**First Aid during Covid-19**

April 2020

**Purpose**

Daniel Thwaites Plc ("the Company") will operate the following policy in relation to First Aid during the COVID-19 pandemic

**Scope**

The policy applies to all trained first aiders within the Thwaites group of Companies.

Principles

This policy is correct at the time of writing on 21st April 2020

# The Policy

First Aid during COVID -19

**Procedure**

Although Daniel Thwaites PLC already has a first aid risk assessment and trained team responsible for providing first aid the COVID-19 pandemic has required the below to be added to the risk assessment found in the Operational Health and Safety Workplace Risk Assessments.

**Overview**

The [Health and Safety (First Aid) Regulations 1981](https://www.hse.gov.uk/pubns/books/l74.htm) requires (in summary) all employers to provide or ensure that there is provided:

* Such equipment and facilities as are adequate and appropriate in the circumstances for enabling first aid to be rendered to their employees if they are injured or become ill at work (Reg 3(1))
* Such number of suitable persons as is adequate and appropriate in the circumstances for rendering first-aid to his employees if they are injured or become ill at work. For this purpose, a person shall not be suitable unless she has undergone such training and has appropriate qualifications (Reg 3(2)).  If first aiders are absent “in temporary and exceptional circumstances” someone else can be appointed to take charge of anyone needing help from a medical practitioner or nurse and of the first aid equipment
* Information to employees of the arrangements made (Reg 4)

During the pandemic, there are 2 obvious areas that need to be considered.

1. **Working at Home**

Clearly what is adequate and appropriate is going to be different when teams are working from home.  Each employee working at home has access to the April 2020 Working at Home Policy however additional management controls might include:

* providing a contact number for first aiders from whom advice can still be sought
* If they live alone
	+ Imposing a requirement that they always have access to their mobile phone or landline so can call for help if needed
	+ Requiring a call when they start, and finish work so that you can be assured that they are safe and well.
1. **Working at our Premises**

The Government is keen to ensure that where working at home is not possible, people should continue to go to work provided that suitable additional measures are put in place to ensure compliance with its guidelines on hygiene and social distancing.

In contemplating what measures need to be put in place, we need to bear in mind that a designated first aider might refuse to provide first aid in the usual way, because of the risk of contracting COVID-19. In particular we must think about what will happen if cardiopulmonary resuscitation (CPR) is needed.

Daniel Thwaites PLC has duties of care not just to the injured, but also to the first aiders.

It is likely that as a minimum we will need to make additional PPE available to responding first aiders along with some additional instruction on managing the potential risks to themselves.

**Current** [**NHS guidance**](https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/novel-coronavirus-2019-ncov-interim-guidance-for-first-responders/interim-guidance-for-first-responders-and-others-in-close-contact-with-symptomatic-people-with-potential-2019-ncov) **on CPR is;**

The NHS suggests that if required to perform CPR you should complete a dynamic risk assessment **“*and adopt appropriate precautions for infection control.  Where possible, it is recommended that you do not perform rescue breaths or mouth to mouth ventilation; perform chest compressions only.  Resuscitation Council (UK) Guidelines 2010 for Basic Life Support state that studies have shown that compression only CPR may be as effective as combined ventilation and compression in the first few minutes after non-asphyxial arrest (cardiac arrest due to lack of oxygen).  If a decision is made to perform mouth to mouth …use a resuscitation face shield if available.   Should you have to give mouth to mouth ventilation there are no additional actions to be taken other than to monitor yourself for symptoms of possible COVID 19 over the following 14 days….”***

The NHS site also recommends the following PPE to assist anyone symptomatic and suspected of having COVID-19

***“Disposable gloves and fluid repellent surgical face mask …and, if available, disposable plastic apron and disposable eye protection (such as face visor or goggles) should be worn. Wash your hands thoroughly with soap and water before putting on and after taking off PPE.”***

**Accidents/Incidents**

* Any accidents or incidents must be reported to your Line Manager and in turn to Bill Holt who will log the details on the accident and incident reporting system.

**One final point –** if anyone holds a first aid certificate that expires after 16th March 2020 and you cannot access re-qualification training because of the virus, a 3 months extension to the training requirement will be given. Don’t though lose track of the need to arrange for that retraining.