

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

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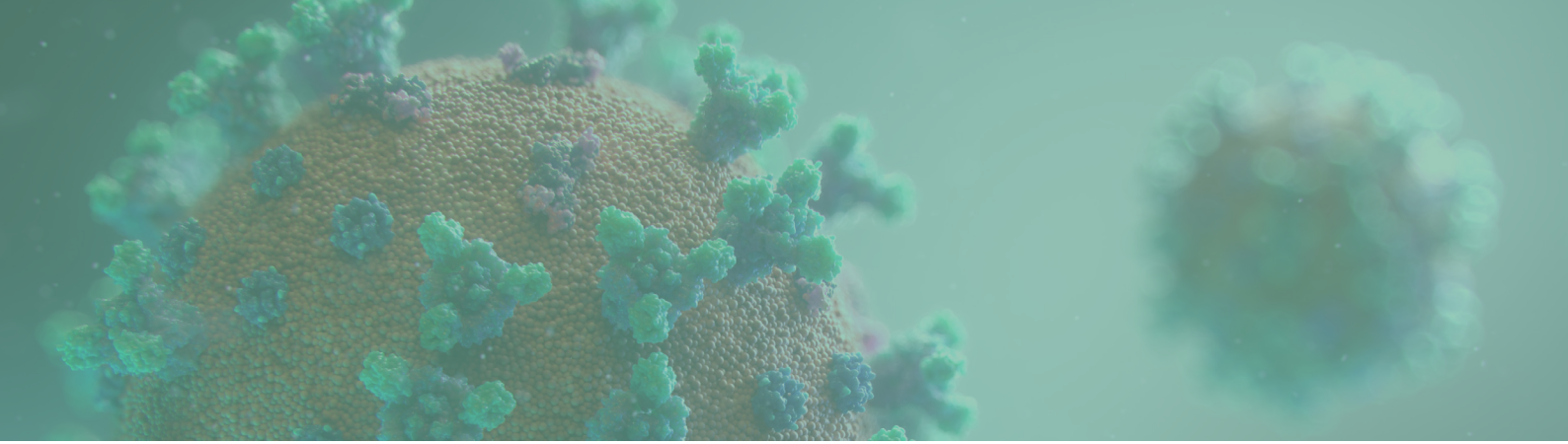
# NOAH COVID-19 Animal Health Industry **Best Practice Guideline**

This guide is intended to support animal health companies and their staff as they plan and restructure working activities around easing of Government restrictions across the UK. This is not a legal document and use of these guidelines is on a voluntary basis. The guideline will be reviewed regularly.

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 change<sup>1</sup>. 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<sup>2,3,4</sup>. This has practical consequences for those planning to work and travel over borders. You can expect guidance and restrictions/easements that differ in message or timeframe from one country to another.
- Working within Government guidelines for all four nations, the RCVS<sup>5</sup> has published new Covid recovery guidance for the veterinary professions in the UK, which will gradually replace emergency guidance and aims to help veterinary practices begin a phased return to near-normal operations, subject to a number of provisions. The BVA<sup>6</sup> has also produced guidance for veterinary practices on working safely as lockdown restrictions are eased.
- In the medium term, during the recovery period across the UK, veterinary practices can use the new RCVS guidance to enable them to provide services to clients in accordance with their professional judgement, with an ongoing requirement to maintain biosecurity and social distancing, and any other relevant government guidelines and restrictions.
- As part of this recovery 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 with representatives during this time.
- 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 guidelines<sup>7</sup>.





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

## 1 Social Distancing and other mitigations:

- Government required social distancing measures are in place to help control the spread of the virus. Other mitigations include the wearing of face coverings.
- Animal health company workplace/employee testing could be considered where available.
- Plan and discuss with veterinary practice staff what social distancing and other 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. During the recovery period and easing of restrictions, 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 risk?
- Use of Government/NHS Test and Trace Apps in England and Wales to understand risk/exposure?
- Travel frequency?
- Overnight stays?

# 3

## Personal protective equipment (PPE)<sup>8</sup>:

- 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 symptoms<sup>9</sup>?
- Ensuring vet practices, pet shops and SQP premises wish to meet with company representatives
- Limitations on meeting sizes?
- What is appropriate and legal in which phase of the pandemic?
- 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 representatives 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 and when/how to get a COVID-19 test<sup>10</sup>?



## Further Information:

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

1. **UK:** [www.gov.uk/coronavirus](http://www.gov.uk/coronavirus) and [www.gov.uk/guidance/working-safely-during-coronavirus-covid-19](http://www.gov.uk/guidance/working-safely-during-coronavirus-covid-19)
2. **Scottish Government:** [www.gov.scot/coronavirus-covid-19/](http://www.gov.scot/coronavirus-covid-19/) and [www.gov.scot/publications/coronavirus-covid-19-phase-1-business-and-physical-distancing-guidance/](http://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](http://www.nidirect.gov.uk/campaigns/coronavirus-covid-19) and [www.nidirect.gov.uk/articles/coronavirus-covid-19-regulations-guidance-what-restrictions-mean-you](http://www.nidirect.gov.uk/articles/coronavirus-covid-19-regulations-guidance-what-restrictions-mean-you)
5. **RCVS:** <https://www.rcvs.org.uk/news-and-views/news/coronavirus-recovery-guidance-issued-in-line-with-government/>
6. **BVA:** [www.bva.co.uk/coronavirus/](http://www.bva.co.uk/coronavirus/), [www.bva.co.uk/coronavirus/coronavirus-advice-for-veterinary-professionals/](http://www.bva.co.uk/coronavirus/coronavirus-advice-for-veterinary-professionals/) and [www.bva.co.uk/media/4054/bva-guidance-for-veterinary-practices-on-working-safely-during-covid-19-march-2021.pdf](http://www.bva.co.uk/media/4054/bva-guidance-for-veterinary-practices-on-working-safely-during-covid-19-march-2021.pdf)
7. **HSE:** [www.hse.gov.uk/news/coronavirus.htm?utm\\_source=hse.gov.uk&utm\\_medium=refferal&utm\\_campaign=coronavirus&utm\\_content=home-page-banner](http://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](http://www.hse.gov.uk/simple-health-safety/risk/index.htm)
8. **HSE - PPE in non-healthcare work during the coronavirus outbreak:** [www.hse.gov.uk/coronavirus/ppe-face-masks/non-healthcare/index.htm](http://www.hse.gov.uk/coronavirus/ppe-face-masks/non-healthcare/index.htm) and [www.hse.gov.uk/toolbox/ppe.htm](http://www.hse.gov.uk/toolbox/ppe.htm)
9. **NHS guidance on what to do if you have symptoms:** [www.nhs.uk/conditions/coronavirus-covid-19/symptoms/](http://www.nhs.uk/conditions/coronavirus-covid-19/symptoms/)
10. **NHS free COVID-19 testing:** [www.gov.uk/get-coronavirus-test](http://www.gov.uk/get-coronavirus-test)