



**For the attention of NHS Optometrists**

East of England

By email only

Swift House  
Hedgerows Business Park  
Colchester Road  
Chelmsford CM2 5PF

[rachel.webb6@nhs.net](mailto:rachel.webb6@nhs.net)

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Dear Colleagues,

**Business Continuity Plans and Increased Transmission of new variant COVID-19**

As you are doubtless aware, there was a Central Alerting System (CAS) alert found [here](#) distributed on 24<sup>th</sup> December in relation to concerns about the increased transmissibility of the new COVID-19 (SARS-CoV-2) variant. It reiterated the importance of maintaining excellent infection prevention and control (IPC) measures in your premises. This link also provides you with access to nationally published information/guidance regarding the new variant.

It is paramount that you ensure that all recommended measures are being followed, that all staff training is up to date in respect of IPC and that all PPE is continuously available to everyone. These measures include social distancing in all locations, enhanced cleaning of communal areas, regular hand sanitisation and use of face masks and appropriate risk assessments.

Optometry premises that remain open to treat patients in line with their own Standard Operating Procedures, must offer care which is safe, necessary and clinically prioritised' as indicated by Dr Nikki Kanani in the Primary Care Bulletin on 3rd November 2020. In particular, patient flow through premises should continue to be re-assessed to ensure social distancing for all patients at all times. It is also recommended that you review your business continuity plans in light of the pandemic. Given the current heightened risk I would strongly recommend that you ensure your plans include contingency arrangements to mitigate outbreaks among your staff and/or closure of premises.

I appreciate that you and your colleagues are under unprecedented pressure from all the impacts of the pandemic and would like to thank you for your invaluable work and care for your patients and for supporting the wider NHS.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Rachel Webb', is positioned below the closing text.

Rachel Webb  
Director of Primary Care and Public Health