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The aim of this policy is to ensure that staff are protected from risks and hazards at work and to meet the legal requirements of the regulated activities that Serendipity Healthcare Ltd is registered to provide:

Serendipity Healthcare Ltd will follow any procedures and guidance from its regional and/or national Public Health England centres in relation to PPE which will supersede this policy.

We aim for the the team at Serendipity Healthcare Ltd to understand when and why PPE is required to be worn in order to control and prevent infection, to avoid the spread of disease and to keep staff members at Serendipity Healthcare Ltd safe from harm by minimising their risk of infection at work and following the current [guidance](#) issued by Public Health England.

When there is a need for staff at Serendipity Healthcare Ltd to use any form of personal protective equipment (PPE), they are fully trained in its safe and effective application to avoid infection and the spread of disease and to protect the health of the staff members at Serendipity Healthcare Ltd.

For supplies of all types of PPE to be available and maintained in optimum condition and ready for use to control infection, prevent the spread of disease and to minimise the risk of staff members at Serendipity Healthcare Ltd being exposed to the risk of infection.

Serendipity Healthcare Ltd will ensure that the risk assessment process is used to identify hazards and minimise risks. The reduction of risk may identify the need for the use of PPE, and where used, it will be supported by guidance produced by PHE.


Staff will be provided with appropriate PPE by Serendipity Healthcare Ltd. Staff will be trained in:

- How to use PPE, including the approved process for donning, removing, and disposing of used PPE
- When to use individual items of PPE
- When to replace any PPE
- The limitations of any PPE being used
- How to report issues to the Registered Manager regarding the quality, quantity or effectiveness of PPE supplied

Serendipity Healthcare Ltd has an Infection Prevention and Control Lead who is responsible for monitoring the effectiveness of PPE usage at Serendipity Healthcare Ltd. The person will regularly report to the Registered Manager any:

- Concerns with the quality of PPE
- Concerns regarding stock levels, supply, and range of PPE products available
- Audits and reports on the use of PPE
- Issues raised by staff
- Failure of staff to adhere to PPE policy

National/Local Guidance

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The procedure detailed in the policy reflects current national guidance. However, as the pandemic evolves and more targeted and local responses are developed, Serendipity Healthcare Ltd will be aware of, and follow, relevant regional or local guidelines for PPE.

All PPE Must Be:

- Compliant with the relevant BS/EN standards (European technical standards as adopted in the UK)
- Stored to prevent contamination in a clean/dry area until required for use (expiry dates must be adhered to)
- Disposed of after use correctly
- Used in line with current COVID-19 guidance

Effectiveness of PPE

PPE on its own will not prevent the spread of infection and is only effective when combined with:

- Thorough hand hygiene. Staff must perform hand hygiene immediately before every episode of care and after any activity or contact that potentially results in their hands becoming contaminated. This includes before putting on (donning) and after the removal (doffing) of personal protective equipment (PPE), equipment decontamination and waste handling
- Respiratory hygiene (“catch it, bin it, kill it”)
- Being aware of the importance of avoiding touching your face with your hands (Hands, Face, Space)
- Following standard infection prevention and control precautions
- Using the correct technique for putting on and taking off PPE
- The safe disposal of used PPE

When and What PPE Must be Worn

The care required, the health needs of a Service User and the vulnerabilities of individual staff should be risk assessed.


Close personal care requires you to be in direct contact with the Service Users (e.g., touching). This applies to all care, e.g., assisting with getting in/out of bed, feeding, dressing, bathing, grooming, toileting, administering medications. For any close, personal care, the following PPE must be worn by all staff:

- Disposable gloves
- Disposable plastic apron
- Fluid repellent surgical mask
- Clear face shield

When within 2 metres of a Service User but not delivering personal care or needing to touch them, and there is no one within 2 metres who has a cough

- Disposable gloves
- Disposable plastic apron
- Fluid repellent surgical mask
- Clear face shield

Any other work situation when in a Service User's home; or with other staff. These recommendations apply: (see here for further explanation.)

