



Coronavirus (COVID – 19) Policy and Procedure

(For CLIENTS)

November 2020

Version 1.4 – Client Copy
Created by: Rebecca Rawcliffe
Next Review Due: December 2020

Hammersmith and Fulham Mencap is a charitable company limited by guarantee, registered in England and Wales under company number 08155114 and registered charity number 1150840



HF Mencap Coronavirus (COVID – 19) Policy and Procedure

This document has been adopted by HF Mencap through its Board of Trustees and Senior Operational Team which remains responsible for its review.

Signature: 
 Name: Julian Hillman
 Date: 11/30/2020

Chair of Trustees

Signature: 
 Name: Teresa McGinn
 Date: 11/30/2020

Chief Executive Officer

Record of adoption and review of this policy and procedure:- Adopted: November 2020.

This document is to be reviewed every 6 months or in-light of new governmental guidance.

Reviewed by: Rebecca Rawcliffe	Date of Review: 24/11/2020
Reviewed by: Rebecca Rawcliffe	Date of Review: 26/11/2020
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Reviewed by: _____	Date of Review: _____
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1 Scope

This document is designed to provide you with important information about the Coronavirus outbreak and what we are doing to support the people accessing our services and our employees.

Please continue to take time to read the information and ask questions if you have any concerns.

This document may be amended or added to at any time and it will be updated, as appropriate, to reflect changing advice and supersedes any previous policy.

It applies to all employees, including those who work for us on a casual basis or volunteers. The document also applies in areas to the people we support and their families and/or main carer.

2 Policy Statement

COVID-19 is an illness that can affect your lungs, airways and beyond. It's caused by a virus called coronavirus. COVID-19 has a range of symptoms and affects people differently.

The UK is facing tighter restrictions including a 2nd lockdown in England starting Thursday 5th of November 2020; this is due to last until around the 2nd of December 2020 and may be extended beyond this date, after which England is expected to follow a localised Tier System:

Tier 1: Medium alert

Tier 2: High alert

Tier 3: Very High alert

The MYLIFE: Out and about services will continue to run under strict control measures to ensure our clients and families/carers continue to have the vital support they require. We are able to offer this service as "The Health Protection (Coronavirus, Restrictions) (England) (No. 4) Regulations 2020 Reg 11, Exception 6: respite care:

(9) Exception 6 is that the gathering is reasonably necessary for the purposes of—

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(a) respite care being provided for a vulnerable person or a person with a disability”.

Due to the nature of coronavirus it must be acknowledged and highlighted that despite the steps taken to safeguard both clients and employees the risk of contraction cannot be completely eliminated.

All other projects will run remotely until further notice.

The Youth Development Project may resume face to face small group activities after lockdown subject to government restrictions and up to date risk assessments.

3 Symptoms

3.1 The main symptoms of Coronavirus (Covid-19) are:

- **a new, continuous cough** - this means coughing a lot for more than an hour, or 3 or more coughing episodes in 24 hours (if you usually have a cough, it may be worse than usual)
- **a high temperature** - this means you feel hot to touch on your chest or back (you do not need to measure your temperature)
- **a loss or change to your sense of smell or taste** – this means you've noticed you cannot smell or taste anything, or things smell or taste different to normal

Most people with coronavirus have at least 1 of these symptoms.

Of those who do develop an illness, the majority will have a mild to moderate illness similar to seasonal flu. A minority will develop complications severe enough to require hospital care, most often pneumonia and in a small number of these the illness may be severe enough to lead to death.

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Note that guidance indicates that among those who become infected, some will exhibit no symptoms but can still transmit the virus.

4 Preventative Steps and Hygiene

We are taking all reasonable steps to protect your health and safety.

We require all employees and clients to follow these simple steps to help stop the spread of infections like Coronavirus.



Do:

- Cover your mouth and nose with a tissue or your sleeve (not your hands) when you cough or sneeze.
- Put used tissues in the bin straight away.
- Thoroughly wash your hands with soap and water for at least 20 seconds (**see appendix 1**).
- Only use hand sanitiser gel (at least 60% alcohol based) if soap and water is not available.
- Always wash your hands before leaving home or the support centre and when you get home or into HF Mencap. This includes if you leave and return to the HF Mencap building (e.g returning from a walk or going to a shop).
- Always wash hands after using the toilet; after breaks and sporting activities; before food preparation; before and after eating any food, including snacks or drinks.
- Clean and disinfect frequently touched objects and surfaces.

