

# Psychotherapeutic practice and working in isolation

This updated guidance is for UKCP members who are no longer able to see clients face-to-face because of the latest Government advice on COVID-19 and/or you or your client(s) may not be able to attend online or remote therapy sessions for health reasons.

Please note that the UKCP Code of Ethics and Professional Practice must still be adhered to even where clients are seen online or otherwise.

- If you have not already done so, discuss what arrangements you will put in place if your usual format of therapy (for clients seen in person previously) has been disrupted due to events beyond your and your client's control.
- Consider if you and the client have the means, competence and facilities to conduct online/remote therapy safely and securely and whether this is appropriate and suitable for you and the client given your and their health condition.
- If you are unable to provide therapy because of your health (for example, because of persistent coughing etc.) consider what other means of communication you can use to provide an update to clients. For example, a brief email may be more appropriate.
- If you are unwell, self-isolating or can't offer online/remote therapy, ask yourself: 'How will my client react if I am unable to provide therapy and what do I feel is the best way to tell them this information?' Consider, how much information you should provide to your client. For example, whether you want to share information about your health and if not what information and how much of it should you provide and how will they deal with this information?
- Consider sharing with them the likely duration until 'normal' therapeutic arrangements will resume or when you will be able to give them an update so that they are not left feeling in the dark and anxious about your wellbeing. Even if the update is to notify your clients that you don't know when normal therapy will resume, this is better than not providing any updates.
- For clients who are in a distressed and vulnerable state and in your opinion require imminent and ongoing therapy sessions, consider referring them to another psychotherapist, psychotherapeutic counsellor or professional who is able to offer this support. Consider providing details of emergency support and help for the client in your absence.
- Keep your supervisor informed of the situation.
- Do not charge your clients if you are unable to provide your usual psychotherapeutic support and they do not accept other arrangements you offer.

If your client is unable to attend their psychotherapy sessions because they are unwell consider the following what psychotherapeutic support are they likely to need and how can it be delivered safely?

- Consider the fee arrangements you have in place with your clients and explore whether these still apply in your client's absence and if so, how it may affect your psychotherapeutic relationship with your client.