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- Disposable gloves
- Disposable plastic apron
- Fluid repellent surgical mask
- Clear face shield

Risk Assessment Before Each Visit

Attempts should be made, where appropriate, to ascertain whether a Service User meets the case definition for a possible or confirmed case of COVID-19 before the care episode. Service Users who are well but who have the following must now follow **COVID-19: guidance for households with possible coronavirus infection:**

- **A new continuous cough and/or**
- **A high temperature**
- **A loss or change in normal sense of smell or taste**

Serendipity Healthcare Ltd will monitor its Service Users for symptoms and Care Workers will inform their line manager if any changes occur. Those Service Users with symptoms will be assessed based on their needs.

Serendipity Healthcare Ltd must ensure that staff are aware that Service Users may not present with the same symptoms as someone who is young and healthy. The symptoms may include confusion or diarrhoea, sore throat, loss of appetite or shortness of breath. The Coronavirus Policy and Procedure at Serendipity Healthcare Ltd has a symptom checker for staff to refer to.

PPE guidance must be followed as stated in **COVID-19: Coronavirus (COVID-19): providing home care and PPE guidance for Home Care**. Serendipity Healthcare Ltd can refer to the PPE Fact Sheet for Domiciliary Care Staff in the QCS Resource Centre.


Action Required Before Using PPE

Follow **Putting on personal protective equipment for home care workers** on donning (putting on) PPE. Before PPE is donned:

- Perform hand hygiene
- Ensure the staff member is hydrated
- Tie hair back
- Check PPE in the correct size is available

PPE must be donned and doffed at least two metres away from the Service User and anyone in the household who may have a cough.

This also includes when replacing PPE. The best place to do this in the Service User's home must be agreed, i.e., just before or just after entering the Service User's home or in a separate room.

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Service Users with Behaviours that may Challenge


Where Serendipity Healthcare Ltd supports Service Users with behaviors that may challenge, such as those with learning disabilities or autism, [guidance](#) in relation to PPE must also be adhered to. The levels of PPE will depend upon the tasks being conducted, the risk, and how vulnerable the Service User may be.

For some Service Users, PPE can affect their normal routine and Serendipity Healthcare Ltd will look at ways to ensure that PPE items do not appear frightening to them, whilst not altering them in anyway. Some examples of how this can be done include:

- Greeting the Service User without a mask through a window before entering the space where you meet
- Explain that by wearing the mask you are helping other people to stay safe and that the mask is now part of your regular working clothes or uniform
- Use Makaton or British Sign Language (BSL) or possibly develop shared, non-verbal signals for the expressions usually read from faces
- Praise people when they ask questions about the masks. Answer clearly and honestly using their preferred communication method
- Consider graded exposure approaches with the aim of making the PPE acceptable

COVID-19 - Safe ways of working

- Staff should be trained on donning and doffing PPE. Videos are available for training
- Staff should know what PPE they should wear and when they should be using it
- Staff should have access to the PPE that protects them for the appropriate setting and context
- Gloves and aprons are subject to single use, with disposal after each task/ service users
- Fluid repellent surgical masks and eye protection can be used for a session of work (in domiciliary care this may vary depending on the length of the visit at the Service User's home)
- It is important to remember to change gloves if providing personal care and carrying out food preparation which is standard good infection control and food hygiene practice
- Hand hygiene should be practised and extended to exposed forearms, after removing any element of PPE
- Staff should take regular breaks and rest periods
- If staff feel unwell, they must not attend work and must contact Serendipity Healthcare Ltd 1 hour before they are due to work to inform Serendipity Healthcare Ltd that they are unable to attend their Service User

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Reusable PPE

Whilst most PPE items are for once-only use, certain PPE items are manufactured to be reusable. This most commonly applies to eye/face protection items, i.e., goggles or visors.

