**Risk assessment considerations and implementations**

1. **Increasing the frequency of hand washing and surface washing**

* Handwash facilities are available throughout the clinic and the in the treatment room.
* Antibacterial wash, alcohol gel and single use hand towels are in situ.
* Clients will be required to wash their hands-on arrival (pre-treatment) and post treatment.
* I, the clinician, will wash my hands before donning my PPE prior to the procedure, after note taking, prior to removal of the needles and at any other times when I feel there has been an increased risk of possible contamination.
* Hand washing will be carried out in accordance with the government’s handwashing guidance. (Posters in situ and documentation in COVID-19 file)
* There will be no material sheets/blankets on the therapy bed at any time.
* Single use paper couch roll will be in situ for each client and disposed of correctly after each use.
* The waterproof cushion cover will be wiped with an antibacterial solution between each client and thoroughly washed as per instructions after each clinic day.
* The therapy bed will be cleaned with an antibacterial solution between clients.
* The sink, taps, door handles and any other surface that may have come into contact with an individual will also be cleaned with an antibacterial solution prior to the next appointment.

1. **To ensure social distancing in all situations possible and mitigating actions to take when this cannot take place**

* Acupuncture can be a minimal contact therapy as it only requires a small amount of time to insert, then withdraw the acupuncture needles. The needles themselves are in a sterile environment as they are individually packed with a guide tube, so have minimal exposure to the atmosphere before they enter the skin.

During this short period of time when the recommended 1m social distance rule cannot be applied, the following procedures have been put into place (in accordance with British Acupuncture Association (BAA) and government guidance):

* The client will be required to wear a facemask covering throughout the session (This will be explained at time of booking). If the client does not have a facemask in situ on arrival, a single use facemask will be supplied by Gentle Touch Healing and Acupuncture.
* I, the acupuncturist will be wearing a face shield, facemask, gloves, plastic apron and shoe covers (see pictures on [www.gentle-touch-acupuncture.co.uk](http://www.gentle-touch-acupuncture.co.uk)) . All of my equipment will be worn, cleaned and disposed of in accordance with the manufacturing instructions.
* Once the needles are in situ, I will ensure the required distance guidance is followed for the remainder of the treatment other than to remove the needles where once again, all necessary precautions will be taken aforementioned.
* Tongue and pulse diagnosis will be kept to a minimum and will only be taken if absolutely necessary to minimise the increased risk this poses.
* Reduced opening hours and staggered appointments to ensure time for cleaning between each client, and to minimise the risk of contact between members of the public within the clinical environment. (Please refer to cleaning procedure checklist documentation).

1. **Additional safeguarding measures in relation to COVID-19**

* A health and safety consent form has been devised and will be completed by each client prior to each acupuncture session (via email where possible or prior to commencement of the treatment). If there is any doubt over the health of the individual in relation to possible COVID-19, the appointment will be terminated/cancelled and re scheduled in accordance with the timescale guidance from the government. Appropriate measures in accordance with Public Health England will then be adhered to.
* Additional cleaning procedures will be in place as an extra precaution against COVID-19. Please see *Gentle Touch Healing & Acupuncture’s* *cleaning procedure checklist* documentation. Please refer to additional information supplied by the Northern Integrative Health Practice additional health and safety measures of the premises.

*Such guidelines and policies are subject to change at any time in accordance with government and regulatory bodies guidance. All policies have been implemented taking guidance from British Acupuncture Association (BAA)* [*www.britishacupunctureassociation.co.uk*](http://www.britishacupunctureassociation.co.uk) *and* [*www.gov.uk*](http://www.gov.uk) *.*

*In addition, please see* [*www.healthnorth.co.uk*](http://www.healthnorth.co.uk) *or contact 0191 398 0000 for further details from the Northern Integrative Health Practice in relation to COVID-19 and keeping you safe!*

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Gentle Touch Healing & Acupuncture

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