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- Try to avoid close contact with people who are unwell.
- Wear freshly laundered clothes every day; it is recommended you change your clothes on returning home.
- All staff must wear surgical grade disposable face masks (otherwise known as a type II mask) or face shields mask these will be provided by HF Mencap. Face masks should be replaced daily or sooner if required.
- Staff must wear the face masks or shield when working for HF Mencap, other than when eating and drinking. This includes within the HF Mencap centre, offices or within the van or car, when on public transport or supporting an individual outside. **Staff should provide evidence of any medical exemption if they are unable to wear a mask or face shield.**
- Clients will also be encouraged to wear a mask or face shield if safe to do so and they agree.
- In order to protect others we expect that all of our clients, families/carers and staff members follow the latest government restrictions within their hours at HF Mencap and during their own time.
- Only bring in packed lunches or shop brought food. No cooking sessions will be held.
- Food or drink should not be shared, for example during movie night.
- Keep indoor spaces well ventilated by opening windows and avoiding recycled air e.g no air conditioning units.
- Staff and clients should follow social distancing measures (see point 14).

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- Touch your eyes, nose or mouth

5 At Risk Groups

Coronavirus (COVID-19) can make anyone seriously ill. But for some people, the risk is higher.

There are 2 levels of higher risk:

Note these lists are not exhaustive and may be updated.

High risk (Clinically extremely vulnerable)

The latest Government guidance suggests that clinically extremely vulnerable people are advised to stay at home, except for exercise or essential health appointments

You may be at high risk from coronavirus if you:

- have had an organ transplant
- are having chemotherapy or antibody treatment for cancer, including immunotherapy
- are having an intense course of radiotherapy (radical radiotherapy) for lung cancer
- are having targeted cancer treatments that can affect the immune system (such as protein kinase inhibitors or PARP inhibitors)

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- have blood or bone marrow cancer (such as leukaemia, lymphoma or myeloma)
- have had a bone marrow or stem cell transplant in the past 6 months, or are still taking immunosuppressant medicine
- have been told by a doctor you have a severe lung condition (such as cystic fibrosis, severe asthma or severe COPD)
- have a condition that means they have a very high risk of getting infections (such as SCID or sickle cell)
- are taking medicine that makes them much more likely to get infections (such as high doses of steroids or immunosuppressant medicine)
- have a serious heart condition and are pregnant
- • are an adult with Down's syndrome
- are an adult who is having dialysis or has severe (stage 5) long-term kidney disease
- have been classed as clinically extremely vulnerable, based on clinical judgement and an assessment of your needs

Moderate risk (clinically vulnerable)

- are 70 or older
- have a lung condition that's not severe (such as asthma, COPD, emphysema or bronchitis)
- have heart disease (such as heart failure)
- have diabetes

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- have chronic kidney disease
- have liver disease (such as hepatitis)
- have a condition affecting the brain or nerves (such as Parkinson's disease, motor neurone disease, multiple sclerosis or cerebral palsy)
- have a condition that means they have a high risk of getting infections are taking medicine that can affect the immune system (such as low doses of steroids)
- are very obese (a BMI of 40 or above)
- are pregnant

Employees must inform management if they feel they are at a high or moderate risk, to allow assessments to be completed and appropriate safeguards put in place.

HF Mencap recognises that many of the individuals we support may be deemed high or moderate risk.

HF Mencap will support each individual attending our service to the best of our ability despite any additional risk factors. However we expect families/carers and (where possible) those that we support to take into consideration Government guidance and understand that HF Mencap is unable to take responsibility if an individual contracts Coronavirus.

HF Mencap will conduct risk assessments for anyone we believe to be in a high or moderate risk group and will put in place appropriate safeguards. These risk assessments will be created by the Head of Services, with input from support staff, families/carers, supported individuals and relevant health and social authorities. The risk assessments will be co-signed by HF Mencap's Chief Executive Officer.

In line with the **Mental Capacity Act (MCA)** it may be appropriate to carry out a best interest's decisions process for or on behalf of people who **lack the relevant capacity** in the context of the COVID-19 pandemic. HF Mencap will consider this for

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those individuals who are classed as high risk (extremely clinically vulnerable) and wish to continue attending our services.

All clients continuing to access our face to face services (or their main carer/family member) must sign a consent form if they wish to continue to access support.

