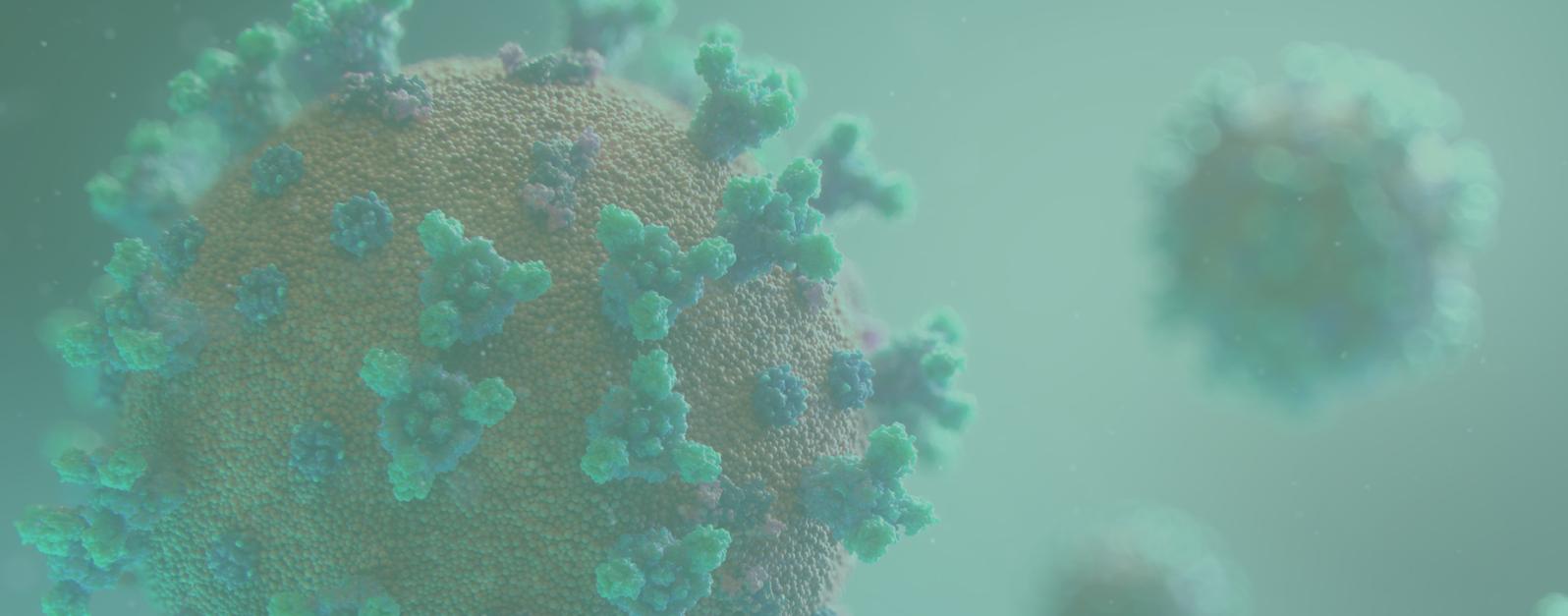


NOAH COVID-19 Animal Health Industry **Best Practice Guideline**

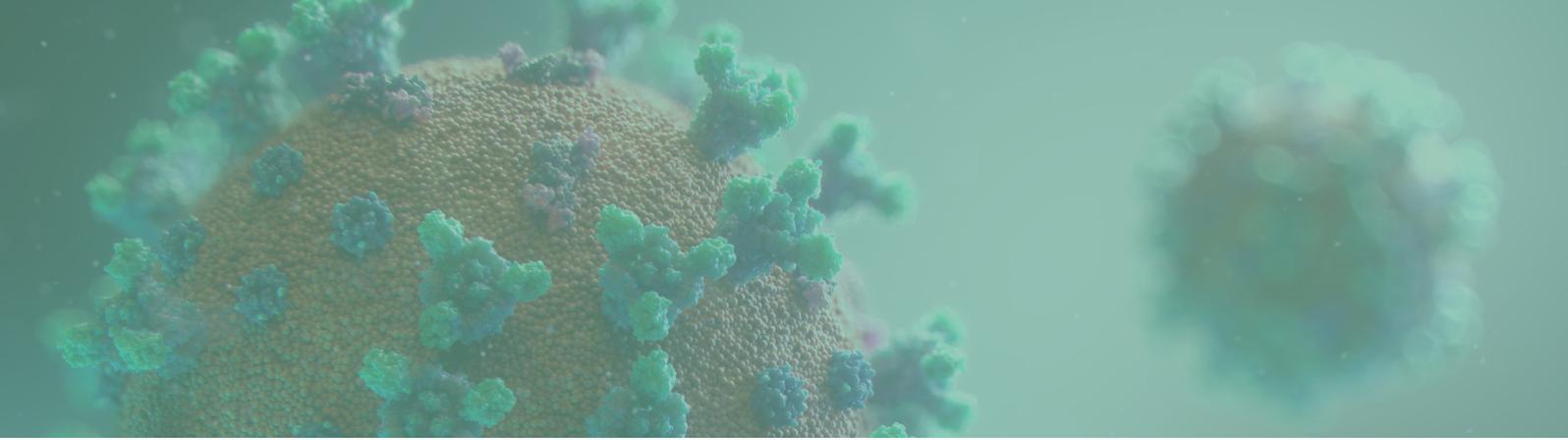


NOAH COVID-19 Animal Health Industry **Best Practice Guideline**

This guide is intended to support animal health companies and their staff as they plan and restructure working activities following the publication of Government plans to ease lockdown restrictions. This is not a legal document and use of these guidelines is on a voluntary basis. The guideline will be reviewed every three months.

Staff in customer facing roles, such as sales representatives and field-based technical advisors, will need to carefully consider how business objectives can practically be achieved. Whilst developing company specific bespoke plans, the following broad points should first be considered:

- Government guidance in the UK that applies to all aspects of work, including travel, is under constant review and subject to change¹. It is the responsibility of every individual and business to keep up to date with the changing requirements. Links are provided at the end of this guide to help you easily find the relevant information.
- England, Wales, Scotland, and Northern Ireland publish specific guidance for each country^{2,3,4}. This has practical consequences for those planning to work and travel over borders. You can expect guidance and easements that differ in message or timeframe from one country to another. Localised restrictions with associated guidance may also apply.
- Working within these Government guidelines, the RCVS⁵ has developed a flowchart for veterinary practices to use as they consider how to expand services beyond emergency and essential work. The BVA⁶ has also produced general principles to help vet teams transition to a more normal range of services. Best practice includes working within and supporting these veterinary professional and association guidelines.
- In the short to medium term, veterinary practices will not see a return to pre-COVID 'business as usual'. Each practice will need to individually assess the risks for their staff and clients, determine how they can mitigate these risks and then implement plans⁷. As part of this process, meetings and activities with animal health sales and technical representatives are likely to be under review. You will need to work closely with vet practices, pet shops and SQP premises, to plan mutually acceptable new ways of working and to ensure that they wish to meet with representatives at this time.
