

COVID-19 BPC Update: 23 April 2020

Parliament

MPs returned to work Tuesday 21 April, following the Easter Recess. They approved a motion facilitating 'hybrid proceedings', with effect from Wednesday 22 April. The proposed model allows a maximum of around 50 MPs to be present in the Chamber (under social distancing measures). Up to 120 Members will be able to participate remotely during these 'hybrid' proceedings. Select Committees continue to hold meetings remotely as All-Party Parliamentary Groups (APPGs). Next week we will take part in the virtual meeting of the APPG on Mental Health, chaired by Jeff Smith MP. The meeting will focus on the impacts of the Covid-19 crisis on mental health and on the services providing mental health support.

Government Support

Following the government's announcement that £5 million are available to voluntary and community sector organisations that provide mental health services, applications for the Coronavirus Mental Health Response Fund (CMHRF) are now open. Grants of £20,000 or £50,000 are available for projects lasting up to 12 months. Mind is administering the fund in partnership with the Mental Health Consortia (MHC). To apply or to find out more about the Fund [please click here](#).

Resources and CPD

We have published on our website a [reflective piece written by Chris Vincent](#) on life, illness and on the need to keep alive our collective thinking during the Covid-19 pandemic. If registrants wish to share their brief psychoanalytically informed reflections about Covid-19 or their experiences of adapting to working psychoanalytically during the pandemic, [please email us](#). We will collate them and aim to publish them in the Covid-19 section of our website as a way of providing a psychoanalytic thinking space for registrants, trainees and anyone interested.

We encourage Registrants to continue with their CPD and to take advantage of online/virtual courses, events and information available. There are many, such as:

- The Open University in collaboration with BACP has created an [module on how to deliver on-line counselling](#)
- The American Psychoanalytic Association has made available significant and useful [information for providers](#) working during the pandemic as well as a [free presentation](#) on how to move from face to face to tele-treatment

Campaign to Maximise the Role of Counselling and Psychotherapy in Response to Covid-19

Almost 10,000 people have now signed our letter to Matt Hancock, Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, and joined our campaign. Thank you to those of you who have signed the petition. With BACP and UKCP we have also worked to gather political

support and we have individually received commitments from politicians to table relevant parliamentary questions and to share the petition.

There is still time to sign, so if you have not already done so, [please click here and add your name](#) so we can reach 10,000 signatures.

Guidance

- We have circulated to all our Member Institutions general guidance about how to facilitate ongoing training during these exceptional times. We have also issued [general guidance and guidance on online/telephone sessions](#)
- The NHS Psychological Professions Network with the BPC and other professional organisations has produced guidance for NHS staff and training organisations. The guidance is complementary to our specific guidance and [can be accessed here](#)

How to Contact Us

Our team is now working remotely. We are operating as usual but, as we adapt to the new working arrangements, please bear with us if there are any delays in replying to your queries.

We are doing everything we can to make this transition as smooth as possible and, to help us, we would be grateful if you would [contact us by email in the first instance](#). Please provide your name, contact details including a phone number and your query. We will aim to respond within 48 business hours, Monday to Friday.

This is the latest in our regular updates to support you during the Covid-19 crisis. Previous updates are [available on our website](#).