This form highlights the possible increased risk factors **despite relevant control measures being made by HF Mencap the risk of contracting Coronavirus cannot be eliminated** (See Appendix 2).

Note you may also be considered high risk if you have returned from one of the countries considered to be high risk.

OR You have been in contact with, or live in the same household as, someone who is being tested for, has tested positive for Coronavirus or has been advised to self isolate because they have coronavirus symptoms.

6 What to do if you have Coronavirus Symptoms

6.1 If an employee or client becomes ill whilst at the HF Mencap centre/offices:

- Please speak to a manager as quickly as possible.
- The affected person should go to an area that is at least two meters away from other people and, if possible, find a room or area where they can be isolated behind a closed door, such as a staff office (If you can, open a window for ventilation). If the individual is a client, they will be supported by a staff member in full Personal Protective Equipment (PPE).
- Please try to avoid unnecessarily touching surfaces.
- Arrangements for the affected individual will be made, e.g next of kin will be contacted for clients and 999 in an emergency.

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- We ask that employees make their way home as safely as possible. If you travel on public transport, please follow any instructions given to you by NHS staff via 111.
- If the affected person needs to go to the bathroom during this time, this should be flagged to management so a deep clean can be completed.
- Individuals should self isolate and not return until a COVID-19 test has been carried out with a negative result and symptoms such as a cough or high temperature stop.
- Onsite HF Mencap manager to arrange a deep clean of all areas with immediate effect.

6.2 If an employee or client becomes ill at home

- Do not come into HF Mencap.
- Please telephone Management and inform them as soon as possible.
- Self isolate and arrange a COVID-19 Test.
- Inform HF Mencap Management of your test result.

6.3 What to do if someone within your household or support bubble has symptoms:

- Inform HF Mencap Management as soon as possible.
- Do not come into work or send a supported person into HF Mencap
- Get a test to check if you have coronavirus as soon as possible.
- You and anyone you live with should stay at home and not have visitors until you get your test result – only leave your home to have a test.

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- Anyone in your support bubble should also stay at home if you have been in close contact with them since your symptoms started or during the 48 hours before they started.
- Inform HF Mencap Management of Test Result.

7 What to do if you test positive for Coronavirus

Please advise us immediately if you test positive for Coronavirus, even if your symptoms are mild.

You may contact the office on: 020 8748 5168

Or the on call manager on: 07398509439 during out of hours

Remain at home and follow the self isolation advice from the NHS

- do not go to work, school or public places – work from home if you can
- do not go on public transport or use taxis
- do not go out to get food and medicine – order it online or by phone, or ask someone to bring it to your home
- do not have visitors in your home, including friends and family – except for people providing essential care
- do not go out to exercise – exercise at home or in your garden, if you have one

You may need to do this for up to 14 days (longer if you are in a high risk group) to help reduce the possible spread of infection.

Please follow any additional advice given to you by health professionals.

We ask that both employees and clients maintain regular contact with us to feedback back on how they are.

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8 How and When to Book a COVID-19 Test

8.1 How

Visit: <https://www.gov.uk/get-coronavirus-test>

Call: 119 (open from 7am to 11pm)

8.2 When to get a test

If you have symptoms, get a test as soon as possible.

Book a visit to a test site to have the test as soon as symptoms appear. Test sites are open 7 days a week. Order a home test kit if you cannot get to a test site.

9 When can I return to HF Mencap?

Do not return until you have had confirmation from HF Mencap Management.

9.1 Displaying symptoms or a Household/Support Bubble member has a positive test result:

Displaying symptoms does not necessarily mean you have the illness. The Coronavirus Symptoms are similar to other illnesses that are much more common, such as cold and flu.

However, due to the additional risk factors faced by those accessing our support services no one should return to HF Mencap until management are satisfied it is deemed safe.

This means:

- 1. The appropriate self isolation period has been undertaken for a household and/or support bubble.

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2. The client or staff member has not developed any symptoms during this period.
3. Has received a negative test result from a COVID-19 test taken at the end of their period of self isolation.

- And/or the staff member or client thought to have symptoms, as well as having had a negative test result, is not displaying any of the main symptoms as referenced in section 3 and is not required to self isolate Test and Trace or Public Health England.

9.2 After a Positive Test Result

- You should not return until deemed safe by Test and Trace or Public Health England.
- Appropriate length of self-isolation has been carried out.
- Any main symptoms as referenced in section 3 have passed and a negative test result has been returned.

