Industry specific guidance for the spa, salon and wellness sector with clear and fit for purpose guidelines, relating to the re-opening of businesses post COVID-19.
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Foreword

The purpose of this document is to provide the spa, salon and wellness sector with clear and fit for purpose, industry specific guidance relating to the re-opening of businesses following lockdown as a result of COVID-19.

This guidance has been created by the UK Spa Association. We have been invited to consult on a voluntary basis, with the Department for Business, Energy, and Industrial Strategy (BEIS) around the publication of the guidance document for “close contact services, including hair and beauty” due to be released. The Association has also gathered feedback from the industry wide survey issued to the salon and spa community and has run a series of Spa Director and supplier assemblies to facilitate a discussion around best practice for re-opening.

This guidance is not a legal requirement and does not replace government guidance. These are guidelines only and are not intended to cover every aspect within your operation. As you make your way through this guidance document, it is important that each spa operator and individual take into consideration the areas highlighted throughout this document. Operators can make their own decisions and go above our guidance within this document, it is not advised however to operate below these standards. This document is for the initial opening period and anticipated social distancing restrictions.

Areas for additional consideration to be made specific to your environment as you work through this document:

- At what point do you bring back your staff from furlough – either full or part time
- Health and Safety checks – pre-opening checks i.e. Legionella etc
- How to limit the number of people in your facility from an occupancy perspective
- Pre-opening communication to consumers
- As an employer, it is your responsibility to develop your own risk assessments, standard operating procedures, emergency action plans, normal operating procedures and all other relevant information

We also continue to enforce the same message as the UK Government, and remind all operators and teams to focus on:

- Wash your hands
- Do not touch your face
- Clean and sanitise
- Social distance where possible
- Use of PPE to manage transmission risk
- Follow procedures that you have put in place

Current UK government guidelines (currently for England only) also state

- Stay at home as much as possible
- Work from home if you can
- Limit contact with other people
- Keep your distance if you go out (1 metre plus apart where possible)
- Wash hands regularly
- Do not leave home if you or anyone in your home has symptoms

For the most recent updates from the UK government please visit: https://www.gov.uk/coronavirus
Please note, if you decide to open your business prior to UK government guidance it is advisable to check your insurance policy as this may be invalid. Please note, Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland may have different dates for re-opening. All information in this document is correct at time of publication.

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COVID-19

Definition

The World Health Organisation (WHO) define COVID-19 as:
‘Coronavirus disease (Covid-19) is an infectious disease caused by a newly discovered coronavirus’
The virus primarily affects the respiratory system (lungs and airways). Most people who become infected with the virus will have a mild to moderate respiratory illness and will recover. WHO also state that older people, those with underlying health conditions such as cardiovascular disease, diabetes, chronic respiratory disease and cancer are more likely to develop a serious illness as a result of catching COVID-19.

Routes of transmission

COVID-19 is spread “primarily through droplets of saliva or discharge from the nose when an infected person coughs or sneezes. When someone coughs, sneezes, or speaks they spray small liquid droplets from their nose or mouth which may contain virus. If you are too close, you can breathe in the droplets, including the COVID-19 virus if the person has the disease” (Carpenter,2020).

It is important to note that COVID-19 can be transmitted via 4 main routes:
- Droplet transmission occurs when a person is in in close contact (within 1 m) with someone who has respiratory symptoms
- Airborne: transmission of infectious agents in small airborne particles, particularly during procedures such as intubation
- Transmission of the COVID-19 virus can occur by direct contact with infected people and indirect contact with surfaces in the immediate environment or with objects used on the infected person (e.g., stethoscope or thermometer)
- Faeco-oral: Whilst this is possible, there have been no reports of faecal-oral transmission of the COVID-19 virus to date

(WHO,2020)

It is important to stress that COVID-19 cannot enter the body through the skin.

Reducing the risk of transmission

“Regularly and thoroughly clean your hands with an alcohol-based hand rub or wash them with soap and water. Washing your hands with soap and water or using alcohol-based hand rub kills viruses that may be on your hands.
Avoid touching eyes, nose and mouth. Hands touch many surfaces and can pick up viruses. Once contaminated, hands can transfer the virus to your eyes, nose or mouth. From there, the virus can enter your body and infect you.”

(WHO,2020)

Managing risk

Assessing the risk of COVID-19

All operators / employers will be required to carry out risk assessments taking into account their own business environment and any specifics relevant to them. Employers have a duty to minimise risk to the lowest reasonable, practicable level by taking preventative measures.
Risk assessment
Risk assessment is identifying potential hazards or threats and putting appropriate control measures in place.

Preventative measures could include:

- Increase the frequency of handwashing and surface cleaning
- Work from home where possible. Where working from home is not possible, make every reasonable effort to comply with the social distancing guidelines set out by the government
- If social distancing guidelines cannot be followed in full, such as in a spa or salon which require close contact working, businesses should take all mitigating actions possible to minimise the risk of transmission. Clearly, when providing close contact services such as treatments, it will not possible to maintain a 1m distance

Further mitigating actions to consider include:

- Further increasing the frequency of hand washing and surface cleaning
- Screens or barriers to separate people from each other
- Reduce the number of contacts for staff and guests
- Back-to-back or side-to-side working (rather than face-to-face) whenever possible
- Operate with teams to define which workers work together, if workers have to be in close proximity
- Ensure that any member of your team who are considered clinically extremely vulnerable to COVID-19 are risk assessed and appropriate working practices are put in place where possible

You should carry out an assessment of the risks posed by COVID-19 in your workplace prior to re-opening to identify any improvements you can make. You must ensure that the measures you have put in place are reviewed to ensure they are working or if there are any changes.

As can be seen in the below hierarchy of control Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) is the last line of defense. Creating and following the procedures is the most important factor in terms of minimizing risk.

**NATS' MODEL: Applying the NIOSH Hierarchy of Controls When Dealing With COVID-19**

![NATS' MODEL: Applying the NIOSH Hierarchy of Controls When Dealing With COVID-19](North American training solutions,2020)
Our people

As a reminder: Work from home where possible. Where working from home is not possible, make every reasonable effort to comply with the social distancing guidelines set out by the government.

- Consider who is essential on site. Those that are in admin roles could still work from home in order to minimise risk. Ensure you have provided any equipment required
- Monitor the wellbeing of people who are working from home
- Keep in touch with anyone working from home including their welfare, mental and physical health
- Ensure that any member of your team who are considered clinically extremely vulnerable to COVID-19 are risk assessed, and appropriate working practices are put in place where possible
- Continuous engagement with staff. For mental well-being regularly check on people fears, symptoms or questions. For further guidance and assistance within your teams for mental health in relation to COVID-19, please click here

Test and trace

It is vital that as employers and individuals we encourage those who are currently advised to stay home under the existing government guidance do not physically come to work. This includes anyone who lives in a household with someone who is displaying symptoms of COVID-19 or anyone who has symptoms of COVID-19 themselves. Anyone who falls into these groups is advised to self-isolate. For more information on this service please click here.

