

PPE AT A GLANCE

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When to use PPE

The Health and Safety Executive (HSE) advises to “only use PPE as a last resort” because you should first focus on safe systems and other controls (Source: [HSE, PPE](#)).

During the pandemic, in a typical community audiology practice setting, you should first focus on ensuring there are procedures in place to help people comply with:

- Social distancing guidance
- Best practice hand and respiratory/cough hygiene
- Cleaning and disinfection protocols
- Avoiding face touching
- Other safe systems – e.g. Perspex shields, breath shields, etc.

For example, if you can redesign a task so that it is performed at >2m away, then this is preferable to being within 2m and using PPE. Where you cannot do this, for example, when performing otoscopy, the appropriate PPE should be used and used correctly.

What PPE to use

Pages 24 and 28 of the joint AIHHP, BAA, BSA and BSHAA audiology and otology guidance during Covid-19 includes a table about which PPE to use. [Access general the table here](#) and [PPE for specific vestibular assessments here](#).

In a typical community audiology setting, where you see no Covid-19 suspect or confirmed cases, then:

- Staff working at >2m do not need to use PPE¹
- Patients do not need to use PPE²

Face coverings are not PPE for healthcare settings, some service users however might opt to use face coverings in line with general advice from the government.

If you work in a different setting or perform aerosol-generating procedures refer to the full [Covid-19 PPE guidance](#) or contact us directly for additional support and advice by emailing info@the-ncha.com.

¹ For example, see Table 3, UK PPE guidance https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/879108/T3_poster_Recommended_PPE_for_ambulance_staff_paramedics_transport_pharmacy.pdf

² See Section 9, of UK PPE guidance <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/wuhan-novel-coronavirus-infection-prevention-and-control/covid-19-personal-protective-equipment-ppe#patient-use-of-ppe>

How to use PPE

PHE has produced posters which explain [how to use PPE](#). The most relevant to community audiology, for non-aerosol generating procedures, are:

- [Putting PPE on](#)
- [Taking PPE off](#)

HPS has created a short video which explains how to use PPE correctly:

- [Watch the video](#)

Alternatively, you can use the following PHE videos for health and social care settings and a guide for care homes.

- [Public Health England – video training for health and social care](#)
- [Public Health England – video training PPE for care homes](#)

How much PPE should I order?

You will need to order Type IIR masks. These can be used for an entire session unless damaged or, for example, you touch it. A session might last four hours but could be less.

To help independent practice owner-members, we can help you estimate the amount of PPE you need to order. If you need any support, please email info@the-ncha.com.