

Providing client services during CV19

This document was written on 17 March 2020 as internal guidance for VoiceAbility staff. It was last amended on 22 June 2020. We are sharing it publicly in the hope that it might be of some assistance to others, especially advocacy organisations, and ultimately to people who rely on the support we all provide. It was written in good faith based on the best information available at a particular point in time. No liability is accepted for any adverse consequences of reliance upon it. We welcome feedback to CV19@voiceability.org

Key messages

During lockdown we provided services remotely where possible but still met with clients in person where it was deemed appropriate to do so.

As we come out of lockdown, we will need to risk assess accordingly to ensure that we continue to do the best for the client. This may mean opportunities to increase our in-person contact where it is safe to do so and in line with our guidance.

Remote access

We continue to work remotely wherever possible in line with government guidance and to maintain social distancing guidelines to reduce the health risks to clients and staff. However, there are situations where remote access is not possible or not appropriate, and we need to consider an in-person visit. In these cases, staff must discuss with line managers and carry out the risk assessment process to decide if an in-person visit is possible. We will keep this under review and welcome your comments on this at CV19@voiceability.org

We recognise that we provide many important services aside from the advocacy work that we do. Your manager will discuss these with you on a service by service basis.

Microsoft Teams are providing excellent services to many clients using remote access (email, telephone, text, video call etc). Every attempt should be made to access all clients via these means. If you experience difficulties with accessing clients remotely due to settings being unable to facilitate this, please escalate this through your local management chain. There may be situations where you need to 'see' clients on a video call rather than speak to them on

the phone. Please endeavour to encourage this with clients' settings. If this is not possible an in-person visit should be considered for all clients.

In-person visits

There are situations where it is not possible or appropriate to access clients via remote means, or there are over-riding reasons for needing to see the physical environment where our client is living. In these situations, an in-person visit should take place after appropriate risk assessment. This must be judged in every case and not just by type of referral or issue.

If you believe a client requires an in-person visit you should discuss this with your line manager. You should then jointly complete a full risk assessment. The form should be saved on the client file.

Visits to Clients – Checklist

Please ensure that you follow the [Visits to Clients Checklist](#) which can be found here.