- Government workplace guidance for test and trace can be found here
- You should designating a test and trace contact person so employees know who to go to if they are contacted or have a query
- You should amend your privacy notices to reflect the NHS test and trace guidelines. This may include how personal data is used and shared in line with GDPR and Data Protection regulations
- Your return to work policies will need to document test and trace
- You should assist the test and trace service by keeping a temporary record of your staff shift patterns for 21 days and assist NHS Test and Trace with requests for that data if needed. This could help contain clusters or outbreaks.
- You should look at HR policies around Statutory Sick Pay
- You should create a policy around self-isolating for anyone who tests positive and has worked in close proximity to other members of staff
- If team members are contacted via the test and trace service, having been in contact with someone who has tested positive for COVID-19, you will still need to ensure they self-isolate even if they have worn a visor at work

Self-isolation

To make sure individuals who are advised to stay at home under existing government guidance do not physically come to work. This includes individuals who have symptoms of COVID-19, those who live in a household with someone who has symptoms and those who are advised to self-isolate as part of the government’s test and trace service.
Equality within your workforce

- Employers should be mindful of the particular needs of different groups of workers; directly or indirectly regardless of sex, race, age, religion, ethnicity, disability, new or expectant mothers, working from home or on site etc.
- Employees should be welcomed back to work with consideration to those who may have fears and anxiety around returning to work under these circumstances. Areas you could consider may be:
  - A team meeting to ensure all employees are confident in the new procedures and ways of working – this could be done via Zoom ahead of re-opening, or in smaller working “pairs” of staff to ensure social distancing is adhered to
  - 1 - 1 return to work meetings to enable you to support all team members where required

Re-opening
Returning to the workplace

- Identify your new labour model and what that looks like for your operational hours, days of the week etc.
- Map staff to your labour model and identify any gaps
- Should you be required to change staff hours or working patterns you may need to go through consultation processes around how they may or may not fit into this labour mode
- You may wish to consider “pairing” your teams in terms of workstations, or shift ‘bubbles’ where contact is unavoidable to reduce the number of contacts each worker has. This is to minimise the number of people who they come into contact with. As an example, this could be “pairing” a team of 1 attendant, 5 therapists, 2 receptionists and 1-2 supervisors/ manager per shift. For smaller businesses, this may be individuals rather than teams of larger numbers. For example, this could be pairing two receptionists together so that they always work side by side, on the same shifts
- One option is to have teams working alternate weeks. For example, team 1 works the whole of week 1 while team 2 work the whole of week 2. Please ensure you have a contingency plan, as outlined earlier, in case any team member has to self-isolate
- It may be advisable to look at staff working less days but longer shifts so as to accommodate your opening hours and ensure your occupancy can be maximised where possible
- Establish a sanitisation point for “check-in” procedure at start of shift. You may wish to include ensuring your teams do not come to or leave work in their uniforms (including footwear) If the business has the facility to launder uniforms this would be preferable.
- You may wish to consider that there is a no jewellery policy for staff, ensuring all personal belongings are left at home
- Entry and exit points to and from work should be considered and wherever possible will include staff areas
- Reducing congestion for example by having more entry points to the building where possible
- Staggered arrival times for staff
- Use markings and introducing one-way flow where possible at entry and exit points
- Create a contact free way of handing over from shift to shift
- Workstations should be assigned to one person where possible – i.e. treatment rooms and or reception desks. If they need to be shared, this should be done by the smallest number of people in order to reduce the risk of transmission
Ensure staff break areas are thought out including staggered break times, and create additional space which may have been made available by alternative working patterns
• Reconfigure table space so as to minimise face to face interaction at break times
• Ensure that space markings are used for any areas which may cause congestion i.e. staff areas, toilets etc
• Ensure that staff remain on site for their shift
• Prepare all treatment rooms at the beginning of shifts so as to minimise movement around the spa and congestion in prep rooms
• Follow government guidance on travelling to and from work. For more information please click here

Social distancing

The 1m social distancing guidance should be observed wherever possible including arriving at and departing from work as well as whilst on shift

When providing close contact services, such as treatments, where maintaining the 1m distance is not actively possible when serving guests, you should ensure that everything possible is done to reduce and minimise the risk. The following mitigating actions should be taken:

• Further increasing the frequency of hand washing and surface cleaning
• Consider minimising the number of contacts, per team member and guest.
• Screens or barriers to separate people from each other such as in manicure areas where this is practical
• Back-to-back or side-to-side working (rather than face-to-face) whenever possible
• Operate with teams to define which workers work together, if workers have to be in close proximity
• Only open customer waiting areas where social distancing can be maintained – you may wish to stagger your arrival times
• Maintain sufficient spacing between guest seating
• Social distancing applies to all areas of the spa / salon including corridors, reception, treatment rooms, relaxation areas and thermal areas. One-way routes could be something you can apply to your spa
• Provide floor markings and signage to remind team members and guest to maintain social distancing where possible particularly in public areas
• Ensure lifts and other accessible areas are included in your social distancing one-way route and or policy where possible

Training

• You must train your team in COVID-19 awareness. The World Health Organisation have a variety of free online trainings including: How to put on and take off PPE, Standard precautions: Hand Hygiene, Standard precautions: Environmental cleaning and disinfection, etc. These can be found here
• Full training should be provided for all team members on updated procedures and policies
• Full training should be provided on cleaning, sanitising and disinfecting ensuring the team understand the difference (see our glossary for definitions)
• Employee training to educate them on new laws or regulations applicable to their role
Welcoming back our guests

Please refer to the above section on social distancing to ensure that you have given consideration to this where your guests are concerned.

- Consider staggered arrival times for guests
- Encourage guests to use hand sanitiser upon arrival and frequent hand washing throughout their visit
- Consider introducing a hand cleansing ritual in the treatment
- Consider calculating your occupancy levels so that they can reasonably adhere to social distancing including total floor space and guest journey pinch points
- Please refer to the above section on social distancing to ensure your guests are welcomed back as safely and to minimise risk as much as possible
- Ensure that your spa has a COVID-19 policy and that this is communicated to all guests pre arrival and that it is included on your website and any third-party sites. This policy should incorporate information such as COVID-19 symptoms and appointments, limiting of bringing personal belongings and locker usage for example
- In accordance with the UK test and trace initiative, ensure you are maintaining a record of all visitors including contractors

Please see appendix 1 for examples of spacing within the reception areas which could be done via markings and use of screens.

Cleaning

Prior to re-opening

- Ensure the spa / salon is clean and ready to restart including: Plant rooms, prep areas, guest areas, staff areas etc.
- Ensure you have cleaning procedures in place and hand sanitiser available before starting work
- Consider servicing ventilation systems
- Remove all soft furnishings and objects such as magazines, reading materials, throws, blankets etc.
- To control the risks on re-opening the other building water systems, for example those in the changing room facilities, consult guidance produced by the ESCMID Study Group for Legionella Infections (ESGLI)
- Ensure you have sufficient ventilation and circulation within your operation. Air handling units do not remove the virus, it circulates it. The key is additional air.

“Increase ventilation as much as possible, increasing the flow of outside air and preventing any pockets of stagnant air. Recirculation of air within buildings should be avoided to reduce the risk of transmission”

(CIBSE, 2020)

Operational cleanliness

- Using your usual cleaning products, ensure that appointments are scheduled to allow frequent cleaning of workspaces, treatment rooms and equipment between uses
- Ensure that you and your employees record and maintain cleaning records and check lists and there is an audit process in place for it
- Ensure you have a standard operating procedure for how to clean to avoid ambiguity
- Review the physical touch points within the spa environment and ensure that the frequency of cleaning is increased. This includes, door handles, handheld devices, products, pens, phones, treatment beds, customer chairs etc. Be aware this will include your pool side and relaxation chairs as well.
- Ensure you follow the Pool Water Treatment Advisory Group (PWTAG) guidance on cleaning and disinfecting your pool environment. This can be found here.
- Ensure uniforms are changed on a daily basis and not worn outside of the spa.
- Maintain a good level of ventilation by keeping windows and doors open.
- Maintain a high standard of cleanliness and hygiene, and wear gloves when cleaning.
- Consider colour coding cleaning cloths and ensure a fresh cleaning cloth between each area.
- Consider the advice provided in our laundry section, by BC Softwear which states “3 minutes at a temperature of 71 degrees or 10 mins at 65 degrees will provide thermal disinfection” to laundry.

