



# COVID 19 Infectious Disease Policy

## 1. POLICY STATEMENT

Effective infection prevention and control is central to providing high quality care for clients and a safe working environment for Occupational Therapists. This policy has been developed in response to the COVID 19 pandemic.

## 2. PURPOSE

This policy exists to help protect the community from the pathogenic COVID19 (Corona Virus) outbreak.

## 3. RESPONSIBILITIES

- All employees are responsible for implementing this policy and procedure.
- The Director is responsible for provision of personal protective equipment, cleaning products, hand sanitiser, soap and single use hand towels for Spark Team members and clients of The Spark Therapy Services.
- The Director is responsible for ensuring The Spark Team members have read and understood their responsibilities and obligations in response to this policy.
- The Director is responsible for the development and implementation of a COVID Safe Work plan.
- This policy will be regularly reviewed by The Spark Therapy Services and any necessary changes will be implemented by the Director Tina Bruce.

## Definitions

### Symptoms

Symptoms of COVID-19 can range from mild to severe. Some people recover easily, and others get very sick very quickly. If you test positive for COVID-19 you may experience:

- fever
- coughing
- sore throat
- shortness of breath.

Date updated	16.1.23
Review date	16.9.23
Version	7
Updated by	Tina Bruce



Other symptoms include:

- runny nose or congestion
- headache or fatigue
- muscle or joint pains
- nausea or loss of appetite
- diarrhoea or vomiting
- temporary loss of smell or altered sense of taste.

COVID-19 symptoms are similar to some common illnesses, such as colds and flu, or allergies.

### **Household or household-like contacts**

- You have spent more than four hours with someone who has COVID-19 inside a house, accommodation or care facility.

### **Social Contacts**

Your social contacts are:

- People you know who you spent 15 minutes with face to face, or more than 2 hours with in the same indoor space, while you were infectious.
- Household and household-like contacts follow different rules and are not your social contacts. Contacts from your work or your education facility will be informed by the workplace and education facility.

### **Workplace Contacts**

Those who you worked with onsite whilst you were infectious. You must tell your employer/workplace if you worked onsite while infectious.

### **Infectious Period and how the virus spreads**

If you had symptoms, your infectious period is considered two days before you noticed symptoms. If you didn't experience symptoms, your infectious period started two days before the day you got tested.

The virus is usually spread from person to person by:

- close contact with an infectious person
- contact with droplets from an infected person's cough or sneeze
- touching objects or surfaces that have droplets from an infected person, and then touching your mouth or face.

Date updated	16.1.23
Review date	16.9.23
Version	7
Updated by	Tina Bruce



## Corona Virus Testing

- **Rapid antigen tests (RATs)** can detect COVID-19 even before you develop symptoms and can provide a result within 10 to 20 minutes. You can do the test at home or at the workplace and a medical professional is not required. Free RAT tests are available locally from:
  - ➔ Greensborough – Banyule Community Health 3/25-33 Grimshaw Street, Greensborough
  - ➔ For other collection sites for free RATs visit: <https://www.coronavirus.vic.gov.au/get-a-covid-19-test>
- **PCR (polymerase chain reaction) diagnostic tests** - This type of test is highly accurate for detecting an active infection of COVID-19.
- PCR tests are only available through referral to a private pathology provider via your GP or [GP respiratory clinic](#)

## PROCEDURE

### Instruction for Spark Team members with confirmed cases of COVID-19

#### Isolate and tell your contacts.

You are most infectious 2 days before your symptoms start, and while you have symptoms. It is recommended that you should isolate for at least 5 days and until you don't have symptoms anymore. This means you should not go to work, school or grocery shopping. Especially if you work with people at a higher risk of becoming very sick with COVID-19.

While isolating, you should:

- Tell people and places you may have been in contact with
- Don't work or visit a high-risk setting like hospitals, aged care, and disability services where there are people who are at a higher risk of becoming very sick or needing hospitalisation.
- Isolate away from the other people in your household as much as possible to reduce the risk of spreading COVID-19.
- Do not attend work until you are symptom free and are testing negative on a RAT.
- Do not attend clinic appointments with your OT until you are symptom free and testing negative on a RAT.

Date updated	16.1.23
Review date	16.9.23
Version	7
Updated by	Tina Bruce



For more information visit: <https://www.coronavirus.vic.gov.au/checklist-cases>

## Instruction for Clients with confirmed cases of COVID-19

- Do not attend OT appointments for at least 5 days following your positive RAT test result, you are symptom free and testing negative on a RAT.

## Instruction for Household or household-like contacts – clients and Spark Team members

- Monitor for symptoms
- If attending work or an appointment, take a RAT test following exposure (for 5 days or until household contact tests negative) and if you have symptoms.
- Children over 8 and adults are required to wear a mask in OT sessions for the 5 days following exposure or until the household contact tests negative.

## Vaccination Status

- All Spark Team members must provide documentation evidence of their vaccination status. OTs are AHPRA registered professionals and are mandated to be fully vaccinated to work face to face with clients.
- Information about COVID 19 vaccination is included on The Spark Website <https://www.thesparkts.com.au/covid19>
- Vaccination status of participants and families is not required for them to attend clinic or receive services.