Reusable PPE items may be used, provided that they are appropriately cleaned or stored between uses, according to the manufacturer's instructions or local infection control policy. The Registered Manager will advise staff where this applies.

Reuse of gloves and aprons is not permitted in any circumstances. Face masks must be disposed of after single or sessional use. They cannot be cleaned and so are also not reusable.

Single and Sessional use of PPE - COVID-19

- Single use is for the use of one discrete, individual intervention
- Sessional use is for a number of individual interventions undertaken on one duty, i.e., between breaks
- Aprons and gloves are subject to single use
- Respirators, fluid-resistant (Type IIR) surgical masks (FRSM), can be subject to single sessional use

Face masks should be discarded and replaced in any of the following circumstances:

- If damaged
- If soiled (e.g., with secretions, body fluids)
- If damp
- If uncomfortable
- If difficult to breathe through


Eye protection should be discarded and replaced (or decontaminated if the item is reusable) in any of the following circumstances:

- If damaged
- If soiled (e.g., with secretions, body fluids)
- If uncomfortable

Disposing of PPE

Any waste PPE must be placed in a bin bag and can be disposed of as normal domestic waste unless the Service User or anyone in their household has symptoms of COVID-19 (new continuous cough, shortness of breath, fever, loss or change in sense of smell or taste). Where a Service User or anyone in their household does have symptoms of COVID-19, then waste from the cleaning of areas where they have been (including disposable cloths and tissues) and PPE waste from their Care must be:

- Put in a plastic bin bag which is tied when $\frac{3}{4}$ full
- The bag must then be placed in a second bin bag and tied
- The bag must then be put in a suitable and secure place and marked for storage for 72 hours. Waste must be stored safely and securely and kept away from children. Waste must not be put in communal waste areas

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until the waste has been stored for at least 72 hours. Storing for 72 hours saves unnecessary waste movements and minimises the risk to waste operatives. This waste does not require a dedicated clinical waste collection in the above circumstances and can be added to domestic waste after 72 hours

Do NOT put any items of PPE in the recycling bin.

PPE Stock Levels

Serendipity Healthcare Ltd will maintain sufficient supplies of PPE for Care Workers to utilise. PPE stock levels are required to be reported to the CQC via their online form, 'Update CQC on the impact of COVID' during the coronavirus pandemic.

Where supplies are required and not accessible from the usual wholesalers of Serendipity Healthcare Ltd, the Local Resilience Forum (LRF) for Serendipity Healthcare Ltd should be approached for support with PPE supplies.

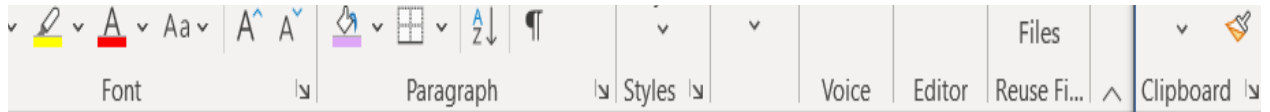
The Department of Health and Social Care will also provide PPE to meet the requirements of all providers to support their COVID-19 needs, further information on this is set out in the **Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) Strategy**.

Serendipity Healthcare Ltd can also refer to the following guidance for further information: **PPE portal: how to order emergency personal protective equipment**. Weekly order limits from the portal will be based on the size of the provider, and the range of PPE products has been extended.