**Hygiene**

**Hand-washing technique with soap and water**

1. Wet hands with water
2. Apply enough soap to cover all hand surfaces
3. Rub hands palm to palm
4. Rub back of each hand with palm of other hand with fingers interlaced
5. Rub palm to palm with fingers interlaced
6. Rub with back of fingers to opposing palms with fingers interlocked
7. Rub each thumb dipped in opposite hand using a rotational movement
8. Rub tips of fingers in opposite palm in a circular motion
9. Rub each wrist with opposite hand
10. Rinse hands with water
11. Use elbow to turn off tap
12. Dry thoroughly with a single-use towel
13. Hand washing should take 15–30 seconds

(NHS, 2020)
Whilst you are increasing your policies around frequent handwashing, it is vital you encourage a “no touching the face” policy for staff

- Ensure you have tissues available for staff and guests, following government guidelines for sneezing, coughing and disposing of them appropriately
- Ensuring you have placed hand sanitising stations throughout the spa / salon including entry and exit
- Ensure your cleaning procedures cover the hand sanitising bottles, pumps and other touch points throughout the spa
- Set a clear “no touch” greeting policy
- Ensure you have increased your waste facilities throughout the spa
- Provide sufficient hand drying facilities in wash areas, such as disposable towels or single use hand towels, provided they are laundered at the correct temperature and discarded in a lined laundry bin after each guest use
- Ensure your procedures include spatula usage. Spatula’s must be used to remove any product from containers and disposed of immediately, ensuring a fresh spatula is then used for the next removal of product
- Ensure hygiene practice is continued throughout all areas of therapies: for example, wash out any empty product bottles with hot soapy water and ensure they are left to air dry

Changing rooms, toilets and showers

- Ensure you have a clear policy outlined for guests, with guidance on usage for lockers and towels
- Encourage less usage where possible. Hotel guests could come to the spa ready from their room to limit changing room and locker requirement. Consider treatment guests changing and showering in treatment rooms if time permits
- Consider identifying lockers for guest use and allocating at reception
- Lockers must be distanced to allow social distancing between guests
- Towels / robes to be kept in sanitised locked lockers
- Ensure you have a procedure around how your staff will set up and refill lockers, including sanitisation between guests. You may wish to consider an indication to the guest that this is a sanitised space – whether it is a recyclable sign, label etc
- Advise guests of exactly where soiled towel go and how to leave the locker after use
- Hard surfaces and touch points should be cleaned and sanitised after each guest as per above guidance
- Remove amenities such as earbuds, cotton pads etc. to limit cross contamination. You may wish to consider having an amenity request at reception as an alternative
- Ensure social distancing markings at sinks and wash basins where possible
- Ensure hand sanitiser and wipes are available for guests to use to wipe down any areas after use
- Consider using signage and markings to show distancing requirements
- Ensure occupancy levels are monitored to ensure congregation is minimised
- Ensure increased frequency of cleaning and sanitisation in addition to regular cleaning procedures is undertaken. You may wish to adapt the touch point cleaning after every guest policy as described in other sections unless this can be staffed accordingly, or you can provide guests with spray and disposable paper towels which are then disposed of effectively
- Consider your laundry collection points, and ensure used towels are discarded in a lined laundry bin after each guest use
Personal Protective Equipment (PPE)

Definition

PPE protects the user against health or safety risks at work. For the purpose of this document PPE includes gloves, medical masks, goggles or a face visor, and gowns (WHO, 2020).

As outlined above in Managing Risk taking preventative and mitigating measures are most important. PPE is the last form of defence. These include:
- “performing hand hygiene frequently with an alcohol-based hand rub if your hands are not visibly dirty or with soap and water if hands are dirty
- avoiding touching your eyes, nose, and mouth
- practicing respiratory hygiene by coughing or sneezing into a bent elbow or tissue and then immediately disposing of the tissue
- wearing a medical mask if you have respiratory symptoms and performing hand hygiene after disposing of the mask
- maintaining social distance”

(WHO, 2020)

The use of Personal Protective Equipment

The WHO (2020) also state that wearing a face mask of any type when symptoms are not present is not recommended.

- Any staff who have worn face masks or coverings on public transport in accordance with UK Government guidance, should ensure that they remove or change their mask in the correct manner and then washing their hands once this is done. The WHO have free online courses available here for training in how to do this
- Where you are already using PPE in accordance with operational procedures, you should continue your normal practices
- When managing the risk of COVID-19, additional PPE should only be required in accordance with your COVID-19 specific risk assessment. Risks need to be minimised by hand washing, social distancing and pairing teams of workers
- According to government guidance in areas where social distancing cannot be maintained the person providing the service should then use PPE in addition to any normally worn.
- Government guidance refers to “an extended period of time”. This refers to the majority of your teams working day, regardless of the number of guests per therapist per column. The therapist providing the treatment (which will include close proximity to a guest’s face) should therefore wear further protection in addition to any that they might usually wear
- This should take place in the form of a clear visor that covers the face, provides a barrier between the wearer and the guest. Please see ‘Treatments’ section for further guidance
- You must ensure the visor is fitted and worn properly. It should cover the forehead, extend below the chin and wrap around the side of the face. Further details can be found here
- Both disposable and reusable visors are available. Reusable visors should be cleaned and sanitised after each use
- There is no benefit for guests to wear any PPE unless they wish to wear their own face covering
Face coverings

Face coverings may be marginally beneficial as a precautionary measure in some circumstances. Workers should only consider wearing a face covering when they are not wearing a visor i.e. when they are not in close proximity with the guest (1 metre plus).

Guests and employees should follow guidance on face coverings when they are not in close proximity as explained below

- Evidence suggests that wearing a face covering does not protect you, but may protect others if you are infected but have not developed symptoms

Face coverings are not a replacement for other ways of managing risk including increasing hand and surface washing, fixed teams and partnering for close up work. There is also no evidence that face coverings have a time constraint in terms of effectiveness. The only mask that will stop the breathing in of airborne droplets containing the virus is a fully waterproof FP3 mask. These are currently secured for hospitals and care homes only (Carpenter, 2020). Based on the measures outlined above are the best way to minimise risk and transmission.

Equipment

- All metal implements should be placed in disinfection solution between guests
- Once sterilised the items should be stored in UV cabinets. Bear in mind that all treatment rooms should be set up to ensure minimisation of contamination – this may mean that each room requires disinfection solution, UV cabinets etc
- If sanitisation guidance is followed for all items which can be cleaned and disinfected, for example, metal manicure tools, hot stones, foot bowls etc. then there should be no need for disposable items. You may wish to consider using some disposable items where required such as orange sticks, spatulas, nail files, foot files etc. Items which cannot be disposable or washed such as body brushes, should be sprayed with antibacterial spray

HM Government Guidance on COVID-19: cleaning in non-healthcare settings, updated 26th March 2020 must be considered in the particular spa cleaning procedures. This can be found here.

