Introduction and Overview of Document

This document provides Occupational Therapy students with information in relation to commencing and engaging in an Occupational Therapy Practice Education placement during the COVID-19 pandemic. It is imperative that students read this document fully and understand and comply with all aspects prior to, and during, their placement. The recommendations and advice outlined in this document are in line with the “Trinity College School of Medicine Policies and procedures to minimise risk of Covid-19 for students, staff and patients (2022, Version 3)” and the “HSE Guidance on Clinical Placements in HSE Facilities (March 2022)”.

Although most of the Irish population are vaccinated against COVID-19, the virus cases remain high and there is an ongoing risk of new variants developing. Healthcare workers are at a substantially higher risk of becoming infected by COVID-19 and infection is associated with risk of serious illness, in particular those who are unvaccinated or have specific underlying health issues. COVID-19 infection can occur, even if a person is fully vaccinated. Students must remain alert to the risk of infection and follow all Infection Control and Prevention policies in clinical sites, College and Government advise to prevent putting patients/clients, clinical staff, colleagues, self, and others at risk.

This document is a useful resource for both students and placement sites/practice educators as it highlights the additional responsibilities of the student during the preparation and maintenance stages of a placement during the COVID-19 pandemic. In understanding such responsibilities, placement sites/practice educators can support the students in their compliance with all relevant policies and procedures.
Information for Occupational Therapy Students commencing a Practice Education Placement during the COVID-19 Pandemic – Updated August 2022

To maximise compliance, this document explicitly outlines the COVID-19 related actions required by the student prior to and during their placement.

Please note that in all cases, placement site policies and procedures relating to COVID-19 will override university-based policies and procedures whilst the student is engaging in his/her placement. Therefore, it is essential that the student is made aware of such policies and procedures in advance of commencing his/her placement.

Actions Required Prior to Placement:

1. **Vaccination Advice:** All students are required to undertake health screening for admission to the Discipline of Occupational Therapy, School of Medicine. In addition, the School of Medicine (SoM) COVID-19 vaccination programme is aimed at reducing the incidence of COVID-19 infection and its spread among clinical staff, students and patients. The School of Medicine advise that all students be fully vaccinated against Covid-19. Vaccination is also recommended by the Government and the HSE. Please review all education relating to the COVID vaccinations in the following link. [https://www2.hse.ie/screening-and-vaccinations/covid-19-vaccine/](https://www2.hse.ie/screening-and-vaccinations/covid-19-vaccine/)

2. **Complete and upload the COVID-19 Student Undertaking/Declaration Form (Appendix 1).** This is a once-off self-declaration that all students must complete prior to commencing placement whereby a student declares they have read and understood the information presented in this document and agree to comply with all national and local policies and procedures relevant in their placement sites. All students must complete this form and upload via Blackboard as instructed by PEC/RPF in advance of placement commencement.

3. **Complete and upload the COVID-19 Risk assessment Form for Occupational Therapy Students (Appendix 2).**
   If a student has concerns that they may be at risk, they should contact their GP / TCD College Health to discuss their health issues further. Students who identify as very high or high risk category (as per HSE guidance) must notify Claire Gleeson (Practice Education Coordinator) or Lorna O’Shea (Regional Placement Facilitator) and the Head of Discipline; Dr. Michelle Spirtos. In such incidences, students may be required to undergo an additional occupational health screening via Medmark therefore it is important that this information is highlighted as early as possible. (More information will be provided as required.)

4. **Provide Evidence of your COVID-19 Vaccinations**
   Students will need to provide evidence of their COVID-19 vaccinations prior to
Information for Occupational Therapy Students commencing a Practice Education Placement during the COVID-19 Pandemic –Updated August 2022

placement. This will need to be uploaded via Blackboard. Please note Practice Educators/placement sites may also request to see this evidence.

5. **Provide Evidence of your HSE Mandatory Training (certificates):**
The following COVID-19 related HSE Land e-learning courses must be completed prior to placement. Please upload the following course certificates via Blackboard to evidence completion.

