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COVID-19 Update No 32

Content of this update

- Reusable FFP3 masks (aka “Stealth Masks)

Dear Colleagues,

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## Reusable FFP3 masks

As you are aware reusable FFP3 masks are not supported by the NHS Lothian RPE team. However I am also conscious that a number of practices are using these masks as a routine for patient care. I thought it would be useful to share some thoughts about Standard Operating Procedures for them, particularly as they are acknowledged in the National SOP for care in the current pandemic.

- Reusable FFP3 masks can be utilised by practices where the practice, as the employer, holds evidence that the masks comply with HSE (Health & Safety Executive) Guidance contained in documents [INDG 479](#) and [EN149](#).
- All relevant staff members must be face fitted to reusable masks in accordance with INDG 479 and the manufacturer's guidance. Certification for each member of staff that has been face fitted to a specific model must be retained for 5-years. The fit test report should be available to the employee and accessible to others such as enforcement authorities.
- Practitioners must ensure that reusable FFP3 masks are decontaminated in accordance with manufacturer's instructions and in line with any local or National guidance in relation to the COVID19 pandemic. Models of mask with fabric straps pose specific disinfection challenges, these should be addressed in the practice's SOPs.
- Staff fitted with reusable FFP3 masks, must have received adequate information, and instruction on the use of the mask including donning and doffing.
- Reusable FFP3 respirators must be removed after leaving the surgery where the AGP has been undertaken. Removal should follow the effective doffing procedures and the mask should be taken to the area specified for cleaning and disinfection.
- A system for ensuring the replacement of expired filters on a reusable FFP3 mask should be developed and employed, in accordance with manufacturer's instructions.
  - This protocol should include a means of recording the hours of use, a calculation based on these hours which will determine the frequency of filter changing and a recording of the date of each filter change.
- Manufacturer's instructions for the model of reusable mask being used must be available.
- Practitioners are advised that this guidance on the use of reusable FFP3 masks is based on current best evidence and could be subject to future change.
- Further information is available in the HSE document [HSG 53 Respiratory Protective Equipment](#)

With all my best

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Director of Dentistry NHS Lothian



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