Treatments and treatment rooms

- Where social distancing cannot be maintained the person providing the service should then use PPE in addition to any normally worn. For treatments which are direct face to face, including: hand and nail treatments and those within the highest risk zone for the majority of the time or the entire duration of the treatment should not be resumed unless they can be adapted in line with this, and government guidance to make it safe. The highest risk zone is defined as the area in front of the face where splashes and droplets from the nose and mouth that may not be visible, can be present and pose a hazard to the guest and therapist and vice versa. For example, wearing a clear visor that covers the face. This provides a barrier between the wearer and the guest
- Consider using cleaning stickers to mark treatment rooms which have been cleaned. It would be advisable to create a policy which means these cannot be accessed once cleaned until the next day or time they are in use
- Consider providing each treatment room with its own cleaning materials and ensure these are restocked
• Consider providing your staff with plenty of time to properly clean and disinfect treatment rooms in between guests. The recommendation of a minimum of 25 minutes should be considered.
• Consider each treatment room having its own UV cabinet, hot stone warmers and any other equipment which is usually shared between therapists to minimise risk.
• Ensure you have a lined laundry bin to dispose of any mitts and towels immediately so that risk of transmission is minimised.
• Consider only performing wraps, scrubs and any other treatment which requires the guest to shower, in a room which has a shower to minimise transmission.
• Ensure you have a lined waste bin available in all treatment rooms to dispose of cotton pads, foil from wraps or any tissues that have been used during treatment immediately and not at the end of the treatment so that the risk of spreading is minimised.
• Ensuring that staff adhere to hygiene, laundry procedures and hand washing, as well as treatment room cleaning procedures should minimise the risk of transmission when preparing treatment areas i.e. mitts in towel warmer, preparing foil for wraps, preparing facial set ups etc. It is the operators’ responsibility to ensure their cleaning, hygiene and laundry procedures are robust and adhered to.

Gyms and studios

• Ensure all equipment is 1m apart in accordance with UK Government social distancing. You may wish to mark alternate pieces of equipment for use for example.
• Ensure sanitiser spray and disposable cloths are available for guests.
• Ensure touch points are cleaned and disinfected after each guest – this is again in addition to any normal cleaning procedures.
• Consider placing signage around any free weights area to advise on social distancing.
• Consider following UK Active guidance on 3m² space per person.
• Consider scheduling classes with a gap, firstly to allow for cleaning to take place but secondly to ensure no class waiting and congregation of guests.
• Ensure equipment in classes are be cleaned after each guest.
• Consider space markings in classes to ensure guests know where they should be placed.
• Consider your laundry collection points, and ensure used towels are discarded in a lined laundry bin after each guest use.

(UK Active, 2020)

Pools

The Pool Water Treatment Advisory Group (PWTAG) have created and published their guidance around ‘Disinfecting COVID-19’ and re-opening pools post COVID-19. Please see below for the following links:

• Re-opening pools post COVID-19
• Disinfecting COVID-19
• Swimming pool technical operation after COVID-19 shutdown

Depending on whether you closed your pool via one of the two methods as recommended by PWTAG: PWTAG technical note 43, you will need to ensure you follow the correct Option 1, or Option 2 guidance as highlighted here. It is important this guidance is followed.
• Option 1: lower circulation
• Option 2: stopping circulation

• Ensure there is signage, advising guests of your maximum capacity for your pool area. Ensure this is monitored by your teams and included in your re-opening bather load procedures.

• ukactive recommend one bather per $3m^2$. For further information click here

• Ensure guests are aware and adhere to social distancing guidelines

Swimming Pools England have provided the following recommended COVID-19 pool chemical levels as follows:

Free Chlorine – min 1.5mg/l pH – 7.0

This can be found here along with other guidance for any operators who may have lane swimming or more of a leisure operation

• Ensure your ‘Normal Operating Procedures’ are updated to reflect the above, and that teams are trained in this
• Ensure your loungers and any seating areas are placed to adhere to social distancing guidance
• Extra care and signposting should be considered for entry and exit points in order to maintain social distancing
• Ensure any equipment used is cleaned after each guest use
• Ensure hand sanitiser and or soap is available poolside for staff
• Consider your laundry collection points, and ensure used towels are discarded in a lined laundry bin after each guest use
• See appendix 1 for floor plans on pool social distancing
• Consider first aid continuing as normal, with the following aspects to be used when needed; gloves, Resus masks for emergency first aid being provided to all first aiders and face masks for general first aid
• The Resuscitation Council UK has provided specific guidance on CPR delivery. More information can be found here
• Where relevant, lifeguards will remain in place

Spa pools

“In order to achieve the most effective chemical treatment, pH levels must be kept as low as possible (7.0 – 7.4) with the free chlorine level raised to between 1.5mg/l – 3.0mg/l.

Maintaining the recommended social distance of 1m between people is almost impossible in a spa pool/hot tub. The aeration effect of the ‘bubbles’ produces an aerosol effect that could carry the COVID – 19 virus. In Europe, the re-opening of spa pools is currently prohibited” (Shuff,2020)

PHE guidance on cleaning and disinfection

“Public areas where a symptomatic individual has passed through and spent minimal time, such as corridors, but which are not visibly contaminated with body fluids can be cleaned thoroughly as normal.
All surfaces that the symptomatic person has come into contact with must be cleaned and disinfected, including:

- objects which are visibly contaminated with body fluids
- all potentially contaminated high-contact areas such as bathrooms, door handles, telephones, grab-rails in corridors and stairwells

Use disposable cloths or paper roll and disposable mop heads, to clean all hard surfaces, floors, chairs, door handles and sanitary fittings, following one of the options below:

- use either a combined detergent disinfectant solution at a dilution of 1,000 parts per million available chlorine

or

- a household detergent followed by disinfection (1000 ppm av.cl.). Follow manufacturer’s instructions for dilution, application and contact times for all detergents and disinfectants

or

- if an alternative disinfectant is used within the organisation, this should be checked and ensure that it is effective against enveloped viruses

Avoid creating splashes and spray when cleaning.

Any cloths and mop heads used must be disposed of and should be put into waste bags as outlined below.

When items cannot be cleaned using detergents or laundered, for example, upholstered furniture and mattresses, steam cleaning should be used.

Any items that are heavily contaminated with body fluids and cannot be cleaned by washing should be disposed of’

(PWTAG,2020)

Thermal areas

There is currently limited guidance on temperatures that COVID-19 can survive at and despite some evidence stating 60º and above will kill COVID-19 and would therefore be deemed safe, we are of the stance that all operators should await further government guidance.

- Ensure loungers or chairs are spaced in accordance to social distancing
- Ensure cleaning frequency is increased for touch points such as door handles, loungers, water stations etc.
- Consider your laundry collection points, and ensure used towels are discarded in a lined laundry bin after each guest use
Retail and merchandising

Tester definitions:

“Self-select tester
A tester available for customers to try in a self-select environment, such as a gondola display of cosmetics, including make-up, skincare or fragrance, in a customer retail store.

Controlled tester
A tester administered in a controlled environment by a consultant or other member of staff, for eg. Single shot samples or product samples provided by a disposable applicator by a consultant or other member of staff.

Display product
A product that is available to view, but access is controlled; for example, through screened display sections. Display products are not available to purchase.”

(CTPA, 2020)

We have included sections from the COVID-19 Guidance for In-Store Testers and Cosmetic Counters’ June 2020 which has been produced by the Cosmetic Toiletry and Perfumery Association.
Under GMP and quality controls, possible product contamination should have been addressed and therefore there would be no concern regarding products on shelf. However, once opened the products will be exposed to possible contacts and contamination. Under any circumstance, this carries a risk of disease transmission, and the COVID-19 situation, while alarming, does not change this fact.