- Making these changes to your normal ways of working such as adhering to social distancing guidance and using face coverings where recommended, helps control the spread of the virus and visibly demonstrates to staff and customers that risks are being mitigated.
- The first step is to carry out a risk assessment for company visits in line with HSE guidelines⁸.



In assessing risk and developing company specific practices, the following should be considered and evaluated:

1 Social Distancing:

- Government required social distancing measures are in place to help control the spread of the virus.
- Plan and discuss with veterinary practice staff what social distancing arrangements are in place and ensure that staff adhere to the practice's wishes.
- When appropriate and by appointment, meetings should respect the current social distancing measures in force.
- Where it is not currently possible or appropriate to meet in person, consider how you can most effectively hold meetings or other activities online. Over time, and in response to the evolving risk level, it may be appropriate to reintroduce some face-to-face meetings.
- In all cases, work closely with customers, and regularly review, a mutually acceptable solution.

2 Travel:

- How far are sales representatives and technical field staff permitted to travel?
- Have you considered local and country specific travel restrictions?
- What are appropriate modes of transportation – risks with private and public transport?
- Using company vehicle – comfort breaks and hand hygiene when refuelling at a pump?
- Passengers in company vehicle, number of staff travelling together?
- Avoidance of hot spots with higher risk⁹?
- Travel frequency?
- Overnight stays?

3

Personal protective equipment (PPE)¹⁰:

- PPE protects the user against health or safety risks at work
- Face coverings are not PPE
- What kind of PPE should company staff use?
- Disposal of PPE?
- Management of clothing, shoes, etc.?
- Hand hygiene supplies and protocols?

