

COVID-19 Lockdown Policy and Procedure

At Cherished Minds, we engage in pro-active planning around circumstances which may lead to disruption of services to clients impacting their progress, overall mental health, treatment goals and additionally impacting functionality, self-management, and associated impacts on everyday life and subsequently on parents, family and caretakers.

Cherished Minds recognises that COVID-19 and associated restrictions including lockdown periods are likely to have a range of impacts, in some circumstances a substantial impact on clients and their families and their ability to access and maintain necessary treatment and engagement with their psychologist.

Equally, Cherished Minds values the safety, health and well-being of all clients, families, staff and the wider community and will engage a measured response to COVID-19 restrictions and lockdown periods to comply with Government legislation and reduce associated risk.

Lastly, while considering the above-mentioned areas, Cherished Minds must maintain an adequate level of business continuity to ensure that the company continues to provide a stable, productive, and sustainable service to the benefit of all clients, families, staff and associated stakeholders.

Lockdown Procedure Phase ONE

Upon formal notification of lockdown in the local area, Cherished Minds will consider the guidelines including Government legislation and those advised by AHPRA, APS and AAPI. Based on this the below will be actioned:

- 1) Director to advise Cherished Minds staff regarding the activation of the COVID-19 Lockdown policy and procedure
- 2) Practitioners will consult their schedule and assess each client individually and based on their specific needs, level of complexity, risk factors, capacity to engage in the online consultation model and any other relevant factors and against the clinic standards for continued face to face consultations
- 3) Practitioners to advise administrative staff of any clients who are **exempt from** online model and may continue **face to face if they chose**. This should be done via email.
- 4) Administration contact reminding clients and email client the appropriate Zoom link to peruse online appointments for the duration of lockdown
- 5) Assessments will not be conducted during lockdown periods and will be postponed until lockdown ends
- 6) Social skills and any other groups will either been transitioned to online model or paused for the duration of lockdown
- 7) Administration to contact clients regarding assessments and groups on direction from Director or Practitioner
- 8) All intakes will be performed via zoom or phone consultation as they are parent based and do not require the client

Guidelines for Assessment of continued Treatment

During periods of lockdown, while as an essential service we are permitted to remain open for business, we are also responsible to determine if clients meet the criteria for continued face to face consultations and manage the associated need versus risk factors.

Clinic guidelines deem the below aspects as reasonable for continued face to face services:

- under the age of 6years
- nonverbal or not functionally verbal
- Clients' behaviours are complex and cause inability to engage in online model
- Moderate to severe Intellectual disability
- Family does not have access to internet, computer and is not suitable for phone consultations
- High risk of harm to self or others
- Lockdown has considerably impacted the clients well-being, mental health or caused considerable decline

In addition to the above factors, psychologist must consider if the client requires face to face or could remain on telehealth to reduce COVID risks in the clinic

Psychologists will maintain a maximum of 3 clients in clinic per day during lockdown to maintain low clinic numbers and ensure suitable physical distancing

Clients who do not meet the above criteria or another suitably assessed measure as determined by the Psychologist, will be offered services under the online model for the duration of the lockdown period.

Clients who are deemed eligible for face-to-face consultations must abide by the COVID-19 risk management measures in place including mandatory masks for those over 12years of age, QR code or visitor log sign in, temperatures taken on entry and must not be presenting with any symptoms of a cold or flu. Additionally, they must abide by any current Government legislation.

Those clients who do not meet the above criteria for continuing face to face consultations and who do not wish to access the online model will be removed from the schedule and should contact the clinic once they are seeking an appointment following lockdown or in line with the current policy. In the circumstance that clients call administration and are seeking to be removed from the schedule, Psychologists should be notified and will then contact clients to discuss options and encourage continuity of services where this is most beneficial. If clients refuse the online model, they may be considered for continued face to face in consultation with the Psychologist.

Lockdown Procedure Phase TWO

Phase two of the lockdown policy and procedure will be implemented at the discretion of the Director based on the severity of the COVID-19 virus in the community and considering factors such as impact and risk on the clients, staff, business continuity and other associated factors. In phase two of the lockdown policy and procedure more significant restrictions will be reflected in the running of the practice in an aim to further reduce associated risk relating to COVID.

Cherished Minds, staff and contractors will adhere to all legislation in addition to the below clinic policies and procedures.

- 1) Director to advise Cherished Minds staff regarding the activation of the COVID-19 Lockdown policy and procedure phase two
- 2) Clinicians to advise admin about any clients they wish to contact themselves due to sensitive reasons immediately upon phase two activation
- 3) Administration to contact all clients and transfer to telehealth or phone and encourage any questions or conversations to be directed to practitioners in their next sessions. Notes should be taken in the comments section of Halaxy appointments for practitioners to address.
- 4) Staff to work from home where possible on arrangement with the Director
- 5) The clinic will implement a strict online ONLY consultation model to be reviewed every two weeks
- 6) As determined suitable, the Director will advise staff when the clinic reverts to phase one as above
- 7) Any intakes conducted during phase two will be offered the same options and revert to phase one and associated policies at that time

Due to the above additional restrictions for clients in this phase of the policy and procedure, some options will be available ONLY to clients who were attending face to face under the phase one format above and ONLY for the duration of Phase two policy and procedure, these include:

- 1) Monthly appointments
- 2) Modified duration: 30 or 45minute appointments. Client will be billed a minimum duration of 30minutes.
- 3) Client who wish to maintain their appointment but are unable to attend online model options may request that session time is utilised for the practitioner to provide other services such as planning, program writing or other appropriate tasks in the pre-allocated session time slot. The practitioner should record these services on session/case notes and the session is billed for as normal.