In addition to the actual product, contact of people with the packaging, where viable microorganisms might also survive, should be taken into account by the manufacturer.

While the use of in-store testers is a commercial practice and is not covered under the scope of the legislation, best practice and risk minimising strategies should be put in place.

A procedure should be in place to review or replace testers giving consideration to the PAQ (Period After Opening) or Best Before Date, and estimated exposure to air, environment and people. The use of disposable applicators will protect against further microbial transmission.

Finally, it is important to adhere to any differing devolved Government rules in England, Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland, or if counters are located in sites with specific measures in place, such as airports. Differing advice may be in operation on matters including the use of face coverings.

**General Hygiene Considerations**

**Considerations for the Brand**

- Any testers which were opened prior to the COVID-19 situation should be disposed of, unless a risk assessment has been undertaken which deems the tester to be low risk. For example, fragrances or products in sealed pump containers that can be easily sanitised. If a PAQ or Best Before Date is present on the product, it must be adhered to.
- Consultant and staff safety must be ensured at all times in all aspects of the work including work rota.
- Companies should consider staff uniforms or other work clothes. In particular, aspects such as washability, washing instructions and frequency, whether staff will travel to work in their uniforms, and changing facilities available at work if this is not the case.
- Companies may wish to consider the use of face coverings and gloves, either disposable or cotton. In this case, consideration should be given to possible allergies, environmental impact and procedures for safe removal and disposal where applicable.
- Good hand hygiene must be maintained at all times through regular hand washing and/or the use of alcoholic hand sanitiser. If staff wear gloves, the gloves must be changed between each customer and product contact, removed without the contaminated part touching the skin, and disposed of appropriately.
- Consultants and staff members should maintain the appropriate distance, according to Government instructions, from customers whenever possible.
- All counter and display surfaces must be disinfected thoroughly and regularly.

**Considerations for the Retailer**

- Thorough hygiene and sanitisation processes should be in place.
- Distance markings should be available, to help all staff and visitors maintain the correct social distance.
- The store layout should be carefully considered, to avoid over-exposure of certain areas of the store to high customer traffic.
Phase One
The initial phase when retail stores reopen

- Self-select testers should not be available during this phase.
- The use of controlled testers during this phase is unlikely to be appropriate unless specific protocols have been fully considered and agreed.
- Display products, which are not accessible to the public, may be on view during this phase, for example, behind a Perspex screen.
- Novel ways to convey the product ethos and characteristics to the customer could be used; for example, digital images and explainers, or touch-free methods to allow the customer to smell a fragrance.
- It is very important that phase one is ‘touch free’, with no physical contact between customers and staff.
- Training should be provided to store staff on how to engage with customers, reassuring them on the safety processes in place.

Phase Two
When the reintroduction of controlled testers is unlikely to risk COVID-19 transmission

- Self-select testers should not be available during this phase. Self-select testers are handled by many different people and there is a risk of contamination of the product surface and subsequent transfer of COVID-19.
- It is important to discourage customers from opening or testing products at self-select counters. For example, through the use of communication, tamper-proof seals or intervention by store staff.
- Controlled testers may be reintroduced if the risk of contamination and transmission of COVID-19 is negligible.
- Store staff should be fully trained on all procedures relating to controlled testers, especially hygiene procedures.
- Controlled testers should not be handled by the customers.
- Controlled testers should be handled by trained staff in a way that minimises surface contamination.
- Wherever possible, controlled testers should still operate under a ‘touch-free’ system. Ideally, companies may show the product to the customer using a white tile or similar item. However, if the customer wishes to apply the tester to their skin, this must take place via a Disposable Applicator controlled by counter staff, or a single-use product.
- Controlled testers in the form of single-use products can be distributed to customers upon request. Hand sanitiser or hand washing must be employed after each customer interaction.

Companies should also consider the environmental impact of the materials that are selected for this purpose.
Example controlled tester procedures for different product formats

Products should be decanted and demonstrated as below, placed on the counter for the customer to use:

- **Creams or Liquids**: place on a sanitised tile or decant using a disposable spatula or pump into a disposable pot.
- **Powders**: take a swipe of the powder using a disposable sponge applicator and place applicator onto a sanitised tile or into a disposable pot.
- **Lipsticks**: take a small slice from the top of lipstick using a disposable spatula, and place onto a sanitised tile or into a disposable pot.
- **Fragrance**: spray onto fragrance blotter.
- **Mascara**: use a disposable applicator and place into a disposable pot.

**Phase Three**

When the reintroduction of self-select testers is unlikely to risk COVID-19 transmission

- Self-select testers should not be reintroduced until the circulation of COVID-19 in the general population no longer poses a significant risk.
- The procedures outlined in phase two for controlled testers also represent good practice in normal circumstances and should still be followed.

- Notices should be in place for guests to understand new policies regarding testers and purchasing retail items
- Consider removing all testers from shelves and having a member of the team available in the retail area to handle products and provide a sample to the guest. If this is a physical application of the product on their hand, then ensure hand sanitisation prior to application and use the disposable applicators to further minimise transmission
- Consider a virtual journey from your supplier brand in order to enhance the guest retail journey
- Virtual consultations can be provided via online platforms (Zoom etc.) to provide advice in person where they cannot be provided with social distancing in place
- Retail items should be stored away from contact, behind glass cabinets or in a cupboard and collected as requested for the purchaser/guest
• Leaflets and other collateral material should be removed to avoid guests reading and replacing information
• Ensure social distancing is in place for product advice and guidance for guests from staff members  
• Any returns should be cleaned as per cleaning guidance in above sections, before returning back to stock

Spa Food and Beverage

Consider the re-opening guidelines from the government around COVID-19 food businesses. For more information please click here.

Laundry

• Consider implementing procedures around handling of laundry to minimise the risk of contamination
• Consider liaising with external laundry supplies to provide written specifications of their laundering process and verify that it is effective against COVID-19
• Consider having a delivery policy for any laundry or other deliveries which may come into the spa
• Minimise person to person contact in accepting deliveries

We have provided BC Softwear’s ‘Achieving Thermal Disinfection for towels, bathrobes and spa linen’ sheet on COVID-19 for your use.

Achieving Thermal Disinfection for towels, bathrobes and spa linen

BC Softwear

There has been much discussion and conflicting views concerning safety and best practice to ensure the linen used in a spa or hotel is disinfected from any potential virus threats, and more specifically the COVID-19 virus. We have heard people suggest boil washing at 90 degrees and using bleach, which will undoubtedly kill any virus, but as towelling experts, we know that this will also weaken your linen substantially over a period over time, thus reducing its overall lifespan. Longevity of your towels and linen is essential to assisting you in reducing long term costs of replacement items and we are also mindful that using bleach and high temperatures is not good for the environment or our efforts to improve our industry’s responsibility to corporate sustainability. As a leading textile provider, we have been working with several industry experts to establish the best practice for thermal disinfection of linen. These experts include:

Useful COVID-19 Facts The protein shell of an animal virus (COVID-19) is protected by a lipid membrane. This membrane is dissolved using soap which inactivates the virus. Just like washing your hands, warm soapy liquid does help eliminate the virus, however, we wanted to provide our customers with more accurate advice on thermal disinfection.
**Government Guidelines**  
This following extract is taken direct from the Department of Health. Paper on ‘Decontamination of linen for health and social care’. 6.6 To achieve the Best Practice requirements (paragraph 3.3, “BP”) all enhanced processes should use a washing cycle that has either: a thermal disinfection cycle that reaches 71°C for at least three minutes or 65°C for at least ten minutes."