Reviewed:- 14th October 2025

S.L.Pickles

Director

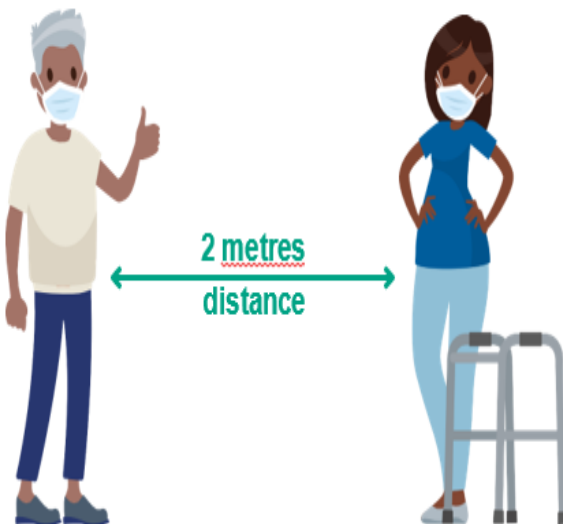
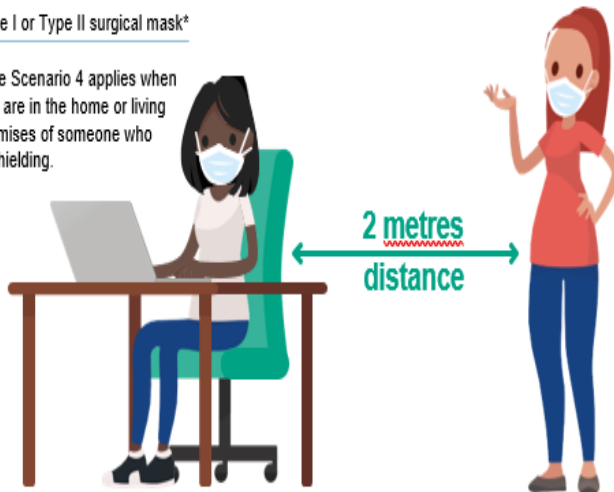


PPE guide for community health and social care settings

5 When you are in the workplace and 2 metres or more away from people you are caring for or supporting


Type I or Type II surgical mask*

Note Scenario 4 applies when you are in the home or living premises of someone who is shielding.



*if only fluid repellent Type IIR surgical masks are available then these may be used as an alternative

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PPE guide for community health and social care settings

What you need to know about using PPE

You need to wear PPE for personal care of all individuals you care for:

- whether the person you are giving personal care to has symptoms or is known to have COVID-19 or not
- regardless of the age of the person you are caring for
- no matter what your role is

You can use face masks and eye protection continuously until you need to take a break or until the item needs replacing. You can use the same mask and/or eye protection:

- for caring for more than one person (**regardless** whether they have symptoms)
- until you need to take a break **e.g.** to drink, eat or break or end duties
- when moving/travelling between individuals if safe to do so (don't wear eye protection when driving or cycling)

Use PPE safely:

- make sure you clean your hands appropriately before putting on and after removing your PPE
- you should not touch your face mask or eye protection unless it is to put it on or remove it
- make sure that your face mask always covers your mouth and nose
- do not dangle your face mask or eye protection around your neck or place on the top of your head

Remove and discard/decontaminate the eye protection:

- if damaged, visibly soiled, uncomfortable
- for taking a break **e.g.** to drink, eat or break or end duties
- decontaminate your eye protection when you remove it before next use
- if your eye protection is for single use only then dispose of it after use

Remove and discard the face mask:

- if damaged, visibly soiled, damp, uncomfortable, or difficult to breathe through
- for taking a break **e.g.** to drink, eat or break or end duties
- replace it with a new face mask for your next duty period

Put on and remove PPE at least 2m away from the people you are caring for


Do not re-use PPE items unless they are clearly marked as re-usable:

