Enabling scientific discoveries that improve human health

COVID-19 Secure: How are we making the visit safe from a COVID-19 perspective?

The safety of our participants and staff is of utmost importance whilst you are visiting one of our imaging centres for the COVID-19 repeat imaging study. We have put several measures in place to ensure that your visit is 'COVID 19-secure', which are summarised below.

We recommend that you do not attend a COVID-19 repeat imaging appointment if you are at higher risk from coronavirus i.e. if you are clinically extremely vulnerable (for information, please see https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/coronavirus-covid-19/people-at-higher-risk/whos-at-higher-risk-from-coronavirus/). If this applies to you, but you would like to attend a repeat imaging assessment at some point in the future, please let us know by calling us on 0800 0 276 276.

Do not attend for your imaging assessment if you are shielding, or if you are self-isolating for any reason. This may include, but is not limited to, one of the following:

1) You have symptoms of COVID-19 (cough, fever, loss of taste/smell) (see https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/coronavirus-covid-19/symptoms).
2) You have had a positive COVID-19 test result within the past 10 days.
3) You are awaiting the result of a COVID-19 test.
4) Someone in your household/bubble has tested positive for COVID-19 in the past 14 days.
5) You have been contacted by Track and Trace to isolate.
6) You have been told by NHS 111, your GP or another healthcare professional to isolate.
7) You have returned from a country, territory or region NOT on the travel corridor list (see www.gov.uk/guidance/coronavirus-covid-19-travel-corridors for current guidance for England and links to guidance for Scotland and Wales).

For further information about the national guidance on self-isolating and shielding, please refer to https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/coronavirus-covid-19/self-isolation-and-treatment/when-to-self-isolate-and-what-to-do/

If you are unable to attend an appointment that has already been booked, please telephone our Participant Resource Centre on 0800 0 276 276 (Monday to Friday 9am to 5pm) to re-schedule your appointment. Please try to give us as much notice as possible so that we can offer your appointment to another participant.

What we will ask you to do

- If COVID-related travel restrictions are still in place at the time of your appointment, please ensure that you bring your imaging appointment confirmation letter and photo ID with you. This is so that you can demonstrate that you are travelling for the essential purpose of taking part in clinical research which cannot be done from home, should it be required.
- Please follow current travel guidance if you choose to use public transport (see https://www.gov.uk/guidance/coronavirus-covid-19-safer-travel-guidance-for-passengers for current guidance for England and links to guidance for Scotland and Wales).
- If you need someone to help you during the journey, you can also claim travel expenses for a companion However, if someone travels with you, they will be unable to wait inside the imaging centre. This is to keep the number of people on site to a minimum and maximise the ability for social distancing.

- When you arrive at the imaging centre, we will ask you some safety questions to see if you may have COVID-19 or have a high chance of having been exposed to someone with COVID-19 in the run-up to your appointment. If we have any concerns (e.g. if you are showing symptoms or have returned from a 'high-risk' area in the past 14 days) when you arrive at the centre, you will be asked to come back at a later date.
- Please wash your hands thoroughly when you arrive, and regularly wash your hands or use the provided alcohol hand gel during your time in the imaging centre.
- Please wear a face covering that covers your nose and mouth when you arrive at the imaging centre. Following registration, we will provide you with a surgical grade mask to wear for the duration of your appointment. You will be able to remove your face mask whilst you are in the MRI scanner.
- Please bring minimal personal belongings into the assessment centre and wear clothes that are easy to change in and out of so that the time taken to change is kept to a minimum. Lockers will be available and will be thoroughly cleaned between participants. Disposable slippers will be provided if required.
- If you develop symptoms of COVID-19 within 48 hours of visiting our imaging centre, please follow the usual Government guidelines (https://www.gov.uk/get-coronavirus-test) about obtaining a diagnostic test or call 111. The UK Biobank imaging centres are COVID-19 secure so you do not need to tell us if you have symptoms or receive a positive test result.

What we will do

We aim to conduct the imaging visit in a similar way to your original visit. The main differences are:

We have greatly reduced the number of participants who attend the site each day so that social distancing is easier to achieve, and for everyone's safety.