**BC Softwear Washing Recommendations**

**Machine Cycle Management**: 3 minutes at a temperature of 71 degrees or 10 mins at 65 degrees will provide thermal disinfection, however, for those operators who are conscious of laundry energy savings, we would recommend a detergent called Sparity, which combines low temperature bug kill and odour elimination with excellent cleaning performance. Halo destroys the H1N1 flu virus, which is an enveloped virus like COVID-19, in 5 minutes contact time at 30°C. Halo also kills MRSA bacteria and C. difficile spores.

**Towel Washing Economy**: Using the latest SmartSoft Collection by BC Softwear, will provide further energy savings particularly in reduction of oil absorption and reduction in drying times. We are aware that there will be a requirement for increased turnover of washing of towels and bathrobes in all leisure areas to provide reassurance to your guests and ensure the best possible safety and hygiene standards for your guests moving forward.

*Beware of any products which claim anti-bacterial properties. COVID-19 is not a bacteria, it is a virus and these products will not therefore provide any protection.*

**Consider the environment** Operators may consider using one off use linen. This type of product needs to be disposed of safely and given the virus can live for days on some surfaces, this may contribute to the excessive storage of unnecessary biohazard, whilst putting an additional burden on landfill. Hotels and Spas should consider wherever feasible, to launder linens and uniforms on-site to save money and save carbon emissions. In house management will also provide optimum laundry control to help minimise spread of the virus.

Please Note: Whilst BC Softwear have made every attempt to ensure the accuracy and reliability of the information contained in this document, the content is for general information purposes only and should not be used as a substitute for consultation with professional advisers. We do not represent, warrant, undertake or guarantee that the use of the information supplied within this document will lead to any particular outcome or result. We shall not be liable to you in respect of any business losses, including without limitation loss of or damage to profits, income, revenue, use, production, anticipated savings, business, contracts, commercial opportunities or goodwill.

For any further information please contact: barbara@bcsoftwear.co.uk  
www.bcsoftwear.co.uk
Marketing and Communications

Why Are Communications Important?

Now that you’ve done all the hard work behind the scenes adapting your SOP’s to accommodate the new guidelines and making your spa safe for employees and guests alike, it’s imperative that you have both an internal and external communications plan in place to shout about your efforts.

Make no mistake, this will have a massive impact on your trading after you open your doors again.

Even the ‘frequent flyers’ (i.e. regular customers who you previously took for granted), will need reassurance; not only from a safety point of view, but also to understand what services will actually be available to them when they walk back through your doors.

Additionally, employees will need regular reminders and reassurance about working life in ‘the new spa world’ environment.

Why is Customer Experience and Marketing Activity Important?

While communications exist to broadcast positive information to your employees, customers and the wider world, your marketing activity should focus on ensuring that everything behind the scenes, actually evidences and supports this information. Like any relationship, getting this wrong and not backing up your words can break trust. And trust in your brand is everything right now.

Get this right, and you’ve actually got a fantastic brand building opportunity!

So, it’s almost time to press reset and to use this opportunity to make sure that we all stand every chance of surviving Covid19.

Below is a list of marketing and communications activities that you may want to consider over the next few weeks before lockdown ends:

Pricing

Like many others, you are probably already panicking about the additional costs that re-opening is going to incur, after months of generating zero revenue. Re-opening your spa and keeping your clients as safe as possible will incur costs, that’s a fact. Cleaning supplies are not free, and you’re just not going to be able to see as many clients as before, for the short term at least.

That said, there is lots of evidence to suggest that demand for spa services will be higher than usual when you reopen. So, while you do not want to appear greedy or crass, it is acceptable for you to complete an audit of your prices and perhaps, if you have not put your prices up for a while, raise prices here and there.

- 3rd PARTIES - Remember the pricing of packages you have with 3rd parties. This is definitely an area in which you could discreetly put prices up. Your spa business’s revenue has already taken a hit from your temporary closure, and your customers know this, therefore small 5% increases if you haven’t put prices up during 2020 is not going to be detrimental to your business or reputation.
• **COVID-19 Supplement** - Consider a “COVID-19 supplement” of around 5% on all of your services. It is important to communicate to customers that this tax helps to keep them safe while spending time in your business. They will be happy to pay a little bit extra to have more care taken, as long as it is considered fair and communicated in the correct way.

**Your website**

Ensure that your website is completely up to date with your planned opening times, and any relevant communication about restrictions on opening and what will/will not be available.

• **IMAGES** - Ensure that all your spa, hotel, grounds images are the newest, highest-quality photos you have

• **LIMITED OFFERS** - Incentivise people to return or try your spa with any offers you wish to run for limited periods of time. But do not go overboard with the offers while in panic mode. It is expected that demand will outstrip supply in the spa and wellbeing world, so it may be that you don’t need to run any offers in the first few weeks of opening to maximise the revenue you are generating.

• **HOMEPAGE BANNER** - Announce your re-opening date at the top of the page, as clearly as you can, along with the telephone number and an email address.

• **POP-UP’s** - If you have enabled them, update them to include your re-opening messages and/or your welcome back promotions

• **PRICES PAGE** - If you do increase prices or decide to add a COVID-19 tax, make sure your pricing page reflects this, and ensure the messaging is clear so that the customer can see the logic.

• **ONLINE BOOKING PAGE** - Make sure calendars and availability is up to date and customers can book all the correct services

• **FAQ’s** - Share what steps you will take to ensure the safety of your clients and staff (e.g. reduced appointment capacity, heightened cleaning, staff temperature taking etc.). Also share the services and products you plan to continue to offer—and how customers can take advantage of them.

• **REVIEWS** – If you haven’t kept your reviews page up to date now is the time to do it. The public will still be searching for and making decisions based on your reviews previous to lockdown, especially around hygiene and cleanliness. The same goes for trip advisor and other 3rd party review sites.

**3rd party spa booking sites**

As above on your own direct website, if you work with Spa 3rd party booking sites now is the time to reach out to them and communicate your re-opening plans. Try to understand if they are running any PR or Marketing Campaigns that you could be part of and try to confirm what levels of business they have forecast to come via them in the first 3 months to help you plan alongside your own direct levels of business.
E-mail campaigns

Now is the time to let your database and customers know that you are back and ready to welcome them with open arms.

Don’t wait to send an email announcement the day or so before you reopen. Give your customers something to look forward to and the chance to plan their schedules accordingly. Let them know that they can start looking forward to a “Post Quarantine Rejuvenation Facial,” or that they can book a “Reboot My Nails” manicure/pedicure.

So prioritise email and text campaigns. Some ideas of themes of content you might like to include are the following:

- **WHAT’S NEW** - Share what you’ve been up to during your closure. Have there been any changes to your processes? Have you personally done anything exciting or learned something new that your customers would like to know about? Are you stocking new products? Think about this as a bit of a summary of the last 12 weeks and allow your customers to get close to you again, by giving them an insight into your life during that time.

- **INVESTMENT** - Share any upgrades you’ve made to your spa/hotel business, including any new spa services/gym classes/F&B additions you are going to be offering or anything relevant that will affect the services they buy from you.

- **SAFETY** - Shout from the rooftops about the cleaning processes you’ve put in place to keep everyone as safe as possible. Before this has all been hidden and unspoken, but now customers will want to know the lengths we are going to keep them safe.

- **TREATMENT MENU** - The warmer and more enticing and creative this can be the better. Remember, everyone will be fighting for whatever business is out there, so don’t rely on discounts to drive footfall. This is where your brand essence, personality and values can shine. Be creative. Provide robust reasons for why people would want to come back to you.