10 What will happen if an outbreak occurs at HF Mencap?

10.1 Following Government guidance the MYLIFE: Out and About Service will continue to run unless we are informed an individual working at or attending the service has tested positive for coronavirus.

If we are informed that a employee or client has symptoms and is a waiting a test or someone from their household or support bubble has tested positive we will seek further advice from NHS Test and Trace or the Public Health England – Protection Team.

Public Health England via-

The North West London Health Protection Team

Email: phe.nwl@nhs.net

Phone: 020 3326 1658

Address: 61 Colindale Avenue, London, NW9 5EQ

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10.2 If we are informed that a Client or Employee has Tested Positive for Coronavirus

HF Mencap will close **with immediate effect** and contact Public Health England via The North West London Health Protection Team and NHS Test and Trace for further advice.

If we are unable to get **an action plan** from Public Health England or NHS Test and Trace the same day then HF Mencap face to face services will remain closed until we get further information.

HF Mencap will investigate who the individual may have been in close contact within the previous 48 hours.

Examples of close contact include:

- *close face to face contact (under 1 metre) for any length of time – including talking to them or coughing on them*
- *being within 1 to 2 metre of each other for more than 15 minutes – including travelling in a small vehicle*

HF Mencap will liaise with clients, families and/or main carer and employees on the next appropriate action:

- If the service will continue to remain open.
- If the service will close and re-open after 48 hours.
- Or if a prolonged closure of 10 to 14 days total is required by Public Health England or NHS Test and Trace.

Upon closing the on site HF Mencap Manager will instruct our cleaning company to carry out a deep clean of all areas (including reception and lift etc).

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11 What if I have been in contact with a person who has tested positive?

The NHS website advises:

“Individuals who have been in contact with a person that has tested positive for COVID-19 do not need to self-isolate unless they're contacted by the NHS Test and Trace service.

But they should take extra care to follow social distancing advice, including washing their hands often. If they get any coronavirus symptoms, they must self-isolate and get a test as soon as possible.”

However given the vulnerability of some of our clients, we would ask anybody involved in the running of the HF Mencap service, attending it, or living with/in a support bubble with somebody who attends who has been in contact with a person that has tested positive for COVID-19 advises that to HF Mencap management straight away so that an appropriate course of action can be determined.

Due to data protection the individual who has tested positive will remain anonymous as far as reasonably possible, management will inform anyone that may have been affected.

12 Contact Tracing Procedure

- A daily register must be kept of all clients and staff members (including CEO, managers or project staff). Clients and staff member contact details are kept on file in line with data protection.
- Any other visitors or contractors who enter the MyLife Centre must sign in using the daily register and provide their names, telephone number and email address.
- In addition to the daily register HF Mencap will display a Government created QR poster in areas around the building (e.g at reception, within the lift etc.), individual's may sign in using the QR poster **but must also sign the daily**

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register.

- Should HF Mencap be informed that a staff member or client (or anyone else who has been within the centre) has tested positive, HF Mencap will close with immediate affect.
- If this occurs when the service is open, our client's next of kin will be informed and arrangements for individual's to be collected or supported home will be arranged.
- Senior Managers will review the contact tracing data and information will be shared as required with **Test and Trace and Public Health England.**
- HF Mencap will close for a minimum of 48 hours whilst we liaise with the appropriate authorities.
- Test and Trace and Public Health England will advise on length of closure and the process for re-opening.

13 Existing Control Measures

- Employees whose positions are not directly related to the MYLIFE service should work from home until further notice.
- Temperature checks of both employees and clients will be taken and recorded on a daily basis; these should be checked again if required.
- All visitors and contractors must sign in and out at reception supplying contact information.
- Employees wear a mask or face shield (other than when eating or drinking) when they are in close contact with others this includes on public transport, in van or car and within the activity centre or office space (unless you are medically exempt – employees must provide evidence to HR Manager).
Service users will also be encouraged to wear a mask or face shield if safe to do so and they agree.

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- Employees should carry the appropriate antibacterial hand gel
- Employees and clients should inform HF Mencap of any allergies to hand gel
- Regular deep cleans of all spaces including lift and vehicles to be carried out by cleaning company and HF Mencap employees.
- Healthy supplies of cleaning products and PPE to be maintained at all times.
- Spaces should be well ventilated and no recycled air used.
- Easy read and accessible information around coronavirus and how to maintain good hygiene for be displayed and shared.

