolate, I will get in touch with patients to cancel appointments that are taking place within the recommended self-isolation timeframe.
- If the test is positive, I will continue to self-isolate for the recommended period of time and return to work only if I am symptom-free. Please note that in this scenario, the NHS Test and Trace will contact me and I may need to pass on the details of any patients I was in close contact with in the 48 hours before my symptoms started.
- If the test is negative, I will return to work only if I am symptom-free and after following the recommended self-isolation period.

TREATMENTS

In order that close contact can be minimised, appointments that require a visit will now be divided into four parts with only the treatment portion of the appointment being based at the clinic.

For example a follow-up Acupuncture appointment lasting 60 minutes will be as follows:

COVID Screening	COVID symptom-screening by online questionnaire or by text on the morning of your visit.
Pre-Visit Consultation	15-minute consultation by telephone/video call at the time of your appointment.
Treatment	45-minute treatment at the clinic.
After-care advice	Advice and support provided by email after the treatment, and an invitation to re-book if needed.

ADDITIONAL CHANGES TO TREATMENTS

- Moxibustion, cupping, ScarWork™ massage treatments are currently suspended.
- Online or telephone/video calling sessions for Moxibustion and Chinese herbal medicine consultations will continue to be offered.
- Appointment times will be staggered with a minimum of 30 minutes between appointments to allow time to carry out disinfection protocols.
- For hygiene purposes, I have removed the provision of mineral water for patients.
- Waste products and PPE will be stored and disposed of appropriately as per PHE guidelines.

TREATMENTS: BEFORE YOUR TREATMENT

- On the morning of your appointment, you will be sent a number of questions via an online questionnaire regarding current COVID-19 symptoms. These questions must be answered before your appointment.
- The consultation portion of your appointment will take place at the time of your appointment, either in your car or in a separate consultation room at the clinic. Please ensure that you are ready to accept my call at the time of your appointment. After this consultation, you will then be invited in for your treatment.
- As per government guidance, you will now be required to wear a face-covering for the duration of the appointment. Please ensure you put this on before you enter the pharmacy.
- Please use the toilet facilities before you come into the treatment room.
- When you enter and leave the treatment room, please wash or sanitise your hands using the facilities available in the treatment room.
- Please bring the minimum number of items with you to the appointment, and put your jewellery/watch in your pockets/bag prior to your appointment.
- Tongue assessments will now be carried out during a video consultation, or you will be asked to send a photo of your tongue prior to the appointment.



TREATMENTS: DURING YOUR TREATMENT

- Please allow me to open the door for you to avoid you needing to touch surfaces unnecessarily.
- Please avoid bringing out items such as your keys and phone during your appointment.
- As you will be wearing a face covering, you will be asked either to lie on your back (i.e. facing up) or to lie on your side during the treatment.
- Once acupuncture needles are inserted, you will be left alone to relax during the session. This is to ensure that close contact is minimised to 10 minutes.
- Pillows, bolsters and the treatment couch are fitted with waterproof wipeable covers and will be disinfected between patients. Disposable single-use couch roll will still be used to cover the treatment couch.
- You will still be offered towels for modesty or comfort since these are always laundered between each use.
- Handheld devices usually used during the treatment will be held in a separate room and will only be brought into the treatment room if absolutely necessary.

TREATMENTS: WHAT TO EXPECT AFTER YOUR TREATMENT

- At the end of your treatment, please leave all linen and towels on the treatment couch.
- After you have dressed, please wash your hands using the facilities provided.
- Please allow me to open the door for you so that you can leave without touching any surfaces unnecessarily.
- Any post-treatment advice that I provide will now be emailed to you to replace handwritten notes.
- If a follow-up appointment has been recommended, you will receive a link by email or by text to invite you to rebook your appointment online. This is to minimise the time spent in close contact for scheduling a follow-up appointment in person.

Supporting patients and our local community during COVID-19

Times are tough at the moment for many of us and I would like to do what I can to continue supporting patients and the rest of our community. For this reason, I'd like to make the following pledges to you:

- ✓ Treatment prices will **remain the same**.
- ✓ Additional costs of providing treatment such as PPE will **NOT** be passed onto patients.
- ✓ If you need to cancel your appointment at short notice due to COVID-19, you will be offered a **full refund** for your treatment.
- ✓ I will be donating a proportion of my profits to **support frontline workers**.

Thank you for your patience

As guidance from the UK government and the WHO is updated, I promise that the protocols and actions outlined in this document will continue to be reviewed and updated to best protect everyone.

These extra measures will unfortunately mean that fewer appointments will be available. Appointments are now available to book online 24/7 and if you are keen to be seen, I encourage you to book in advance.

Please stay safe and I look forward to welcoming you back in the clinic soon.

Lily
June 2020

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