- When our staff are required to be within one metre of you to perform some of the tests or position you for imaging, they will wear Personal Protective Equipment (PPE), including surgical face masks, gloves and disposable gowns. Perspex screens will be in place on Reception and around the touchscreen booths.
- The frequency of cleaning of both the centre environment and equipment has been increased. Particular attention is paid to frequently touched surfaces. All surfaces in each room are sanitised before and after each participant. Floors are cleaned twice a day.
- Additional sinks have been installed around the centre and alcohol hand gels are readily available for use at any time by staff and participants.
- We are regularly testing all centre staff for COVID-19, at least weekly. Anyone who receives a positive test result will be asked to leave the site immediately and not return until we are sure it is safe for them to do so.
- The choice of refreshments available to you may be more limited than was the case at your previous visit. All food will be sealed (no fruit can be offered during this time) and we will use disposable cups for drinks. If you have specific dietary requirements, we may ask that you purchase your own refreshments to bring with you and reimbursement will be made to you of up to £5.00.

The summary points above have been taken from the UK Biobank Standard Operating Procedures for imaging working practices during the COVID-19 pandemic, most recently updated in January 2021. The following sections of this document give further detail from these Standard Operating Procedures which are of relevance and interest to UKB participants.

Summary of UK Biobank (UKB) Standard Operating Procedures for imaging working practices during the COVID-19 pandemic, January 2021

Purpose and scope

Due to increased risks to health caused by COVID-19, additional precautions and different working practices are required to enable staff to work safely within a 'COVID-19 secure' environment in the imaging centres during the COVID-19 pandemic.

Processes have been designed with the safety of both staff and participants in mind. All measures are based upon the principles of: reducing the number of people on site; increased hygiene; physically distancing; and where that is not possible, provision of medical grade PPE to manage the risk of transmission.

UKB have, and will continue to, adopt all reasonably practicable and Public Health England (PHE) recommended mitigations to reduce the risk of SARS-CoV-2 infection. Practices will be reviewed and amendments made to standard operating procedures if required to keep up to date with best practice.

Staff training

All imaging study staff must have read and acknowledged all relevant COVID-19 related documentation before returning to site to ensure that they are aware of, and have understood, all risks associated with working on-site during the pandemic and the required measures to mitigate those risks. Staff are further required to complete a competency and training assessment to demonstrate and confirm their competence in the new procedures, successful completion of which is a pre-requisite for returning to site.

COVID-19 specific health & safety guidance for staff

No person should attend site if they should be self-isolating. Current guidance states that imaging centre staff and participants must self-isolate for at least 10 days if they: have symptoms or have tested positive for COVID-19; live (or are in a bubble) with someone who has the symptoms or has tested positive; have travelled from a country not on the UK Government's safe travel corridor list; or if they have been contacted by NHS Track and Trace.

Track and Trace within the imaging centre

All staff and participants are asked to turn off the Track and Trace App when on site. UKB do not require participants or staff to 'sign in' for Track and Trace purposes. In determining this approach, UKB has followed all available government guidance. Staff do not need to self-isolate if a staff member or participant tests positive for COVID-19 after attending site as they are working within a COVID-19 secure environment. For example, UKB imaging centre staff wear medical grade PPE when working in a medium risk setting as defined in https://www.bma.org.uk/advice-and-support/covid-19/ppe/covid-19-ppe-for-doctors and https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/918091/IPC_Highlights_Quick_Reference_Guide.pdf

Furthermore, as staff and participants are asked to leave their mobile phones in their lockers, which in turn are left in close contact to other phones, this could appear as though they have been within a two-metre distance for more than 15 minutes and make the 'track and trace' process unreliable.

There is no requirement for participants to inform UKB if they test positive for COVID-19 soon after their visit. If UKB are informed of a positive participant result, there is no requirement to inform the imaging

centre staff of this. However, if a participant believes they may have picked up COVID-19 from the imaging assessment centre then this concern will be escalated to centre management and properly investigated.