14 Social Distancing

Where possible our clients and staff should stay 2 metres (6ft) away from people who are not from their household.

We acknowledge that due to the nature of the support needs of many of our clients social distancing guidelines cannot always be followed in full. For example when supporting with personal care needs or keeping an individual safe whilst out in the community.

It should be considered whether that activity can be redesigned to maintain a 2m distance or 1m with risk mitigations where 2m is not viable.

Further mitigating actions to use when 2metres social distancing is not possible:

- Further increasing the frequency of hand washing and surface cleaning.
- Keeping the activity time involved as short as possible.

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- Employees wearing a surgical/ type II face mask
- Where possible and appropriate work to the side, regularly circling the client.
- Avoid skin to skin contact and use gloves where possible.

Reference: Keeping workers and clients safe during COVID-19 in close contact services, published by the UK Government (5th November 2020).

15 Further Considerations for Clients

- HF Mencap request that we are informed if a client has been or is going on holiday or has anyone visiting from other countries to their home.
- HF Mencap reserves the right to request that clients who display coronavirus like symptoms, have travelled to or from a high-risk area OR have come into close contact with a person with a positive diagnosis **do not come to the centre or meet with our staff for a 14 day period.**
- HF Mencap reserves the right to cancel support services and provide no alternative cover at short notice due to COVID-19 related restrictions.
- Should there be a need for a reduced service, or a total closure, HF Mencap will do their utmost to work with the appropriate authorities to ensure this happens for the least amount of time.
- HF Mencap are running smaller groups per room when advised to by governmental guidance. These groups are not exclusive bubbles due to some cross over of staff and clients over a week.
- HF Mencap will offer risk-assessed activities in the centre but also permitted activities in the community such as visiting parks, local supermarkets and using public transport, where that is part of the client's support. If the supported person does not want to access outside activities during this time please state this clearly on the consent form.

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Please note that public transport may be unavoidable unless other modes of transport have been arranged and agreed in writing.

- For any temporary closures of the MYLIFE Service that relate to COVID-19 (after December 2020) we ask that clients pay 36% of their average monthly hours (this applies to those using direct payment, private payments or who are local authority funded). This will help towards the re-opening the support service.

17. Where to Find up to Date Information

UK Government: [Social distancing and protecting high risk groups](#)

UK Government: [travel information including information about 'high risk' countries/regions and information for people travelling overseas.](#)

NHS: [information about Coronavirus](#)

World Health Authority: [latest advice](#)

UK Government: [Guidance for Social Care Providers](#)

NHS: [guidance on staying at home](#)

UK Government: [guidance on staying at home](#)

Social care institute for excellence: [Day care safe delivery](#)

LBHF: [local information](#)

Royal Mencap: [Easy read and accessible information on coronavirus](#)

Social care institute for excellence: [Best interests decisions: A COVID-19 quick guide](#)

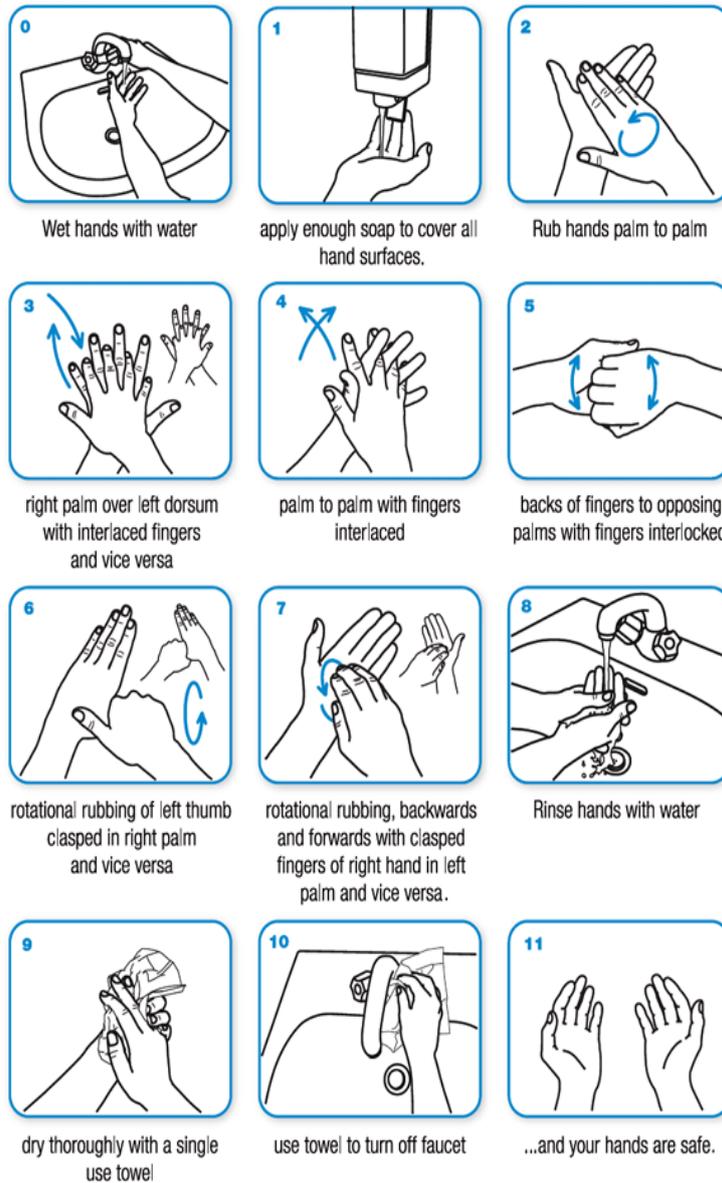
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Appendix 1:

