

**Statement from the College of Operating Department Practitioners
Coronavirus (COVID-19)
16th March 2020**

As the spread of this disease progresses across the world, including in the UK, it now seems increasingly likely that health services will face unprecedented challenges. This may come from both an overwhelming volume of critically ill patients, coupled with escalating staffing shortages. These shortfalls could be through illness or competing caring responsibilities such as caring for elderly family members; those with underlying medical conditions; or caring for children following the closure of schools or childcare services.

Increasingly non-urgent surgery is being suspended and additional critical care capacity will be required with operating department facilities likely to be utilised for escalation.

Your own hospital will be developing local action plans and as Operating Department Practitioners, your knowledge, expertise and transferable skills will be integral in the operation of these plans.

CODP and other professional bodies will support rational staffing and flexible working decisions made in accordance with the principles set out by the [HCPC and other Statutory Regulators of Healthcare Professions](#).

Please consider your colleagues as some may be at an increased risk from the COVID-19 infection e.g. colleagues with long term medical conditions – diabetes, respiratory disease, heart disease. Also consider colleagues with caring responsibilities that may prevent them from attending work.

Universities are providing regular updates and advice to students who are undertaking pre-registration Operating Department Practitioner programmes. The College recognises that students will be very anxious in relation to any possible disruption of their programme of study, the caring responsibilities that they may have as a parent and the risks of themselves becoming ill.

The College would like to thank all Operating Department Practitioners for their professionalism, dedication and commitment in these exceptional times. Our unique skill set, our flexibility and our adaptability will offer solutions to the challenges ahead. Thank you.

The following links are to the latest information and resources available. You are advised to check resources relevant to you regularly as advice and guidance will likely change as the course of the pandemic progresses.

- [UK Government latest position, advice and guidance](#)
- [UK Government list of Guidance for Health Professionals](#)
- [Joint statement from statutory regulators of health and care professions](#)
- [CODP guidance on working in unfamiliar environments](#)
- [Infection prevention and control measures including the use of personal protective equipment](#)
- [Information hub for the anaesthetic community](#)
- [Intensive Care Society COVID-19 Resource Page](#)

- [Unison – Coronavirus Your rights at work](#)
- [Public Health Northern Ireland COVID-19](#)
- [Health Protection Scotland COVID-19](#)
- [Public Health Wales COVID-19](#)