General 'COVID-19 secure' precautions and procedures

Reducing the risk of infectious people on site

- All participants are informed of COVID-19 safe measures relating to the study and reasons why they would not be allowed to attend or participate within the study by the Participant Resource Centre (PRC) before they attend site. This information is re-iterated in the participant materials sent with the appointment confirmation letter.
- People attending site using public transport must adhere to government guidelines: see https://www.gov.uk/guidance/coronavirus-covid-19-safer-travel-guidance-for-passengers
- Upon arrival at the centre, all participants are screened straight away by a staff member. They are asked to wash and dry their hands then put on a FRSM TIIR mask. Participants are asked a series of screening questions (as listed on page 1 above) on the presence of COVID-19 symptoms, any recent COVID-19 antigen test taken, any recent contact with someone who has tested positive for COVID-19 or who has symptoms, receipt of recent advice from Track and Trace, NHS 111 or a healthcare professional to isolate, and any recent travel to a country not on the Government's safe travel corridor list.
- If participants answer 'Yes' to any of these screening questions, they are asked to leave the centre immediately and rebook to return at a later date. If they are unable to leave immediately e.g. due to transport issues, they are taken to the designed isolation room to wait.
- All staff are provided with access to COVID tests for at least weekly use.
- Staff have the right to ask any participants who fail to comply with UKB's COVID-19 safe working practices to leave the site.

Increasing hygiene

a) Hand-washing

- All persons (staff, participants and other visitors) are asked to wash their hands or sanitise upon arrival at the site.
- Signage to remind people to physically distance and wash hands/sanitise regularly is visible throughout the centres. Sinks and/or alcohol gel are provided to facilitate regular hand washing.
- Participants are actively encouraged after each stage to sanitise/wash their hands.
- Hand sanitisers are placed at each touchscreen booth.
- Wall mounted hand sanitisers have been installed in appropriate designated spaces.

b) Cleaning

- Easy-clean furniture is provided in the centres. Furniture that is not easily cleanable has been removed from use.
- Additional cleaning measures have been introduced, including two whole site deep cleans per day, and sanitisation of all measurement areas and equipment after every use.
- Participant changing areas and lockers are cleaned fully after use and before the next participant uses the area.
- All rooms and equipment are thoroughly cleaned after use and a record kept using standardised 'cleaning post-room use' forms.

- 'Magnawands' are available to use in conjunction with a cleaning wipe to mitigate the need for staff to bend and put their heads within the magnet bore.
- Staff have been instructed to avoid using the curtained area around the MRI safe trolley, and curtains are disposed of and replaced at least every six weeks (or immediately if contaminated by a participant or staff member).
- The wooden height boxes have been varnished and are covered with a disposable sheet prior to use by each participant to facilitate cleaning.
- Single use blood pressure arm sleeves are used prior to placing a cuff on a participant to reduce the risk of transmission. Cuffs are also cleaned after each use.
- In the event of an emergency evacuation, coats for participants can still be provided but must be wiped down with approved wipes. Where this is not possible, individually packed single use waterproof jackets can be made available. Umbrellas also need to be cleaned if they are used in an emergency situation.

c) Participant refreshments

- Refreshments are served to participants by a healthcare assistant (HCA) wearing PPE (gloves/mask).
- Only disposable cups with lids are used for hot drinks and fresh milk has been replaced with UHT milk pots.
- If a participant brings their own food due to dietary requirements, the items are placed into a clear bag prior to being put into the fridge which is available at reception by the HCA/radiographer.
- When the participant removes their face mask to have refreshments, it should be kept carefully on their person to remove the risk of cross-contamination.
- Once the participant has had refreshments, they wash their hands and either replace their mask or are issued with and put on a new mask. Their mask only needs replacing if it gets dirty, wet or damaged or if it is touched on the inside.

d) Keys

- The USB key, used to identify participants on the computers, is only handled by staff members rather than also by the participant as was previously the case.
- Staff wipe down USB sticks with an azowipe after each use.
- All USB key lanyards have been replaced with cable ties which can be cleaned regularly.
- The participant's locker key remains with the participant, and they pick up and put down the key throughout their visit. These keys are cleaned after each use; the fabric straps have been replaced with silicone straps for more effective cleaning.