- AMRIC Basic for Infection Prevention and Control
- AMRIC Hand Hygiene
- AMRIC Standard and Transmission Based Precautions (Please note that the old “Breaking the Chain of Infection” has been replaced by this course”)
- Putting on and taking off PPE in the acute healthcare setting
- Putting on and taking off PPE in the community healthcare setting

Please note that you are also required to share these with your Practice Educator.

6. **Consult with placement site regarding uniform and any additional COVID-19 related preparation**
Each placement site will advise on a uniform/dress code in advance of the placement start date. If this advice is not provided, you are required to seek clarity from your Practice Tutor/Practice Educator prior to placement. Please note that in line with the HSE National Policy, a newly laundered uniform/appropriate working attire must be worn every day (a 60-degree wash cycle is generally recommended). If your existing uniform supply does not cater for this requirement, please consult with your Practice Educator/Practice Tutor for alternative options.

Placement sites will have site specific COVID-19 policies and procedures. If this information is not provided, you are required to seek clarity from your Practice Tutor/Practice Educator prior to placement. It is the responsibility of the Practice Tutor/Practice Educator to ensure that all site specific COVID-19 information is provided to the student in a clear and timely manner.

7. **Complete the following essential reading prior to and during your placement:**
Please review the following websites regularly for updates in relation to the general public health advice in relation to COVID-19:

- The HSE Website for healthcare workers: [https://healthservice.hse.ie/staff/news/](https://healthservice.hse.ie/staff/news/)
Information for Occupational Therapy Students commencing a Practice Education Placement during the COVID-19 Pandemic –Updated August 2022

- IPC Guidance including IPC COVID-19 Guidance and educational videos on https://www.hpsc.ie/a-z/respiratory/coronavirus/novelcoronavirus/

Actions required during placement:

1. Daily Declarations to Practice Educator
   You will be required to declare daily to your Practice Educator that you are COVID-19 symptom-free immediately when you present for placement. The format of the declaration may include phone, email, text or verbally. You will also be required to have your practice educator sign off that you do declare this daily as per your assessment form documentation (please see the updated assessment form). If you are not in a position to make this declaration, then you should not attend placement.

2. Daily Check in Form via the Trinity App:
   You must also declare via the COVID-19 Daily Health Questionnaire which is accessed via the Trinity Live App and is required by the HSE. This is a daily self-declaration which must be completed each day on placement by students regardless of whether you are on placement/teaching/study/home. This exercise must be completed each day prior to presenting for clinical placement and no later than 10 am each day for other activities. The completed forms will be reviewed by the PEC/RPF at 10am every weekday. Failure to submit this self-declaration will result in the student being removed from clinical placement with immediate effect. Students should follow the instructions on the form and the algorithm outlined in the Daily COVID-19 Questionnaire Algorithm (Appendix 3) for TCD Occupational Therapy students on placement.

Instructions for completing the Daily Check in Form via the Trinity App
Step 1. Download the Trinity Live app and login with your student username and password.
Step 2. Click on the Yellow virus symbol at the top of the screen.
Step 3. Complete the declaration form accordingly, you will need to select the edit button the bottom of the screen. Once your submission is complete click submit response. If you make a mistake you can resubmit by clicking edit response. The app will only register you last submission.
3. **Induction on Placement Site**: All clinical sites will complete COVID-19 specific orientation as part of their induction programme including relevant COVID-19 policies and procedures, local requirements regarding Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) and IPC responsibilities. Please check the following website for Government updates: [https://www.gov.ie/en/publication/3361b-public-health-updates/](https://www.gov.ie/en/publication/3361b-public-health-updates/)

In an effort to maximise compliance with all of the information outlined in this document the Practice Education Team have created a “**Preparation for Placement - COVID-19 specific checklist**” (appendix 4). Students are encouraged to complete this checklist following the completion of all relevant COVID-19 specific preparation. This record does not need to be uploaded to blackboard. It is simply an aid to assist students with their preparation for placement.