4

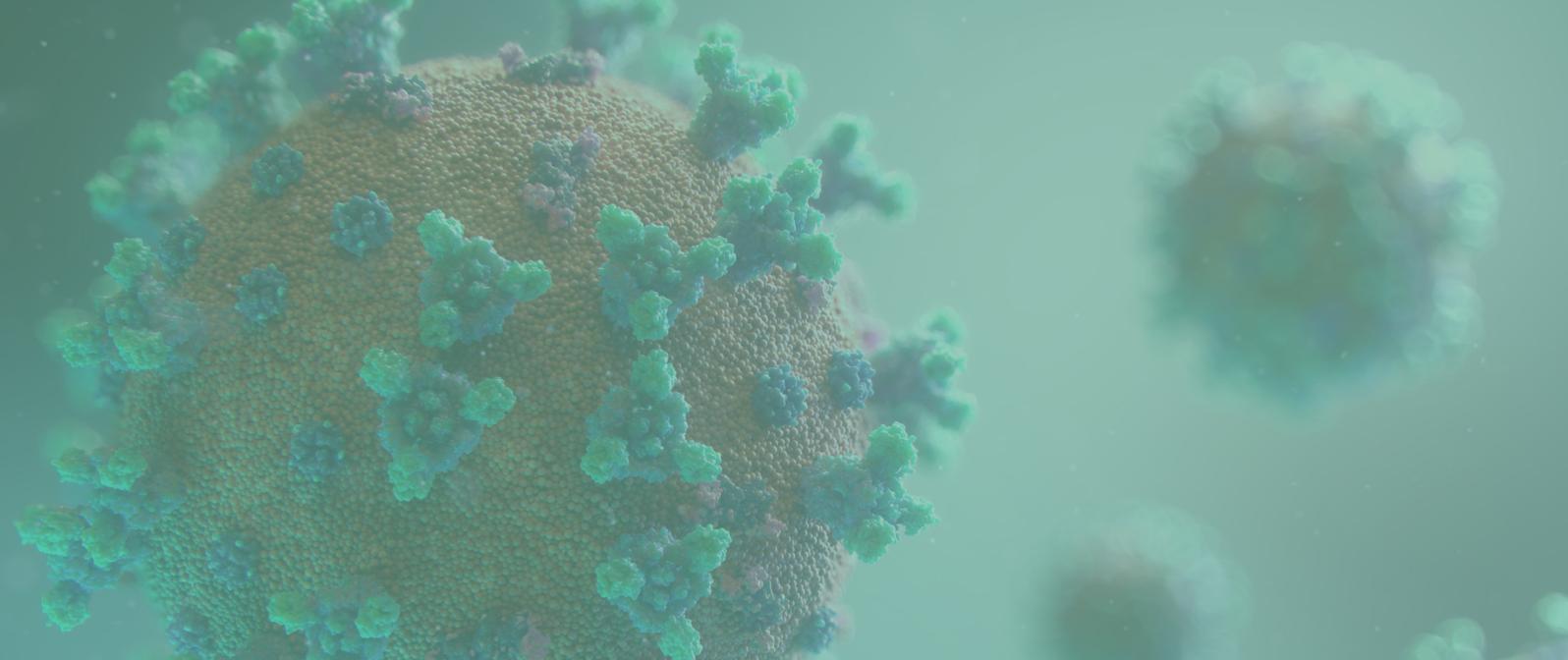
Biosecurity:

- Company representative contact with animals on field calls?
- How to ensure that biosecurity protocols are integrated into COVID-19 protocols?

5

Meetings & field visits:

- Monitoring health and actions in case of developing COVID-19 symptoms¹¹?
- Ensuring vet practices, pet shops and SQP premises wish to meet with company representatives
- Limitations on meeting sizes?
- What is appropriate in which phase of re-opening?
- Meeting room size requirements?
- Providing food at meetings? Use of restaurants?
- Restrictions on number of visits per day?
- Protocol for infection prevention prior to entering premises?
- Number of company representative attending a single visit?
- Collection and delivery of samples?
- Sanitisation of equipment used on visit?
- What happens if a company representative is exposed to a COVID-19 case?



Further Information:

Please visit these information resources regularly as advice is subject, and likely, to change over time.

1. **UK:** www.gov.uk/coronavirus and www.gov.uk/guidance/working-safely-during-coronavirus-covid-19
2. **Scottish Government:** www.gov.scot/coronavirus-covid-19/ and www.gov.scot/publications/coronavirus-covid-19-phase-1-business-and-physical-distancing-guidance/
3. **Welsh Government:** <https://gov.wales/coronavirus> and <https://gov.wales/taking-all-reasonable-measures-maintain-physical-distancing-workplace>
4. **Northern Ireland:** www.nidirect.gov.uk/campaigns/coronavirus-covid-19 and www.nibusinessinfo.co.uk/content/coronavirus-workplace-safety-guidance-and-priority-sector-list-published
5. **RCVS:** www.rcvs.org.uk/setting-standards/advice-and-guidance/coronavirus-covid-19/
6. **BVA:** www.bva.co.uk/coronavirus/ and <https://www.bva.co.uk/media/3500/bva-updated-guidance-for-veterinary-practices-on-working-safely-during-covid-19-final-28-may-2020.pdf>
7. In Practice, June 2020: Practical tips for managing change during the Covid-19 pandemic <https://inpractice.bmj.com/content/42/5/297.full>
8. **HSE:** www.hse.gov.uk/news/coronavirus.htm?utm_source=hse.gov.uk&utm_medium=refferal&utm_campaign=coronavirus&utm_content=home-page-banner and www.hse.gov.uk/simple-health-safety/risk/index.htm
9. **PHE:** www.gov.uk/government/organisations/public-health-england
10. **HSE - PPE** in non-healthcare work during the coronavirus outbreak: www.hse.gov.uk/coronavirus/ppe-face-masks/non-healthcare/index.htm and www.hse.gov.uk/toolbox/ppe.htm
11. **NHS** guidance on what to do if you have symptoms: www.nhs.uk/conditions/coronavirus-covid-19/symptoms/