e) Staff personal items

- Personal items remain in staff lockers. At the end of each day, staff clear their work area and clean all necessary areas including personal lockers.
- Personal mobile phones are not permitted to be used outside designated areas. Staff may require a mobile phone in case of emergencies or for work purposes but this should be discussed beforehand with the Centre Manager or person in charge that day. Mobile phones can be used by staff on their breaks but phones have to be sanitised and hands washed prior to returning to work.
- Staff cannot bring or consume food (including chewing gum) or drink outside of the designated break/dining areas, nor bring in food for communal sharing (e.g. tins of sweets or cake).

- Staff change into a clean tunic and trousers at the start of each shift. They are also encouraged to change out of their tunic/trousers if they leave site for a break and after their shift. Staff wash their tunics at home on a high temperature wash after each use.
- Staff clean their own changing cubicle after each use.

Physically distancing

- All persons must physically distance from one other (defined as a minimum two-metre distance) unless required to be closer in order to conduct a measure or when positioning a participant, in which case additional precautions must be taken.
- Participant throughput has been reduced from eighteen to a maximum of eight appointments per day to allow a reduction in room capacity and to reduce contact between participants. This reduction also gives staff time for enhanced cleaning and other safe working practices.
- Participants' companions cannot wait on the site during their visit.
- Perspex shields have been installed around the participant touchscreen stations, in the screening rooms and on the reception desk itself so that participants can be approached without the need for PPE. Further Perspex installations have been made where required.
- Room layouts in the centres have been modified where required to facilitate physical distancing.
- Staff have been asked to be mindful when entering and exiting the building and to stagger their entry/exit to ensure physical distancing.

Personal Protective Equipment (PPE)

- All staff wear suitable PPE when unable to physically distance.
- All participants are provided with and must agree to wear a FRSM TIIR mask for the duration of the visit (apart from when on the scanner beds).
- Visors are considered a suitable alternative option for staff who wear glasses.
- All staff have been trained in how to don and doff PPE and dispose of used items safely (in line with guidelines described at https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/covid-19-personal-protective-equipment-use-for-non-aerosol-generating-procedures).
- Posters explaining how to don and doff PPE are displayed in all rooms where the practice takes place.
- Whenever a participant removes their mask whilst on the scanner bed, it is placed on a clean wipeable surface where it is safe during the scan. The mask is carefully returned to the participant immediately after the imaging has stopped and the area then cleaned thoroughly. If there is any concern about cross-contamination, the mask is replaced with a new clean one immediately.

Contractor-specific safety measures

- When a third party visit is arranged, all contractors are told to only attend site if they are not having to self-isolate.
- On arrival, all contractors are asked to re-confirm that they do not need to self-isolate and common symptoms are checked (as per participants).
- All contractors are asked to wash/sanitise their hands upon arrival.
- Signage is available at the entrance of each centre to assist with safe entry and chaperoning.
- Upon arrival, during signing in and whilst transferring to their place of work, contractors are required to wear a face mask. A suitable mask is provided if not available.

- If the contractor's place of work is in an area where UKB staff are working (and/or participants are present) then a face mask is required.

Sandwich deliveries

- The sandwich delivery arrives suitably packed and is delivered at the entrance for a staff member to collect and put into the fridge.
- The delivery person does not enter the imaging centre.
- All sandwich packaging is cleaned upon arrival by a staff member with a Clinell/Dettol wipe prior to being put into the fridge.

What happens if a person starts to show symptoms while at the imaging centre?

In these circumstances, staff:

- inform the centre manager and Head of Estates and Facilities;
- advise the person to leave site and go home immediately (if safe to do so);
- isolate the person in the designated isolation room if they are unable to leave immediately and designate a toilet to this person;
- ensure that all people on site are aware that they should not use the designated room/toilet until advised;
- ask the affected person to avoid touching anything and provide them with a mask, tissues and alcohol gel;
- immediately deep clean any known areas/surfaces that the affected person has been in contact with;
- deep clean the isolation room and toilet post-use, wearing required PPE, and leave empty until the next day with suitable signage in place to ensure it is not used.

