

The safety and wellbeing of claimants and their families, venue staff and our medical experts is of the utmost importance to us, particularly during this Covid-19 period. In light of this, specific measures have been introduced to ensure that this is maintained during your face-to-face appointment.

The most important message is that you should not attend the appointment, if:

- You, or any member of your household, is diagnosed with Covid-19 symptoms within 14 days of your appointment date.
- You, or anyone in your household, develops a new continuous cough within 14 days of your appointment date.
- You, or anyone in your household, develops a fever or temperature measuring 37.8 degrees or greater within 14 days of your appointment date.
- You, or anyone in your household, suddenly loses their sense of smell within 14 days of your appointment date.
- You have been in contact with someone who you know has had symptoms or been diagnosed with Covid-19 within 14 days of your appointment date.
- You are deemed to be in a high risk group and have previously been advised to “shield” by either the NHS or the Government (please refer to the exclusion criteria outlined on page 3). There may be exceptions (to include the inclusion criteria outlined on page 3) and we would be delighted to speak to you to ensure your safety before you attend.
- You have developed any other unexplained illness within 14 days of your appointment date.

If any of the above exclusion criteria apply to you, please contact us on 01204 478361 so that we can take the appropriate action.

If you are deemed to be in a moderate risk group (please refer to the inclusion criteria outlined on page 3) you are still invited to attend a face-to-face appointment if you feel happy to do so.

To assist in the limitation of risk, we ask that you;

- Attend wearing a face covering.
- Go into the appointment venue alone unless you are accompanying a child or a vulnerable adult who requires a litigation friend.
- If accompanying a child or vulnerable adult, please ensure you are from the same household.
- Arrive at the venue no sooner than 5 minutes prior to your allocated appointment time. Please also avoid arriving late for the appointment as this will impact on the social distancing measures that have been implemented.
- Be prepared to wait outside the venue until called for by the expert or reception desk. You may be asked to leave your mobile number with a member of staff who will call you when it's appropriate to enter the building.
- Ensure that you are washing your hands regularly in line with government advice.
- Socially distance yourself at the venue from everyone by 2 metres, including interpreters if attending with one (if you are accompanying a child or vulnerable adult you do not need to maintain a 2 metre distance).

What to expect when you arrive for your appointment;

- Barriers or markers may have been placed outside the venue. Please ensure you pay attention to these and ensure social distancing is maintained by standing 2 metres apart.
- You may be asked to access the venue using a different entrance or wait in a designated area. Please follow any signposted routes outside and within the venue.
- There will be restrictions on the amount of people allowed to enter the venue at any one time. Therefore, you may be asked to wait outside until called for and once admitted you may be the only person in the waiting room, other than the venue staff.
- Once in the venue, the reception staff may be sat behind a fitted screen. The screen will enable them to safely assist you with check-in or any queries you may have.
- Your identity will be checked by either the receptionist or medical expert.
- Your temperature may be checked before you are allowed to continue. In the event it is 37.8 degrees or greater you will be turned away. Should this occur, please contact us and we can review your appointment options.
- If you don't attend wearing a face covering, the appointment will be rescheduled as the expert will be unable to complete the assessment.
- You may be asked to sign a consent form before proceeding with the assessment or agree to the 'Test and Trace' process.

What to expect during the appointment;

- The medical expert will be wearing PPE (Personal Protective Equipment) and social distancing will be maintained within the examination room.
- The medical expert will ensure that you are wearing a face mask or covering.
- The medical expert will have washed their hands prior to meeting you and putting on gloves. This will be repeated after any physical examination has been undertaken.
- The medical expert will avoid making any unnecessary personal contact when meeting or leaving you.
- The medical expert will also avoid contact with any of your personal possessions, including any evidence you may have brought that is relevant to your claim.
- In the event that a physical examination is required, this will be minimally proportionate to what is required to allow the medical expert to complete their assessment.

The medical expert will also adhere to the same exclusion criteria specified at the outset of the document before attending the clinic.

Additional measures that will be implemented;

- Staff within the venue will wear protective clothing such as face masks, visors, gloves or gowns, depending on their roles.
- All public areas within the venue will be sanitised regularly.
- All clinical areas within the venue will be cleaned regularly.
- Any equipment used within the consulting room will be appropriately cleaned prior to meeting you and after your departure.
- Handwashing facilities / hand gel will be available at the venue.
- Refreshments, newspapers and reading materials will have been removed as per national guidelines.

It is important that all parties adhere to the measures and requirements that have been put in place. Therefore we kindly ask that you work with the expert and the staff at the venue to ensure that everybody's safety and well-being is protected.

Please also ensure that you follow any advice released by the government which relates to Covid-19 in your local area.

If you have any questions or are unsure as to whether you should attend the face-to-face appointment that has been arranged for you, please contact us on 01204 478 361.

Exclusion criteria: People at high risk (clinically extremely vulnerable - previously advised to "shield") should not attend. This includes people who:

- 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).
- 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 they 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.

Inclusion criteria: People at moderate risk (clinically vulnerable – previously advised to stay at home as much as possible) can still attend. This includes people who:

- Are 70 years of age 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.
- 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.