



South Cumbria &  
North Lancashire Branch

## Joint Zoom meeting 19<sup>th</sup> June 2020 Chat panel comments



South Cumbria Occupational  
Health & Safety Group

*From Phil Sedgwick to Everyone: 01:42 PM*

**Q:** Hi Elsa. I note Dave has furloughed some but not all staff. Are there any issues with perhaps jealousy amongst those who kept working while others had an extended holiday, mostly in very good weather, and conversely have some of those furloughed perhaps had issues of spending so much time locked in with partners, creating strain in relationships?

*From Andrew Davies to Everyone: 01:44 PM* - issue of furlough and those returning with long absence. How are the businesses going to re induct re-educate staff?

*From Tony Panter to Everyone: 01:45 PM*

**Q.** Hi David - you mention that communication is key; which methods have you found to be most effective and well received by your teams?

*From Carol Stearne to Everyone: 01:46 PM* - Tony, we have been doing small groups in a 40-50 min induction.

*From Graham Kearsley to Everyone: 01:48 PM* - I've been advising my clients to set up a regular communication with staff via a What's App link. A couple of them have adopted a 2-week regular group discussion. One client has produced short video clips to put on the What's App Group to help staff prepare for the come-back after Furlough.

*From Lisa Flavell-Matts to Everyone: 01:48 PM* On the homeworking front, this is clearly something that is going to be popular option. Do you think there are insurance implications for those working from home that need to be considered by organisations?

*From Jo Price - IOSH Council, Consultancy Group Chair to Everyone: 01:49 PM* - The problems I have seen is where one of my clients topped up the salary of those furloughed to 100% but there was still 20% of the employees still working - both getting the same pay but 20% working

*From Carol Stearne to Everyone: 01:49 PM* - Graham, yes that's a great idea with What App we have done this to keep in touch with our H&S team.

*From David Wilson to Everyone: 01:52 PM* - Hi Tony, we use an app called Workplace which is a spin off from Facebook or the workplace, allows direct messages, shared messages, video and pics. even used it for quizzes during the furlough period!

*From Andrew Davies to Everyone: 01:54 PM* - current concerns we have seen is the prevention of second wave impact and threat of liability claims arising we have put videos together of the workplace new layout and used prepare return

*From Valerie Kennedy to Everyone: 01:55 PM*

**Q** I've just been reading about some research that suggests that firms who are making staff redundant are more likely to make women redundant than men because they think that women are likely to need more time off due to childcare responsibilities. How do you think that firms should deal with the problems that they face when downsizing due to financial pressures?

*From Steve Highley to Everyone: 01:57 PM* - One common factor for case clusters is groups of people spending time together in poorly ventilated places, some quite large. See for example <https://www.erinbromage.com/post/the-risks-know-them-avoid-them> Infections,

in some cases many people, have occurred even where they have followed social distancing rules. Has anyone taken this into account, such as enhancing ventilation, defining groups who would all have to be isolated if any one of them tested positive, limiting time spent in shared spaces or anything similar?

*From Graham Kearsley to Everyone:* 01:57 PM - Hi Valerie, that would be a HR nightmare. You can't discriminate for economic reasons. In this day and age I'd like to believe that the parents & guardians would share the home school & child care issues. Particularly when it is still optional for staff to return to work.

*From Andrew Davies to Everyone:* 01:59 PM - same issue could occur with high risk individuals who may not be able to return due to underlying issues - alternative work options need looking at.

*From Ciarán Delaney IOSH COUNCIL to Everyone:* 02:00 PM - Apologies, forgot to introduce myself - Ciarán Delaney here from Cork, Ireland - I am a colleague of Joannes on IOSH Council

*From Katy Millard to Everyone:* 02:03 PM

**Q** Gary mentioned Covid controls in people's homes. We have written home-working RAs for all our staff working from home...do we need to include measures we would expect them to take to control COVID at home? i.e no external visitors, hand hygiene, accepting deliveries etc. Thank you

*From Valerie Kennedy to Everyone:* 02:04 PM - I agree Graham but apparently there is evidence that this is actually happening when analysts look at the ratios of men and women who have been made redundant - child care responsibilities are not listed as the reason for the redundancy but there is a strong suspicion that this has been a factor in redundancy selection particularly in businesses that are already struggling financially.

*From Ciarán Delaney IOSH COUNCIL to Everyone:* 02:05 PM

**Q** Can I pose a question please - I received a call from the Irish equivalent of the HSE who said that they have no guidance in relation to what type of material could be used as a barrier - a business is using plywood as a barrier between employees - this is where a shift pattern exists. Is there guidance in the UK with regards to what material should be used for this purpose

*From Phil Sedgwick to Everyone:* 02:06 PM

**Q:** As regards the reduced social distancing, I have read something that conflicts, whereby SAGE have said to the government that any decision to reduce from 2m will be 'a political decision', suggesting the science does NOT support a reduction.

*From Valerie Kennedy to Everyone:* 02:08 PM - But WHO is recommending that 1m is a safe physical distance and most other countries are using this as the standard Phil!

*From Lisa Flavell-Matts to Everyone:* 02:08 PM

**Q** Message to Gary. If you have a gang travelling in one vehicle, could it not be that all passengers wear masks and the driver does not therefore not putting vehicle insurance at risk?