Enhanced cleaning measures

Introduction

SARS-CoV-2 is an enveloped RNA virus. Approved disinfectants used to clean the imaging centres during the COVID-19 pandemic must have proven activity against enveloped RNA viruses.

Cleaning is the action of removing the bulk of the physical contamination (i.e. you cannot see it). This can often be 'mechanical' cleaning. **Disinfecting** is the action of reducing the microorganisms to a level which is unlikely to cause infection.

Cleaning and disinfection are carried out using the following approved products:

- Clinell universal range wipes
- Clinell universal range spray
- Dettol antibacterial surface cleanser wipes
- Dettol antibacterial surface cleanser spray
- Diluted thick bleach for a deep disinfect of floors twice daily (dilute 20 mls of thick bleach per 1 litre of cold water)
- Hospec pine disinfectant to clean the floor at the end of the day

- 1% Virkon high level surface disinfectant, prepared onsite (one tablet to 500ml cold water) and changed every 5 days
- IPA Spray (isopropyl alcohol spray)
- Azowipes

Contact time for effective disinfection

It is important to understand that for these products to be effective against COVID-19, adequate contact time is required when wiping down surfaces. The duration differs by product:

- Clinell universal wipes and spray are effective against COVID-19 in 60 seconds' contact time. Contact time is the length of time the surface being disinfected must remain wet for in order for the disinfectant to work. Clinell universal wipes are formulated to keep surfaces wet for the whole contact time. It is important for staff to remember to discard the wipe they are using as it becomes dry or soiled.
- For further information, see https://gamahealthcare.com/latest/clinell-efficacy-against-coronavirus-covid-19
- Dettol antibacterial surface cleanser spray and wipes have demonstrated effectiveness (>99.9% inactivation) against coronavirus strains from the same family as the 2019 novel coronavirus (COVID-19) in third party laboratory testing, when used in accordance with the directions for use (i.e. a contact time of ten minutes).
- For further information, see https://www.dettol.co.uk/about-us/understanding-coronavirus/

Cleaning: where, when and how

It is very important to ensure that the extra cleaning performed due to COVID-19 does not cause harm to individuals on the site nor damage to equipment. The cleaning agents identified have been chosen specifically to ensure that the chance of damage to equipment is reduced. Staff are trained on cleaning techniques to reduce the possibility of induced harm due to cleaning.

Each imaging centre is 'deep cleaned' twice per day, at the start of every shift and at the midway point of each day. This means that the entire site, including general areas, is cleaned and disinfected.

Each site is split by area and can be cleaned by multiple team members to ensure this process is efficient. The Superintendent Radiographer or most senior team member is in charge of ensuring this cleaning is performed and appropriate daily cleaning records are kept.

Specific areas and equipment that come into contact with each participant are also disinfected after every use. Twenty minutes is allowed for cleaning to be performed in between each participant.

Staff are given a specific area to work within each day (e.g. DEXA scanner or bloods room). They are responsible for disinfecting their work area at the start of their shift and just prior to any change of staffing within a specific area. This includes the cleaning of any common touchpoints such as computer equipment, worktops and door handles.

There are **three** main categories of objects/surfaces to be cleaned within each centre:

- **Hard surfaces (all non-electrical, non-porous items)** are cleaned by using a spray and wipe method, allowing for a minimum of 60 seconds' contact time for the disinfectant to be effective prior to wiping away with a single use cloth.
- **Electrical devices** are cleaned using an azowipe / disinfectant wipe or disinfectant spray sprayed onto tissue paper/a single use jay cloth prior to wiping down the component. Any excess residue is wiped away with the paper or cloth after the contact time has elapsed.
- The **floor** is vacuumed, mopped and disinfected twice per day, as part of the general site deep clean, with a diluted thick bleach solution (20mls of bleach in 1 litre of water).