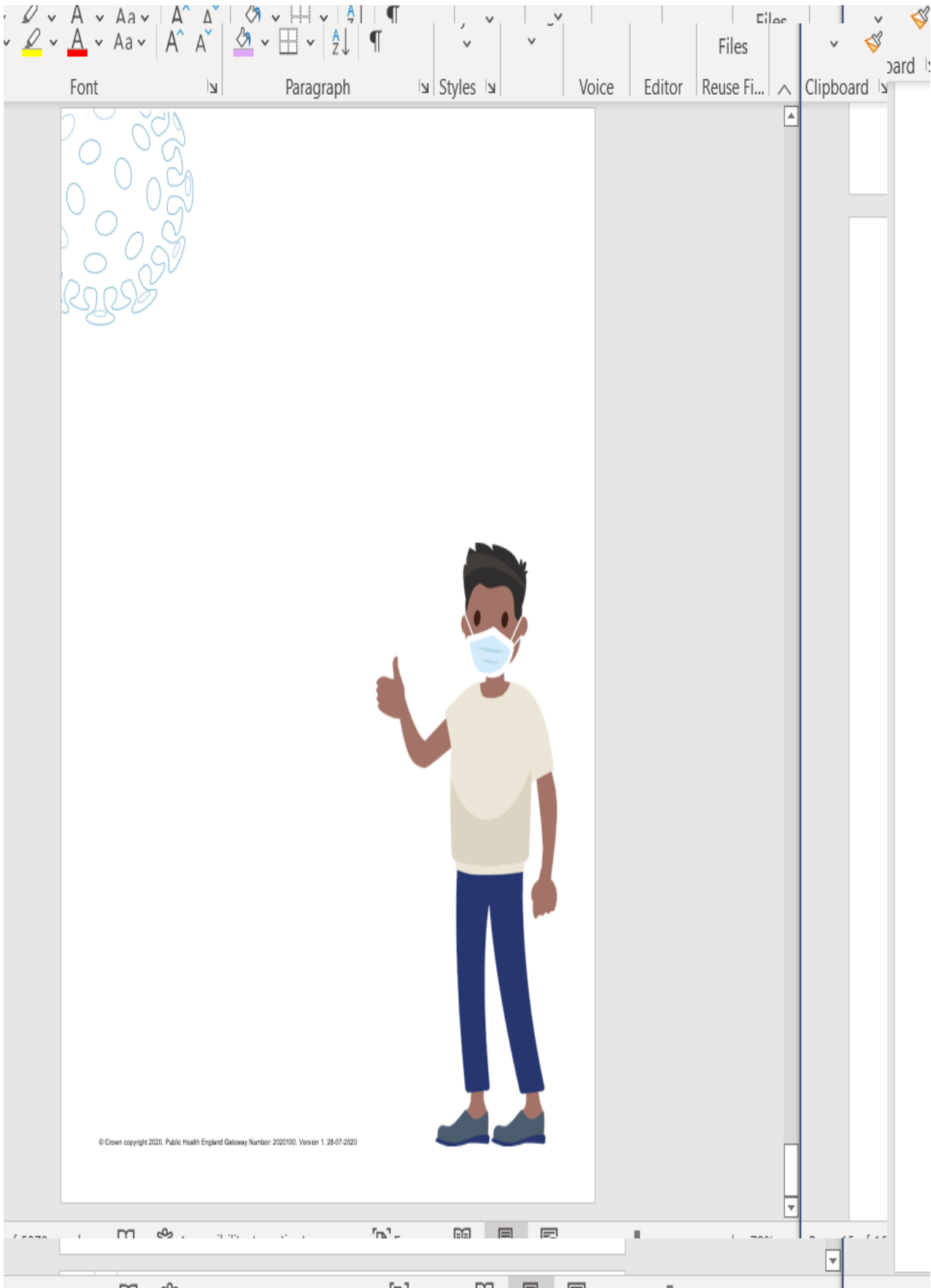
- gloves and aprons are always single use and must be disposed of and replaced after use
- re-usable items **e.g.** eye protection must be cleaned according to manufacturer's instructions or according to local infection prevention and control protocol


Make sure you change your clothing at the end of your work duties and launder your uniform/work clothes:

- separately from other items if heavily soiled
- at the maximum temperature the fabric can tolerate, then iron or tumble dry

Put on and take off PPE items according to this video
https://youtu.be/-GncQ_ed-9w

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