

BIVDA Member Notice

COVID-19 recovery: Guidance for the Re-entry of in-vitro diagnostics professionals in healthcare facilities

June 2020

The COVID-19 pandemic has brought uncertainty and disruption in the delivery of needed medical care and treatments to non-COVID-19 patient communities that rely on access to hospitals, clinics, and other healthcare facilities, as well as on IVD test results.

The UK IVD sector, and BIVDA as its trade association, remain committed to do the utmost possible to ease the difficulties that patients might face in these challenging times by ensuring that medical technologies and services are available without disruption and by contributing to a safe and swift return to regular healthcare services, including routine diagnostics procedures. We are acutely aware of the backlog of IVD interventions that has built up during the COVID-19 pandemic and the need to have diagnostic facilities up and running again.

A critical element to achieving this is the continuation of IVD professionals being able to return to healthcare facilities in order to support healthcare professionals in delivering patient care and ensuring the safe and effective use, installation, servicing, and maintenance of IVD systems.

BIVDA believes that these staff should be able to return to healthcare facilities as soon as routine services resume in order to be able to contribute to the safe and effective use of the IVD equipment, and help patients get the diagnoses they need. The presence and activities of these representatives must at any time be in line with all applicable regulatory requirements as well as with local hospital policies and rules.

Furthermore, in the context of managing the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic, BIVDA believes that IVD company staff should follow all additional protocols and requirements in place in light of COVID-19 that aim to protect the safety of patients and healthcare workers.

Those measures can include:

- a. Office of Life Science and Department of Health and Social Care rules and policies related to social distancing and safety policies, including specific considerations on Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) or hand hygiene;
- b. Hospitals' testing policies for IVD company staff entering both restricted and non-restricted areas;
- c. Any training and qualification requirements that may have been established, including a clear understanding of infection prevention recommendations for COVID-19, and facility policy related to COVID-19 safety principles

BIVDA is dedicated to engaging in discussions with UK policymakers to find timely and practical solutions and relevant guidance to support the above-mentioned possible measures.

The purpose is to make the industry's technical expertise available and accessible for doctor, patients and hospitals, as soon as possible and where and when needed. The IVD industry reaffirms its longstanding commitment to serve and protect patients whose lives depend on safe services, technologies and diagnostic procedures being available in a timely and accessible fashion.