*From Michelle Hay to Everyone:* 02:08 PM - Symptom free family/household members might be able to drive people to work

*From Nicola Croft to Everyone:* 02:09 PM

**Q:** Which is the safer suggested option, car sharing or public transport? On public transport there is a higher likelihood of touching a surface that someone with Covid-19 may have touched but less chance of sharing breathing air.

*From Phil Sedgwick to Everyone:* 02:10 PM - Val, I am aware of that, but this is the problem whereby we are getting conflicting messages from different 'authoritative' sources.

*From Gordon Hutchinson to Everyone:* 02:10 PM

**Q** In regards to working from home do you have issues regarding DSE assessments? as in that extra costs for office equipment, desks, chairs, space etc?

*From Steve Highley to Everyone:* 02:11 PM - Water utility business I work with clearly identified groups whose work requires them to travel together and work in close proximity to each other - most often pairs of maintenance technicians. Treated as workplace households who would both have to isolate if needed. Should take a similar approach for people regularly travelling to work together.

*From Graham Kearsley to Everyone:* 02:11 PM - Hi all, I've been advising clients on car share to ask staff in the car to wear a face screen and mask whilst travelling, with the preference to have the windows partially open rather than air conditioning or heater system on in the car.

*From Phil Sedgwick to Everyone:* 02:12 PM - I Agree Dave - The virus can't be absorbed through the skin, so hand hygiene rather than gloves is far better.

*From Graham Kearsley to Everyone:* 02:13 PM - I agree with increased hand hygiene. There is the increased risk of touching the face whilst wearing gloves

*From Phil Sedgwick to Everyone:* 02:14 PM - Gary, face shields are readily available on the internet; they protect the wearer far better, but less so protecting people other than the wearers.

Also, face shields make it more difficult to touch the face.

*From Gary McAteer to Everyone:* 02:15 PM - Excellent point Phil

*From Steve Highley to Everyone:* 02:19 PM - Some helpful ideas about remote working flexibility in Remote: Office Not Required <https://www.amazon.co.uk/Remote-Required-David-Heinemeier-Hansson-ebook/dp/B00CZ7OC46/>

*From Ciarán Delaney IOSH COUNCIL to Everyone:* 02:21 PM - Totally agree with everything that you are saying Gary!

*From Andrew Davies to Everyone:* 02:21 PM

**Q** What policies has anyone put in place for business travel and overnight stays?

*From Helen Quirk to Everyone:* 02:23 PM

**Q** Does anyone have a view on workplace temperature testing?

*From Phil Sedgwick to Everyone:* 02:23 PM - Plywood would probably be better than plastic or metal, in that given the early research I would expect the virus to deteriorate more quickly on plywood than on plastic or metal.

*From Ciarán Delaney IOSH COUNCIL to Everyone:* 02:23 PM - Computer hard drive manufacture.

*From Jo Price - IOSH Council, Consultancy Group Chair to Everyone:* 02:24 PM - My husband's company sent someone home when their temperature was high. He reluctantly left and within the week was in hospital with Covid....

*From Ciarán Delaney IOSH COUNCIL to Everyone:* 02:25 PM - I can't see how plywood can be sanitised

*From Michelle Hay to Everyone:* 02:25 PM - Overnight stays have been halted for one of my clients who provide a meter testing and refitting service. All jobs carried out by the engineers must be carried out within a working day timescale including travel times. Hope that helps.

*From Phil Sedgwick to Everyone:* 02:25 PM - OK, what do I know! :)

*From Graham Kearsley to Everyone:* 02:27 PM - I have one client which has used both plywood and plastic. I advised that the plywood be treated / painted to make it easier to clean. Perspex was used for view / vision reasons if safety critical.

*From Steve Highley to Everyone:* 02:28 PM - Gov guidance limits accommodation: <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/covid-19-advice-for-accommodation-providers> The same key workers who can send their children to school if needed (and not reception y1 & y6)

*From Ciarán Delaney IOSH COUNCIL to Everyone:* 02:28 PM - Thank you for a very informative session

*From Lyndsey.Wicks to Everyone:* 02:28 PM - Thank you very much great session

*From Phil Sedgwick to Everyone:* 02:28 PM - Ciaran, another alternative might be to use a spray disinfectant. I know it's not as good as a smooth surface for wiping down, but it might work.

*From Lisa Flavell-Matts to Everyone:* 02:28 PM - Thank you very much. Very informative.

*From Graham Kearsley to Everyone:* 02:29 PM - Great session - thanks everyone

*From Carol Stearne to Everyone:* 02:29 PM - thanks for contributing to the questions

*From Paul Kelsall to Everyone:* 02:29 PM - Thanks everyone.

*From Carol White to Everyone:* 02:29 PM - Thank you for great session

*From Stuart Mason to Everyone:* 02:29 PM - Good information, thanks to all.

*From Ciarán Delaney IOSH COUNCIL to Everyone:* 02:29 PM - Cheers Phil - we lost a 33 year old lady who left three kids behind

*From Andrew Davies to Everyone:* 02:29 PM - Thanks all very good

*From Neil Lawrence to Everyone:* 02:29 PM - Thanks all