Effective Hand Hygiene (You should wash your hands for the amount of time it takes to sing "Happy Birthday" twice)



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Appendix 2:

Date: 27th of November 2020

HF Mencap

**65 Aspenlea Road,
London, W6 8LH**

**Chief Executive: Teresa McGinn
Parent/ Carer Consent Form
Version 4**

Dear Parent/Carer,

From Thursday 5th November until Wednesday 2nd December, the Government is implementing a national lockdown with certain measures in place, which will be underpinned by law. From the 2nd of December onwards the government is replacing the lockdown with a 3 tiered system. London will be placed in Tier 2 – High alert.

The NHS also advises that “Coronavirus (COVID-19) can make anyone seriously ill. But for some people, the risk is higher. There are 2 levels of higher risk:

- high risk (clinically extremely vulnerable)
- moderate risk (clinically vulnerable)”

We advise that you consult this guidance and consider if your child/client falls into any of these categories and consider any additional risks that may arise due to other underlying health conditions. We also request that you inform HF Mencap if your child/client has received an updated and recent NHS letter advising them they are in the high risk category.

The current guidance states that clinically extremely vulnerable people are asked to minimise contact with others and stay at home as much as possible; with a small number of exceptions such as for exercise, health appointments, education and others. We strongly advise that you speak to your GP or specialist clinician, if you have not already done so, and inform HF Mencap if your child/client will remain at home for the period of the lockdown.

If you have any further questions, do ask - we are here to help. You and your child/client have the right to change your mind at any time, including after you have signed this form.

I agree to my child/client attending the MyLife Service from the 30th of November onwards and I have considered carefully any potential risks. *Yes/ No*

I confirm that, if my child/client is in the high risk (clinically extremely vulnerable) category, I will liaise with HF Mencap to ensure a Covid-safe return to the service. *Yes/ No*

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I understand the guidance from H&F Mencap, as stated in the “Coronavirus (COVID – 19) Policy and Procedure – November 2020, Client Version “” Yes/ No

I confirm I will play my part in minimising risk by adhering to the measures stated in the aforementioned Policy (e.g. providing packed lunches, ensuring my child/client wears freshly laundered clothes daily, keeping my child/client at home if displaying Covid-19 symptoms, ordering a Covid-19 test as soon as my child/client displays symptoms etc) Yes/ No

I understand that HF Mencap will offer risk-assessed activities in the centre but also permitted activities in the community such as visiting parks, local supermarkets and using public transport.

(where that is part of the child/client’s support and has been arranged and agreed in writing). Yes/ No

I confirm that I am happy for my child/client to be supported with permitted activities in the community. Yes/No *OR if specific activities only, which ones*

.....

I understand that H&F Mencap has risk assessed the possibility of anyone contracting Covid-19 and has taken relevant control measures however cannot confirm that the risk of contraction has been decreased to nil. Yes/ No

Parent/Carers ‘s signature

.....Date.....

Name (PRINT)

.....

Child’s/Client’s name

(PRINT).....

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