**Important note:**

All Practice Education processes and protocols as per the Practice Education Handbook and Practice Education Website continue to apply and must be adhered to throughout the student placement. Please ensure that you are fully aware of all your professional responsibilities during your engagement in placement. Please see: [https://www.tcd.ie/medicine/occupational-therapy/practice-education/](https://www.tcd.ie/medicine/occupational-therapy/practice-education/) for all Practice Education related processes and protocols.
Information for Occupational Therapy Students commencing a Practice Education Placement during the COVID-19 Pandemic –Updated August 2022

Appendix 1: COVID-19 Student Undertakings and Declarations

COVID-19 Student Undertakings and Declarations
DISCIPLINE OF OCCUPATIONAL THERAPY, SCHOOL OF MEDICINE 2022

In advance of resumption of clinical placement as part of studies at Trinity College Dublin, the University of Dublin (“University”), I acknowledge I have a personal responsibility to protect myself, patients/clients and the general public from the potential of Covid-19 virus transmission, and to comply with Public Health Advice. Accordingly, during my placement I will ensure:

1. I am aware of COVID-19 symptoms or other related pandemic symptoms. Please see: https://www2.hse.ie/coronavirus/

2. I will not present myself to clinical placement (or to the University) if I have symptoms of COVID-19 or acute infections such as symptoms of viral respiratory tract infection or gastroenteritis.

3. I commit to declaring to the School daily that I am free of symptoms of COVID-19 each day before I present myself to clinical placement.

4. In event I develop an infectious disease (COVID-19 or other communicable infectious disease), I will immediately notify the University through the Practice Education Coordinator and my assigned Practice Educator on the placement site in case it has implications for patients and staff.

5. I will keep myself up-to-date and comply with current Public Health Advice regarding COVID-19 or other related pandemics.

6. I will follow the Trinity algorithm re: Covid and the on-site guidelines around Covid.

7. I commit in advance of returning to clinical placement, to comply with regulations regarding Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) training/requirements in addition to all related policies, guidelines and directives available locally and on www.hseland.ie to ensure, amongst other things, correct donning and doffing.

8. I will ensure that I abide by, and comply with, the rule of ‘bare below the elbows/bare above the wrist’ while on clinical placement.

Information for Occupational Therapy Students commencing a Practice Education Placement during the COVID-19 Pandemic – Updated August 2022

10. I acknowledge I have been provided with training in performance of hand hygiene in advance of clinical placement and will undertake competence re-training at least once in each academic year.

11. I will comply with Infection Prevention and Control directions given by HSE and other Clinical staff at all times when I am in clinical areas, and any other measures the HSE has in place to prevent the emergence of COVID-19 in while I am on clinical placement.

12. I undertake to cooperate with requirements for management of outbreaks or other incidents of infection including providing samples for testing where required.

13. Students can move from a clinical placement in one institution to a clinical placement in another without an interval of time as part of their programme. In such circumstances, I acknowledge I must adhere to Infection Prevention and Control Practice at all times with all individuals.

14. I acknowledge that my Clinical Placement is subject to Public Health Advice which may be in place from time to time and that public health advice may result in changes to arrangements during the course of my Practice Education Placement.

Data Protection

Any information disclosed to the University pursuant to this declaration will be treated with the highest standards of security and confidentiality and processed in accordance with the University’s Data Protection Notice. The University is collecting this personal data in light of the COVID-19 pandemic and to implement the requirements of the HSE in relation to the resumption of clinical placements. The legal basis for processing this data is for compliance with a legal obligation to which Trinity College is subject (the provision of education under the Universities Act 1997) and for the reasons of public interest in the area of public health. The data collected in this form will only be kept for the duration of the placement after which time it will be deleted.

Signed:

Print student name:

Student number:

Date:
Appendix 2: COVID-19 Risk assessment Form for Occupational Therapy Students

COVID-19 Risk assessment Form for Occupational Therapy Students

All students must be assessed for their risk of COVID-19 before commencing an Occupational Therapy placement.