## Spark Team COVID 19 Training

- All Spark Team members must complete the COVID 19 Infection Control training annually. <https://www.health.gov.au/resources/apps-and-tools/covid-19-infection-control-training>

## Spark Team members Guidelines

- COVID Safe Work Plan outlines all details regarding COVID safe practices and procedures. All Spark Team members to read and acknowledge that they will adhere to the COVID safe work plan.

Date updated	16.1.23
Review date	16.9.23
Version	7
Updated by	Tina Bruce



- CovidSafe Cleaning plan and roster is in place.
- Single use masks are no longer required in clinic appointments and home visits. If OTs or clients have been a close contact, masks should be worn for 5 days following this exposure.
- Spark Team members are to keep physical touch to a minimum.
- Spark Team members are to wash hands with soap and to sanitise their hands frequently. This should occur before and after all client sessions, before and after eating and drinking.
- Spark Team members are to request all clients to wash or sanitise their hands before and after their session.
- Spark Team members are to encourage children to practise good cough and sneezing etiquette. Coughing into elbows or use a disposable tissue. Tissues to be disposed of after one use.
- Equipment, toys, resources and hard surfaces are wiped down after every client with disinfectant alcohol solution.
- High contact areas like switches, handles and desks will be wiped regularly with disinfectant alcohol solution. A cleaning schedule is in place in the kitchen of the clinic and must be signed off each time cleaning is completed (2 times daily).
- Extra tissues, hand towels, alcohol solution and soap is in stock.
- Equipment which is unable to be wiped down (e.g. soft toys), not to be used in therapy sessions at this time.
- If a child touches their nose and mouth during the session, encourage them to use alcohol gel hand sanitiser during the session to minimise transfer of germs to other surfaces.
- Social Distancing - clients and therapists should aim to stay at least 1.5 metres away from each other when sharing space in therapy sessions.
- Families to be offered telehealth sessions as an option to replace clinic-based appointments.
- If a child or parent displays COVID 19 symptoms during an OT appointment, the therapist can cease the appointment early and a cancellation fee applies.

Date updated	16.1.23
Review date	16.9.23
Version	7
Updated by	Tina Bruce



## Clinic Attendance

### Appointment Attendance Covid-Safe Checklist - The Spark Therapy Services

Please do not attend your appointment if you...

- Are unwell with symptoms of coronavirus (COVID-19), such as a cough, sore throat, runny nose, shortness of breath, fever or loss of sense of taste or smell.
- Have been diagnosed with coronavirus (COVID-19) and has not yet completed 5 days isolation.
- Are a close household contact of a person with COVID 19, a RAT test must be completed before attending an OT appointment. If your test is negative and you are symptom free, you can attend if you wear a mask.

**If any of the statements above apply to you or any member of your household, please do not attend your appointment. Contact your OT to arrange another appointment time or you can arrange a non-face-to-face appointment (e.g. phone consultation, online consultation, report writing) in place of the scheduled in-person appointment if this is an option.**

- Waiting room is not in use. OTs to text their families when it is time to come into the appointment.
- Spark Team members email footer includes the following reminders.
  - *Stay home if you have cold / flu symptoms, have been diagnosed with COVID 19 or are identified as a close household contact of a known COVID-19 patient.*
  - *Wash/sanitize your hands upon entry to the clinic.*
  - *The waiting room is currently not in use, your therapist will text you when it is time to come in.*
- Text reminder also sent with link to COVID attendance questions.

## What we are doing to prevent the spread of COVID-19

We are committed to providing a safe environment for our Spark Team members, clients and families. Please refer to COVID Safe Work Plan for detailed information regarding the procedures to manage COVID 19 infection control. COVID Safe Cleaning Plan also in place.

In the event that you or your child are unable to attend sessions at The Spark Therapy Services, telehealth services are available.

Date updated	16.1.23
Review date	16.9.23
Version	7
Updated by	Tina Bruce



## Clinic Ventilation

Improving indoor air quality can reduce the risk of COVID-19 transmission in the workplace.

### **Natural ventilation:**

- Open windows during session and leave doors open in hallways and corridors in between sessions to increase outdoor airflow into the space.

This allows fresh air to enter a room which assists in diluting the indoor air and removes particles that are suspended in the air (like aerosolised COVID-19 droplets, viral particles).

### **Mechanical ventilation:**

Mechanical ventilation aims to increase airflow by replacing or diluting indoor air with air from outside using mechanical equipment. Heating, ventilation and air conditioning (HVAC) systems or air conditioning units increase outside air, and filter air to maintain air quality.

Improve mechanical ventilation by:

- Maximising the amount of outside air being provided into the space at all times by disabling any control systems that vary the amount of fresh air based on occupancy.
- Changing the settings to increase the proportion of outdoor air recirculating in the space.
- Where available, turning on ceiling fans or wall-mounted air-conditioning units to aid the distribution of filtered air around the space.

## Further information

<https://www.coronavirus.vic.gov.au/>

<https://www.ndis.gov.au/coronavirus>

<https://www.health.gov.au/health-alerts/covid-19/case-numbers-and-statistics>

## 5. FURTHER INFORMATION

For further information on this procedure, contact Tina Bruce Director The Spark Therapy Services

[tina@thesparkts.com.au](mailto:tina@thesparkts.com.au) 0431273352

Date updated	16.1.23
Review date	16.9.23
Version	7
Updated by	Tina Bruce