The COVID 19 Physical Distancing and Workplace Risk Assessment has been developed to enable local Managers in conjunction with staff to undertake a specific risk assessment, to identify risks and suitable control measures, in order to reduce the risk associated with COVID-19 in the workplace, as low as is reasonably practicable.

Government advice for COVID-19 requires employers to work through the following principles in order:

• If you are able to perform your job from home you should do this.
• Where working from home is not practicable, local managers in conjunction with staff should make every reasonable effort to comply with the physical distancing guidelines
• Strict hygiene measures must be adhered to.
• Where the physical distancing guidelines cannot be implemented in full, consideration must be given as to whether that activity needs to continue for the service to operate, and if so, an appropriate risk assessment should be in place and specified control measures applied.

The risk assessment is based on the “Guidance on Physical Distancing within the Workplace” document and completion will ensure that the guidance within the document is being followed. In utilising the assessment managers should confirm that risks have been addressed or are outstanding and therefore identify the necessary actions required.

Changes to Physical Distances

Government guidance related to physical distances within healthcare environments has changed. An Addendum, to the Guidance on Physical Distance in the Workplace describes this. Areas can only change their physical distancing requirements if they meet the criteria described below:

- Areas must comply, as a minimum with the physical distancing specified within the Addendum.
- A Physical Distancing risk assessment must be completed to ensure that the wider hierarchy of control has been considered and applied.
- The risk assessment document now includes the clinical aspects described within the hierarchy of controls
- Guidance and risk assessment regarding visitor arrangements must be complied with.

How to Use the Assessment

A risk management approach should be adopted, which should look to include;

• Reducing the numbers of people who may be potentially exposed at any time.
• Creating or maintaining physical distance through reviewing layout.

Where it is identified that these measures are not sufficient, additional controls should be explored including:

• Introduction of physical controls such as; barriers or screens, where distancing cannot be maintained.
• The wearing of Personal Protective Equipment as per Infection Prevention and Control Guidance
Management and Review of the Risk Assessment

Approval and Governance process for areas reducing to 1m:

**Acute areas:** the completed risk assessment and an SBAR that describes the reason for reducing to 1m as well as the controls measures that will be implemented to protect staff, patients and visitors should be submitted to the Acute Tactical Group for approval.

**Health and Social Care Partnerships (HSCPs):** Review the risk assessment, in accordance with local HSCP approved governance routes to ensure that suitable controls are in place to protect staff, patients and visitors. Risk assessments will be approved through this route only. Approved risk assessments must then be submitted centrally to HealthandSafety.Partnerships@ggc.scot.nhs.uk where they will be recorded.

**Estates and Facilities areas:** the completed risk assessment and an SBAR that describes the reason for reducing to 1m as well as the controls measures that will be implemented to protect staff, patients and visitors should be submitted to the Estates and Facilities Senior Management Team for approval.

**For all other areas:** please contact the Health and Safety team directly who can provide advice.

**General**

Completed risk assessments should be kept in the departmental Health & Safety Management Manual and any action plan escalated through service management.

The risk assessment should be managed in line with the NHS GGC Health and Safety Policy with ownership residing with the Management Manual holder or other competent person identified locally. The risk assessments should be reviewed regularly, in consultation with staff, to ensure suitable and effective control measures are in place, and as minimum should be reviewed:

- If staff numbers (or numbers of patients, visitors or contractors) within the area increase
- If opportunities for improvement in control measures are identified by staff
- As a precautionary measure should a member of staff within the area test positive for COVID-19 that is deemed to be work related

If none of the above trigger a review, an annual periodic review should be undertaken.

Reviews should be documented locally and made available on request i.e. by staff or other stakeholders.

**Communication**

Risk assessments should be made visible to staff.

Staff should be clear on the control measures that have been implemented in order to protect themselves, their colleagues, patients and visitors.

Staff should form part of any review process and all staff must be briefed on the outcome of the review and any resultant changes in the control measures.