Student Information

Name:
Student Number:
Course of Study:
Year of Study:
E-mail:

Instructions:

• Please complete the following questions and upload the completed form and any additional documentation (if required) to Blackboard prior to commencement of placement.
• Retain a copy of this form and any relevant documentation to take with you if any further assessment is required.
• If you do not understand the questions, please complete this form with your doctor’s help.
• Further testing and/or health assessment may be required, depending on your personal circumstances.

Part A: Possible signs and symptoms of active COVID-19 – Do you currently have any of the following? Please Circle

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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Fever (high temperature – 38 degree Celsius or above)</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Cough</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Shortness of breath</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Sudden onset loss of sense of smell and/or taste disturbance</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
If you have answered Yes to any questions from Part A:

1) Make an urgent appointment with College Health Services for assessment of your symptom/s. They will refer you for COVID testing if needed. Self-isolation may be recommended by your doctor.

2) Notify Practice Education Coordinator who will follow up with your placement site.

Part B: COVID-19 Training and Reading
Have you completed the mandatory COVID-19 Training and reviewed all of the Covid-19 related information/resources outlined in the COVID-19 assigned section in Blackboard.

Please Circle your answer below:
Yes  Or  No

Please refer to the Covid-19 information document for students and complete the training if you have answered No to any questions from Part B.

Part C: Identification of students who have an underlying or chronic illness, or who are in at risk/vulnerable group
https://www2.hse.ie/conditions/coronavirus/people-at-higher-risk.html

The following are very high risk:

- Solid organ transplant recipients
- People with specific cancers
  - People with cancer who are undergoing active chemotherapy or radical radiotherapy for lung cancer.
  - People with cancers of the blood or bone marrow such as leukaemia, lymphoma or myeloma who are at any stage of treatment.
  - People having immunotherapy or other continuing antibody treatments for cancer.
  - People having other targeted cancer treatments which can affect the immune system, such as protein kinase inhibitors or PARP inhibitors
- People who have had bone marrow or stem cell transplants in the last 6 months, or who are still taking immunosuppression drugs
- People with severe respiratory conditions including cystic fibrosis, severe asthma and severe COPD as confirmed by their specialist.
- People with rare diseases and inborn errors of metabolism that significantly increase the risk of infections (such as SCID, homozygous sickle cell)
- People on immunosuppression therapies, sufficient to significantly increase risk of infection
- Are pregnant with significant heart disease, congenital or acquired
Information for Occupational Therapy Students commencing a Practice Education Placement during the COVID-19 Pandemic –Updated August 2022

Please circle if;

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Any of the above applies to you</th>
<th>Yes</th>
<th>No</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>And Please specify:</td>
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If any of the above apply to you, please contact the PEC OR Head of Discipline immediately. You will be required to complete an external occupational health assessment if you are within this category prior to placement. Your placement will be decided based on the outcome of the assessment.

People are high risk if they:

- have a lung condition that’s not severe (such as moderate or severe asthma, COPD, emphysema or bronchitis)
- have a heart condition
- have high blood pressure
- have diabetes
- have chronic kidney disease
- have liver disease (such as hepatitis)
- have a medical condition that can affect your breathing
- have cancer
- have a weak immune system/are immunosuppressed
- have cerebrovascular disease
- have a condition affecting your brain or nerves (such as Parkinson’s disease, motor neurone disease, multiple sclerosis, or cerebral palsy)
- have a problem with your spleen or have had your spleen removed
- have a condition that means you have a high risk of getting infections (such as HIV, lupus or scleroderma)
- have obesity

Please circle if;

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Any of the above applies to you</th>
<th>Yes</th>
<th>No</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>And Please specify:</td>
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</table>

If any of the above apply to you, please contact PEC/RPF immediately.

People with Other Pre-Existing Disease:

(Source: Pregnant Healthcare Workers (HCWs), Vulnerable HCWs and HCW with Other Pre-Existing Disease Version 5, 15/04/2020)

- People with other medically managed pre-existing disease are unlikely to be at greater risk of acquiring COVID-19 virus infection compared with other HCW’s if the appropriate personal protective equipment is worn.
- These people can continue to attend placement UNLESS there is a specific recommendation from their treating specialist.
Information for Occupational Therapy Students commencing a Practice Education Placement during the COVID-19 Pandemic –Updated August 2022

- Pregnant people should be allocated to patients, and duties, that have reduced exposure to patients with, or suspected to have, COVID-19 infection. It is specifically recommended to avoid rostering pregnant staff to COVID-specific units or wards, and redeployment to lower risk duties should be considered.