Social media

Knowing that you may experience a rush once you reopen, take the time now to plan your social media strategy, and schedule out a few weeks’ worth of posts. Get creative and remember you may now have completely new clients who are excited to check your spa out for the first time, in-person. Creativity is key!

- **VIDEO** - Record a welcome (or welcome back) video from just the spa and leisure team, or the wider hotel.

- **VIRTUAL TOUR** – you can do this on your phone, focusing on any refurbs or changes that have happened. Especially focus on the outdoor space and how beautiful it looks in the sun.

- **BE PROUD** - Showcase any new and improved offerings you’ve added.

- **SAFETY** - Share how you’re keeping the space as safe and healthy as possible, interview others within your hotel who could offer an ‘authoritative voice’ on the subject.
• **UPDATE PROMOTIONS** – Create new or update your existing Facebook and/or Instagram adverts to promote your re-opening and any specials you’re running

• **INVOLVE YOUR TEAM** - Why not get your staff to share photos of themselves getting services in the revamped space or photos showcasing their new looks? It’s another way you can let your customers know you’re getting ready for them!

Finally, touch base with your 3rd party partners again, double check with your account manager that you are live and that they have everything they need to be able to start sending you bookings again

**Opening week**

Your first week back is an opportunity to show how much you appreciate your customers and their ongoing support. Welcome them back and make it special for them, even if things are different than they used to be; the small gestures that mean a lot.

You might not be able to host a celebratory spa member get together just yet, but you can make your first appointments back special. For example:

• **SIGNAGE** - Place “welcome back” signs around your spa. Also, make sure signage to promote hygiene and social distancing is clear and in all parts of your spa. Make sure your team are trained to make a point of physically demonstrating that they are adhering to the safety guidelines at all times (remember the ‘actions speak louder than words’ advice?)

• **PROMOTE RELATIONSHIPS** - Put up a collage of social media posts shared during your closure (e.g., a client tagging you in their haircut fail, wearing an at-home face mask, etc.)

• **GIFT BAGS** - Put together “welcome back” gift bags with a note, branded stickers, and a voucher to return at a later date

• **TEAM** – If you don’t already have a WhatsApp group across your team, it’s worth setting one up so that you can offer regular and real time encouragement, while inviting the team to share their reopening experiences, ideas and learnings. Don’t forget, none of you have gone through this before, and you will be stronger if you learn and openly communicate together

• **PRESS** – Prepare a press release with lots of positive messages about all the preparations you’ve made to welcome your guests back. Invite your local or regional press editors to spend some time in your spa so they can help spread the reassurance to their readers

**Moving forward**

Prepare for another possible closure.

The sad reality is, we don’t know how COVID-19 will play out over the coming months or years. That said, you will have learnt a lot from how the last 12 weeks and you now know what works and what doesn’t when temporarily closing and re-opening your business.

Just in case you must do it again, have a plan in place as it relates to finances, staffing, and virtual services. You might not need it, but it’s always better to be safe than sorry.
Check in with those previous ‘frequent flyer’ customers if you haven’t seen or even heard from them. It could just be that they missed the emails and social posts, or perhaps they’re wary to jump back into their previous routines. Whatever the reason, it’s likely you’ll have clients who’ve dropped off once you reopen. It is up to you to win them back and give them all the evidence they need to feel confident and safe back in such an intimate environment.

**Paid for advertising**

Always a controversial one!

It’s natural not to want to spend money when funds are tight. But in actual fact it’s exactly at these times that you may need to speculate to accumulate to attract brand new customers.

Once the initial influx of footfall is over, competitor communications activity will still be fierce, and you will want to stand out among the crowd.

Working with 3rd party booking agents is a great way to elevate your brand, as it’s absolutely in the agent’s interest to promote you if you are on their books, and they will have the advertising budgets and know-how to do so most effectively.

But if you want to stand out just that bit more, perhaps at a local or regional level, and you don’t have the skills internally, it might be worth investing in some external marketing and communications services to help amplify your particular brand message.

The more times your target audience hears about you across a number of different communications channels the more likely they will be to convert. Digital activity such as SEO, PR, Google Ads (PPC), Social Media Ads, Display Advertising etc. are also all great ways to help your ranking on that all important page 1 of Google.

**Booking**

COVID-19 related screening questions to be asked of guests ahead of their appointment, including:

- Have you had the recent onset of a new and continuous cough?
- Do you have a high temperature?
- Have you noticed a loss of, or change in, normal sense of taste or smell?

If the guest has any of these symptoms, however mild, they should stay at home and reschedule their appointment.

Booking system changes and scheduling changes to consider

- Extend turn-around times to allow for room/equipment cleaning
- Consider reducing the number of treatments offered over an hour to reduce exposure
- Set up template rotas and working patterns to ensure the same staff are working together
- Allow additional breaks for therapists’ time outside treatment rooms and to reset any PPE
- Consider extending opening hours to facilitate more guests while respecting occupancy limitations
- Amend automated booking confirmation emails/texts to include new spa procedures
- Amend automated booking reminder emails/texts to include screening questions and new spa procedures
• Consider relaxing cancellation policy so as not to induce people showing symptoms to keep their appointment over concerns about losing money

Recommended booking procedure

In order to ensure containment of the spread of COVID-19 and to enable test and trace it is understood that upon re-opening, spas will be required to operate on an appointment only basis. It is advisable that no walk-ins be allowed however this is down to each operator to decide. All bookings should be made in advance either by booking online or over the phone.

As part of that booking process guests should be made aware of key changes to spa operating procedures that might affect them
• Requirement to complete online consultation prior to arrival and the consequences of not doing this
• Any changes to cancellation policy
• Requirement to complete additional online COVID-19 consultation within 24hrs prior to their appointment
• Explain the communications they will be receiving (e.g. booking confirmation, possible amendments to procedures email, reminder email, COVID-19 screening questions) and that it’s important to read and take required action on these as things are subject to change
• Option for the guest at point of booking to request email consultation forms or phone consultations
• Full payment at time of booking is recommended to further minimise time and contact upon departure
• Booking confirmation email sent to guest with full details of changes to spa procedures including reception/arrival changes, in-spa changes, hand washing requirements, departure and payment changes.
• Provide a facility on the booking confirmation email to allow the guest to ask questions and ensure these questions are responded to
• Consider having a Frequently Asked Questions section
• Online consultation sent out to guest (or conducted by phone) within 7 days prior to appointment further reminding the guest that this must be completed prior to arrival at the spa otherwise their appointment may be cancelled
• Consider a booking reminder email/text sent out to the guest within 48 hours of appointment booking to include additional consultation form focusing specifically on the COVID-19 screening questions
• Within 24 hours of appointment reception/reservation must check that all guests booked the next day have completed online consultation forms and COVID-19 screening question forms
• If guests have not completed both forms, reception/reservation should contact them by phone and email to remind guests to do so or risk forfeiting their booking

To include in your booking confirmation email and call at point of booking
• Booking details (as normal)
• Specific arrival time – highlight the reasons for this, plus consequences of arriving outside of this time
• Reassurance that procedure changes are for the safety of guests/staff and to ensure full enjoyment of them and other guests
• Full details of new spa policies and procedures and what has changed or what will be different from arrival to departure

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• Remind guest of the other communications they will be receiving in order and approximate timescales plus requirements of the guest for each one and consequences of not reading and responding to them
• A reminder of the key symptoms of COVID-19 and the responsibilities of the guest should they or a family member experience any of these symptoms prior to their visit to the spa and especially within 14 days of their booking

