

Covid-19 Guidance

July 2020

Shower Guidance

Occupational Health and Safety Service
HSD209M



UNIVERSITY OF
CAMBRIDGE

Question: Can we reopen showering facilities for staff?

Answer: Yes – subject to risk assessment and appropriate hygiene measures.

1. Carry out a risk assessment for your workspace(s). Consider the following aspects:

➤ **What's the problem?**

Potential risk of transmission of Coronavirus between users of the showering facilities. Aerosols created during the showering might contain virus expelled unknowingly by the user and can settle both inside the shower cubicle, but also outside the shower area onto floors, walls and any other fixtures. Hence a good and thorough cleaning procedure must be implemented to control the risk.

➤ **Why are showering facilities required?**

- Staff returning to work may choose to travel by cycling, walking, and running. This may be part of their normal commuting activity, or because they have decided not to travel by public transport. Some staff may be travelling longer distances and wish to shower and change.
- The benefits of regular exercise for both mental and physical wellbeing are well documented. Staff may wish to partake in exercise during the working day and require access to showering facilities.
- Some laboratories may have showering facilities for emergency purposes.

➤ **How many users likely?**

In the early return to work phases, occupancy levels in any one day will likely be low and thus, the numbers of people wishing to shower may be lower. Estimate the likely daily usage. Consider surveying returning staff.

Keep the demand for showers under review – especially if numbers of people returning to work go up.

➤ **How many showers available?** More showers give greater flexibility.

➤ **Do the showers have good extract ventilation?** Good ventilation is essential in order to clear the facility of steam and airborne droplets and aerosols.

➤ **Do the showers and changing area have easy cleanable surfaces?** Glass shower screens are easy to spray clean. Shower curtains are not likely to be suitable unless frequently sprayed and washed.

➤ **Do staff have places to store wet/dirty clothing?** Personal lockers? Shared lockers? How will you ensure lockers are cleaned between users?

➤ **Will staff need somewhere to dry clothing?** Shared changing / drying rooms etc are not suitable for hanging up clothing to dry. Do you have an outdoor area that could be used if drying is required?

2. Implement risk control measures:

- a) Provide clear conditions of use to all staff. Display these at the entrance to the changing room and showers.
- b) Display signage on doors to showers /changing areas reiterating personal hygiene and social distancing practices.
- c) Each user is personally responsible for cleaning down the shower and surfaces after use.
- d) Departments should provide appropriate disinfectants/cleaning materials for shower cleaning. Ensure these products are appropriately assessed and deemed to be compatible

with those used by cleaning staff (beware incompatibility of quaternary ammonium compounds such as in Chemgene and the use of bleach containing disinfectants frequently used by contract cleaning staff) .

- e) Cleaning staff must clean showers at least daily. Frequency may need to be increased if demand increases. This activity is not a substitute for staff not cleaning the showers after use.
- f) If more than one shower is available, consider implementing a system to alternate between them. This helps by allowing more time for showers to dry out and air changes to occur between users.
- g) Display cleaning records on the entrances to shower/changing room areas (initials, date and time of last cleaning). Cleaning staff to also record when they have cleaned.
- h) Consider implementing a timed interval between use e.g. 30 minutes to allow rooms to ventilate and dry out. The records above should help inform users.
- i) Consider propping doors open to further aid ventilation.
- j) Users to bag up and store dirty clothing, wet towels etc in their personal lockers/offices where possible. Cyclists may need to dry out clothes during the day so that they are ready for changing into at the end of the day. Consider outdoor drying areas.
- k) Disinfect locker after use.
- l) Consult with staff on the measures you propose to implement.

3. What the Government says on showers:

Below are the relevant paragraphs concerning sanitation facilities and toilets.

Publication: *Working safely during coronavirus (COVID19) – Labs and research facilities – Guidance for people who work in or run indoor labs and research facilities and similar environments* (as of 03/07/20)

Section 5.3 Hygiene: handwashing, sanitation facilities and toilets.

Objective: *To help everyone keep good hygiene through the working day.*

Steps that will usually be needed:

1. Using signs and posters to build awareness of good handwashing technique, the need to increase handwashing frequency, avoid touching your face and the need to cough or sneeze into your arm.
2. Providing regular reminders and signage to maintain hygiene standards.
3. Providing hand sanitiser in multiple locations in addition to washrooms.
4. Setting clear use and cleaning guidance for toilets to ensure they are kept clean and social-distancing is achieved as much as possible.
5. Enhancing cleaning for busy areas.
6. Providing more waste facilities and more frequent rubbish collection.
7. Providing hand drying facilities – either paper towels or electrical dryers.
8. Keeping the facilities well ventilated, for example by fixing doors open where appropriate.

Section 5.4 Changing rooms and showers

Objective: *To minimise the risk of transmission in changing rooms and showers.*

1. Where shower and changing facilities are required, setting clear use and cleaning guidance for showers, lockers and changing rooms to ensure they are kept clean and clear of personal items and that social distancing is achieved as much as possible.
2. Introducing enhanced cleaning of all facilities regularly during the day and at the end of the day.

<https://www.gov.uk/guidance/working-safely-during-coronavirus-covid-19/labs-and-research-facilities#labs-5-3>