



Covid -19 Safety and Risk Procedure

National OT has implemented a Covid-19 Safety and Risk Procedure to encourage and support the safety of all employees and clients. This document is updated by the General Manager in keeping with government guidelines and the progression of the pandemic.

All employees must adhere to the following procedure:

1. Prior to attending appointments with clients, National OT employees will ensure that they do not have any symptoms of cold or flu. Where employees become aware of cold and flu symptoms, they will undertake Covid-19 testing (where appropriate) and they will self-isolate. National OT employees will not visit with you until symptoms have resolved and where testing has occurred, a negative result is obtained.
2. Prior to attending any appointment with a client, the National OT employee will complete a **National OT Covid Risk Screen**. This screen may be discussed with clients via telephone. The employee will note client responses within the case file. National OT will only be able to visit with the client where there are no current risks for Covid-19. Where a client has previously tested positive to Covid-019, they will be required to demonstrate a negative result prior to re engagement with a therapist for in-person visits.
3. National OT will offer clients telehealth where required and appropriate to do so.
4. Prior to in person (face to face) visits, the National OT employee may collect client background information over the phone or via video link to limit consultation time onsite.
5. It is expected that all parties will follow social distancing rules as specified in government guidelines. Current distancing rules require that where possible 1.5 meters distance is maintained between people. There are some exceptions for health professionals and at times closer contact may be required.
6. For National OT employees operating in Melbourne, additional requirements relating to stage 4 restrictions apply.
7. For National OT employees operating in regional Victoria, additional requirements relating to stage 3 restrictions apply.
8. National OT employees and clients are expected to maintain high levels of hygiene. This includes frequent handwashing. National OT employees will have washed their hands or used sanitiser prior to an appointment, where possible during an appointment and at the conclusion of the appointment. Clients will also be asked to follow this same routine.
9. Where therapy equipment is used for the purpose of client appointments, the employee will ensure that it has been sanitised/cleaned prior to any appointment. It is preferable that clients supply their own resources wherever possible. Where this is not possible, the following applies for cleaning:



- Disinfectant wipes containing benzalkonium chloride (such as Dettol surface wipes) are recommended for cleaning hard surfaces between client use.
- Items that go into a client's mouth should be thoroughly washed with soap and water or rinsed and soaked for 15mins in Milton sterilising solution or equivalent.
- Items that cannot be washed (e.g. soft toys, playdough or rice) cannot be shared between clients.

Use of face masks – Victoria and NSW only

- Face masks are now compulsory in areas of Victoria when you leave your home. Please see [DHHS link](#) information for rules and exclusions.
- It is important that face masks are worn by all parties in Victoria and NSW when completing any in-person appointment. It is expected that clients will provide their own mask.
- In Victoria all therapists will **wear a face shield and a face mask** to appointments with you.
- Minister for the National Disability Insurance Scheme (NDIS), Stuart Robert, has announced temporary changes to funding arrangements to allow NDIS participants in Victoria and New South Wales to claim the cost of personal protective equipment (PPE), including masks.

From 29 July 2020, NDIS participants who rely on face-to-face supports and assistance with their daily living will be able to use an existing support item (Low Cost Disability-Related Health Consumables) to claim the cost of PPE for the times their worker is with them.

Participants in Victoria and New South Wales can now recover the costs to purchase PPE items using their NDIS funds, if they;

- receive an average of at least one hour a day of face-to-face daily living supports, and
- live in Victoria or New South Wales.

The Minister also announced participants and providers can access additional cleaning supports if required to self-isolate or quarantine, and provider specific measures to ensure support workers have appropriate PPE when delivering NDIS services in Victoria or New South Wales.

- Please inform the National OT employee if there is any reason that a mask cannot be worn during an in-person appointment.
- Where further PPE is required (e.g gowns, gloves, face shield), the National OT employee will discuss these requirements with the referrer. Further protocol may need to be agreed regarding the disposal of this PPE at the conclusion of the client appointment.



Should you have any further questions or comments, please contact the National OT Customer Service Team on 1300 340 440. They will assist you wherever possible.