To include in your standard or amended consultation form email or call . . . (within 7 days of booking)
• Booking details
• Specific arrival time – reiterate this and its importance
• Link to online consultation form
• Consequences of non-completion
• Option to have a phone consultation form and how to organise this
• How to ask any questions the guest may still have
• Reminder of the main symptoms of COVID-19 and the responsibilities of the guest should they or a family member experience any of these symptoms prior to their visit to the spa and especially within 14 days of their booking.
• Reminder that full details of changes to spa procedures can be found on their Booking Confirmation email or a link to these on your website

To include in your reminder email, text or call . . . (2 to 4 days prior to appointment)
• Booking details
• Specific arrival time
• Reminder to have completed online consultation form or phone consultation
• Reminder to complete pre-arrival COVID-19 screening questions (poss. with link to do so depending on when your reminder email/text is sent

Pre-arrival COVID-19 form questions via email, text or call . . . (24hrs prior to appointment)
• Booking details
• Arrival time
• Link to COVID-19 questions
• Reminder of importance of completing these honestly
• How this may/may not affect cancellation policy

Appointment follow up email, text or call
• Thank guest for visiting and observing NEW protocols
• Responsibility to inform the spa should symptoms develop within 7 days of their visit

Guest arrival

It is important to ensure every opportunity has been given to guests to complete their pre-arrival consultation form and COVID-19 screening questions . . . however it is inevitable that some guests will still arrive having not done this.
Operators should decide on your policy for dealing with this and manage it diligently.
Options:-
1. To strictly enforce pre-arrival protocols and inform the guest that as they have not completed the information they were asked to complete multiple times that they are unfortunately not going to be allowed in to the spa and will be charged the relevant cancellation fee
2. To provide a safe and secure space outside of the main spa for a therapist or receptionist to complete the consultation form and COVID-19 screening questions, maintaining full social distancing protocol. The guest can be informed that they may have to wait for a receptionist/therapist to be available and this could impact their treatment time.
**Resources and references page**


Hair and Beauty Suppliers Association, (2020). *PPE portal*. Available at: http://www.thehbsa.co.uk/ppe-portal/ Accessed on 16\textsuperscript{th} June 2020


Shuff, M. (2020). *Advice on spa pools re-opening COVID-19*. Email correspondence. 18th June 2020


Appendices
Appendix 1 – Floor plans

Spa reception showing social distancing
Spa reception with elevation Plexiglass
Appendix 2
Press release

Please find a press release template for your use to adapt as you see fit.

**GIVING YOU PEACE OF MIND AS SPAS GET SET TO SAFELY REOPEN**

*(Spa title)* is delighted to soon be re-opening safely, with the introduction of new, comprehensive measures and protocols, to reassure guests of the ongoing assessments being made to a phased re-opening.

*(Spa title)* closed on X as part of the government’s plans to restrict the spread of COVID-19 and to protect the NHS. However, it’s predicted that the nation’s spas will be in demand and more essential than ever, to support the physical, emotional and mental health of our society, post the COVID-19 pandemic. We’ve all had different experiences and stresses during lockdown and now we invite you back to relax and recover from this most unusual of situations.

During this enforced downtime, *(spa title)* have been engaged with the UK Spa Association and their findings, in terms of scientific research and advice. We will only reopen once the UK Spa Association deem and advise us that is safe, as they lobby and continue their first-hand dialogue at a governmental level.

We’ll open once we are confident that every one of our new measures are in place and that our staff have been trained to an extremely high level with the regard to the new procedures and are equipped with the correct PPE. New measures include: temperature checks, the availability of 24 hour sanitiser, enhanced cleaning policies and established social distancing measures for team members and guests, indicated by floor signage.

We’ll also introduce contactless payment and please be aware that we’ll possibly also have limited occupancy levels when offering your favourite relaxing treatments, so please do bear with us as we prioritise the health and wellbeing of our team and guests above all else.

As members of the UK Spa Association, *(spa title)* will display and adhere to The UK Spa Community Promise, a document developed as a new standard of expectation of PPE use, hygiene and best practise, for both staff member and spa guest alike.

We may look a little different at this initial stage of re-opening but offering beautiful treatments that offer the benefits of physical & mental wellness is what we do best, what we love and what we have missed. *(Spa title)* warmly welcome you back.

For more information, or to book your visit our website: [www.spawebsite.com](http://www.spawebsite.com)

Contact details: spa manager
Tel: 01222245547632

About UK Spa Association (UKSA)

The UKSA founded during 2013 is the official not-for-profit trade body for the nation’s 8000 spas and salons. It is comprised of members and partners from across the UK spa, salon and wellness sector. It exists to progress the positive contribution made by the spa and salon industry to UK health, social and economic wellbeing, and to drive continuous improvement in quality training, inclusiveness, high standards and professionalism at all levels within the industry. [www.spa-uk.org](http://www.spa-uk.org)
Appendix 3
COVID-19 Policy
Please feel free to amend and use where appropriate

Dear Guest,

The safety of our guests and team here at (Spa name) is paramount and as such, you may notice some changes when you next visit. We want you to enjoy your time with us in as safe a way as possible therefore if you have any symptoms of COVID-19 (currently a new and continuous cough, high temperature or change or loss of taste and smell) please do not come to the spa and simply contact us to rebook in no less than 14 days’ time.

We have always held cleanliness and hygiene as sacred but now more than ever, we want spa-goers to trust that we will put their safety and that of our employees, above all else on their return. We make a commitment that our spas will follow all the latest government advice as well as the following procedures.

- Ensuring our cancellation policy and terms and conditions are available to you.
- Welcoming you to the spa with a warm and professional (touch free) greeting, allowing plenty of time for you to complete your comprehensive consultation form
- All employees are fully trained and regularly updated with procedures in line with the latest government guidance and safety protocols
- Regular and thorough hand washing and sanitisation from our employees, always, especially before and after your treatment
- Adequate provision of hand sanitising facilities for all throughout the spa
- Use of personal protective equipment such as gloves, face coverings, aprons etc. where required
- Adherence to social distancing etiquettes in non-treatment spaces throughout your visit.
- Safe, regular and thorough sanitisation of all treatment areas, facilities, surfaces and equipment
- Provisions of fresh, clean and appropriately laundered linens throughout your visit, including towels, robes, treatment linen etc
- The removal of shared items such as tester products, reading materials, soft furnishings etc.
- Appropriate provision for the disposal of waste material throughout the spa.
- Contactless payment is available where possible
- Employees will not be permitted to work in the spa if they, or anyone in their home present with any COVID-19 symptoms
- We would kindly ask that you would commit the following to us and our team
  - If you or anyone in your home presents with any COVID-19 symptoms within 14 days of your booking, please follow UK government guidance and inform the spa
  - Please only bring essential belongings with you to the spa, or if you can leave them in your hotel room if applicable
  - Please ensure you are familiar with the spa cancellation policy and terms and conditions.
  - Please ensure you wash and sanitise your hands upon arrival at the spa and frequently throughout your visit
  - Ensure your consultation form is completed in full prior to arrival at the spa
  - Please ensure that you observe all social distancing measures that have been put in place by the spa
  - Please use the correct bins provided by the spa to appropriately dispose of waste material
The government guidance publication is available here: Keeping workers and client safe during COVID19 in close contact services.

For the most up to date version of the COVID-19 Re-opening guidance for spas please see our website here