Please circle if;

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Yes</th>
<th>No</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>You have another medically managed pre-existing disease not mentioned above</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>You live with someone who has either an underlying illness or chronic condition</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>You are pregnant</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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</table>

Signed Acknowledgement and Consent:

I certify that I have read and understand the Trinity College Dublin Occupational Therapy COVID-19 document entitled: ‘Information for Occupational Therapy Students commencing a Practice Education Placement during the COVID-19 Pandemic’, and all other relevant COVID-19 information outlined in the COVID-19 section of Blackboard (under the relevant Year overview 2022/23). I agree to comply with the guidelines and all procedures in place at my assigned practice education placement site and the Health Service facility at which I am placed, in respect of HSE infection control of health care workers.

I understand that this risk assessment and any required follow-up action is one of the requirements of eligibility for a placement in Occupational Therapy, and I agree to take action as required.

I certify that the information I have provided in this risk assessment is true and correct.

Full name: _________________________
Signature: _________________________
Date: _______________
Appendix 3: Daily COVID-19 Questionnaire Algorithm for TCD Occupational Therapy Students

*START HERE*

Have you been diagnosed with COVID-19 in the last 10 days?

Yes

- Don’t come to placement
- Email otdailycheck and PEC/RPF
- Isolate from symptom onset / positive test
- If symptoms have resolved for the final 2 days of 7 days then can return on day 8 with a negative antigen test prior to return

No

Do you have any of the following*:
- cough,
- fever,
- shortness of breath,
- change/loss in sense of smell,
- change/loss in sense of taste,
- headache
- sore throat
- runny nose/nasal congestion
- Any other flu-like symptoms (fatigue/aches & pains etc.) now or in the last 10-14 days?

Yes

- Don’t come to placement
- Self testing is arranged via through GP / HSE portal (state you are a healthcare worker)
- Email your PEC/RPF to inform of symptoms

No

Are you a household contact of a confirmed case?

Yes

- Inform your PEC/RPF
- Return to placement 48 hours after your symptoms resolve

No

Wear FFP2 mask for full 10 days, and complete antigen test days 6/3/7

Algorithm based on [https://www.hse.ie/eng/staff/workplacehealthandwellbeingunit/covid19/guidance/occupationalhealthinterimguidance.pdf](https://www.hse.ie/eng/staff/workplacehealthandwellbeingunit/covid19/guidance/occupationalhealthinterimguidance.pdf)

* If you have Covid-19 symptoms you will need to get a PCR test an LFT alone will not suffice.
Information for Occupational Therapy Students commencing a Practice Education Placement during the COVID-19 Pandemic –Updated August 2022

**Daily COVID-19 Questionnaire Algorithm for TCD medical students on placement** (Update 13/03/22) – Subject to Revision

**Close contact definition:**
Have a cumulative unprotected exposure during one work shift (any breach or omission of the appropriate PPE) for >15 minutes face to face (<1 meters distance) to a case
OR
Have any unprotected exposure of your eyes or mouth or mucus membranes, to the bodily fluids (mainly respiratory secretions, coughing, but also includes blood, stools, vomit, and urine) of the case.
OR
Have any unprotected exposure, any breach in the appropriate PPE) while present in the same room when an aerosol generating procedure is undertaken on the case.

**Casual contact definition:**
A cumulative protected exposure during one work shift for >15 minutes face to face (<1 meters distance) to a case
OR
Any protected exposure to the bodily fluids (mainly respiratory secretions, coughing but also includes blood, stools, vomit, and urine) of the case
OR
Any protected exposure while present in the same room when an aerosol generating procedure is undertaken on the case
OR
Not wearing gloves but was wearing other appropriate PPE, performed hand hygiene immediately after hand skin contact with body fluids/secrections/excretions of a case, would be considered low risk and therefore not a close contact.
OR
A cumulative unprotected exposure during one shift (any breach or omission of appropriate PPE) for less than 15 minutes face to face (less than 1 meters distance) to a case.

