

ADVICE FOR:

Managers of staff who have **Diabetes** during the COVID-19 Pandemic

People with diabetes are at high risk from COVID-19 according to Government advice. However, the vast majority of people with Diabetes do not fall into the Government's definition of 'extremely vulnerable groups' (for example, people with cancer or Cystic Fibrosis – although those with Cystic Fibrosis-related Diabetes do form part of this group).

These staff do not need to practice shielding for 12 weeks

However, if they are key workers and can still come to work, they should follow social distancing, hand washing, and PPE advice. They also have a right to ask for 'reasonable adjustment' of their work circumstances. We know that people with Diabetes who contract the virus have significantly worse outcomes.

What this means for you and your staff

- 1 Staff who have Diabetes should not be in contact with patients who are known to have COVID-19 infection.
- 2 They should minimise the length of time spent in front of all patients (*whether known, suspected or not suspected of having COVID-19*).
- 3 They should have level 1 PPE for all patient contact (*including eye protection*).
- 4 They should only come into contact with patients and not their relatives unless absolutely necessary.
- 5 If the staff member is working out of hospital, for example in a patient's home, they should make sure that PPE is taken off and disposed of as soon as they leave each house (*mask should be changed every 3 hours as long as it stays dry*).

Ideally, staff with Diabetes should be redeployed from acute areas where they are at high risk of contracting the virus to areas where they are at lower risk. If it is possible for them to perform non-patient facing roles such as telephone triage, remote consultations or co-ordination of care then that would be preferable.

Key Links

- Government advice for people at higher risk: www.nhs.uk/conditions/coronavirus-covid-19/advice-for-people-at-high-risk/
- Diabetes UK advice to all people with Diabetes: www.diabetes.org.uk/about_us/news/coronavirus