Risk of Harm consideration during Phase Two

Cherished Minds practitioners should assess each client on an ongoing basis to determine any potential risk of harm concerns that may need to be addressed in the clinic in person. During the phase two of the clinics COVID management procedure, practitioners may nominate clients who they feel require face to face consultations based on a current and imminent risk to the client themselves or others such as immediate family. This risk should be determined based on a formal risk assessment where applicable or clinical observations as being risk of harm for a presenting concern which is unstable or unmanaged leading to imminent risk, this is reported to the clinic director to determine approval for face-to-face consultations.

Conditions of clinic attendance include the following:

- 1) Adhering to all legislative requirements
- 2) Completing QR code check in
- 3) Wearing face masks for all over 12years of age
- 4) Completing a COVID test and submitting the negative result to info@cherishedminds.com.au prior to attending the clinic for the prescheduled appointment

NB: The above conditions must be met for each attendance and are a condition of entry into the clinic

Practitioners must complete the above approval process with ample time prior to the appointment for all aspects to be complete. Risk will be monitored and managed ongoing and approval will need to be sought for each consecutive appointment as required.

The above policy and procedure for both phase one and two will be active for the duration of any COVID-19 lockdown periods at the conclusion of which, Cherished Minds will revert to regular policies and procedures.

Employee and Contractor Flexible work arrangements during COVID-19 lockdown

Cherished Minds values providing employees and contractors that work with Cherished Minds clientele flexible work options during lockdown period where practically possible. This may include working from home, partial clinic attendance or full clinic attendance while following COVID-19 risk management requirements to uphold a safe working environment to provide services to clients deemed suitably necessary.

Working From Home/remote working Arrangements

Employees and contractors will be provided the option to work from home where this is practically suitable and most appropriate based on the needs of the individual, their work requirements and client service needs. This may be full time or part time work from home as determined in communication with the Director. All work from home must be discussed and agreed by the Director in advance of the working day/s via phone or email where phone is not possible.

While working from home, employees and contractors must maintain a high standard of work ethic, including but not limited to upholding all Company policies and procedures, maintaining the clinic dress code and associated professionalism and confidentiality of client and clinic information.

While working from home, employees and staff are required to have a secure and private space in a neutral setting with no personal items in view while in consultations. All information regarding the client should be held in high confidentiality and stored in a secure manner until which time it can be transferred to the clinic in person or via a secure online platform.

Furthermore, while working from home employees and contractors must ensure they have ample equipment to support efficient and effective work such as a work computer/laptop with sufficient privacy and antivirus protection, access to work emails, secure and stable internet access, access to the '3CX' phone application, access to the online 'remote work' resource file and adequate stationary supplies. Where the employee or contractor does not have suitable equipment, this may be arranged for the company to provide where suitable and practical by discussion with the Director.

While working from home, employees and contractors are required to maintain a high level of work efficiency including but not limited to:

- Completing all necessary case notes, reports and paperwork in clinic stipulated due time frames
- Completing all tasks typically associated with the role and discussing adjustments with the Director where necessary
- Efficient use and consulting all online clinic platforms including but not limited to Halaxy (scheduling and task list), Emails and Google drive
- Maintain a high level of communication with the clinic director, administration and other team members
- Communicate with administration specifically for aspects that will need to be followed up from their end including but not limited to invoicing requirements, clients who fail to attend their appointment, clients who request additional services such as reports or additional sessions, clients who request changes to their services
- Communicate with clients in an efficient manner via secure platforms such as work email and phone call using the '3CX' phone application
- Remain engaged in work related tasks during working hours and contact Director if needing guidance regarding this
- Attend all necessary meeting and PD via Zoom including but not limited to staff meetings, individual and peer supervision



All work from home arrangements are flexible and may be suitably adjusted in consultation with the Director and in advance of the next working day where this change is required.

Continuation of at the Cherished Minds Clinic

Employees and contractors will be given the option to continue to work from the Cherished Minds clinic as deemed suitable based on aspects such as personal circumstance, work requirements and client service needs.

All employees and contractors who remain working from the clinic in any capacity must comply with both legislative and company COVID-19 risk management requirements including but not limited to:

- Upholding all legislative requirements
- Upholding mandatory COVID—19 testing requirements including weekly screener testing stipulated by the Company. Preferably 2days prior to the first working day for that week
- Not attending work when unwell and obtaining a COVID-19 test before returning to work
- Sending all COVID-19 testing results to the Director as means to monitor compliance and manage safety
- Checking in using the QR code on your desk/door or written log sheet at administration
- Wearing a mask and maintaining Physical distancing

All continued clinic work attendance arrangements is flexible and may be suitably adjusted in consultation with the Director and in advance of the next working day where this change is required.