**Household contact definition:** People living or sleeping in the same home, individuals in shared accommodation sharing kitchen or bathroom facilities/partners.

**Conditions associated with suboptimal vaccine responses:**
- Persons with advanced cancer, undergoing cancer treatment (in the last 6 weeks, or 1 year for haematological malignancy), GFR <30ml/min, history of solid organ transplant, HSC transplant in last year, listed for solid organ/HSC transplant,
- HAP/CED, Inborn errors in the interferon pathway receiving immunosuppressants including high dose steroids, cyclophosphamide, rituximab, alemtuzumab, cladribine, ocrelizumab e.g. [https://www.hse.ie/eng/health/immunisation/fcgpinfo/guidelines/covid19.pdf]#Table 5a.2

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This algorithm is intended as a guide only. Please obey local HSE Health advice if specific advice is given. TCD College Health COVID-19 queries phone 01 896 155 ([https://www.tcd.ie/collegehealth/])
For more COVID-19 information, visit the following sites: [https://www.hse.ie/coronavirus] [https://www.hse.ie/eng/staff/workplacehealthandwellbeing/covid19guidance]
Information for Occupational Therapy Students commencing a Practice Education Placement during the COVID-19 Pandemic –Updated August 2022

Appendix 4: Trinity College Dublin Occupational Therapy - Preparation for Placement - COVID-19 specific checklist

☐ Completed and uploaded the COVID-19 Student Undertaking Declaration Form via Blackboard

☐ Completed and uploaded the COVID-19 Risk assessment Form for Occupational Therapy via Blackboard

☐ Provided Evidence of COVID-19 Vaccination status via Blackboard

☐ Provided Evidence of HSEland Mandatory Training (5 certificates in total) via Blackboard

☐ Consulted with placement site regarding uniform and any additional COVID-19 related preparation/information

☐ Completed essential reading recommended in “Information for Occupational Therapy Students commencing a Practice Education Placement during the COVID-19 Pandemic”

☐ Understand daily check-in requirements and commit to completing Daily Declarations to Practice Educator and Daily Check-in Form via the Trinity App over the course of my placement as outlined in “Information for Occupational Therapy Students commencing a Practice Education Placement during the COVID-19 Pandemic”

Full name: _________________________
Signature: ______________________________
Date: __________________________
Appendix 5: Donning and Doffing PPE

**DONNING OR PUTTING ON PPE**

- Before putting on the PPE, perform hand hygiene.
- Be well hydrated and have taken a toilet break.
- Have removed all jewellery including earrings.
- Be bare below the elbows.
- Have secured your hair back off your face.
- Do not bring mobile phones/bleeps into an isolation area.

1. Put on your plastic apron, making sure it is fastened securely at the back.
2. Put on your surgical face mask. For mask with ties, tie the upper strap around base of head and bring each tie over the ears and tie on top of head. For mask with loops, loop strap over the ears and make sure the mask is extended to cover your mouth and chin.
3. Put on your eye protection if there is a risk of splashing.
4. Put on non-sterile nitrile gloves.
5. You are now ready to enter the patient/resident area.

**DOFFING OR TAKING OFF PPE**

Surgical face masks may be used for single session use but gloves and apron must be changed between patients/residents.

1. Remove gloves, grasp the outside of the cuff of the glove and peel off. Remove mask by pushing strap towards mouth, allowing the mask to fall over the globe in the gloved hand, insert the finger underneath and peel off second glove.
2. Perform hand hygiene.
3. Remove eye protection.
4. Snap on surface ties and allow to fall forward. Snap waist ties and fold apron in on itself, do not turn inside-out. If mask is contaminated, and put into Healthcare risk waste.
5. Perform hand hygiene.
6. Once outside the patient room or area, remove surgical facemask.
7. Perform hand hygiene.