

## COVID – 19 Infection Control Policy

Updated 14th December 2022

Aspire Speech Pathology (ASP) provides clinic sessions and mobile therapy services in local schools, preschools and at homes. ASP provides speech pathology services to individuals of all ages. ASP aims to protect our staff, clients, families, and community members by preventing the spread of COVID-19 to the best of our ability. It is imperative to implement effective infection control to limit the spread of COVID-19, keeping clients, their families and our staff healthy and safe.

### Vaccination Status

All current and future ASP staff will have had at least two doses of an approved COVID-19 vaccine before resuming face-to-face therapy. ASP staff will be highly encouraged to undertake regular booster vaccinations.

All clients, carers, guardians and other stake holders have the right to ask to see their clinician's vaccination certificate to verify that this is the case.

While it is not mandatory for our clients or their family members to have had two doses of an approved COVID-19 vaccine to access our services, we at ASP reserve the right not to provide face to face services to those that are unvaccinated. If a client, parent or guardian refuses to present adequate proof of vaccination status ASP also reserves the right to refuse service and will instead offer telehealth sessions.

Each of our clinicians have their own unique situations comprised of innumerable factors including but not limited to; personal health, living arrangements and health concerns of family members and other loved ones. As such each ASP clinician will have the autonomy to determine for themselves what services they will deliver to clients/families that have not received the COVID-19 vaccine.

**ASP staff are committed to the following responsibilities to keep both themselves and our clients safe.**

### ASP's Responsibilities:

- ASP will reschedule appointments when staff are sick and at risk of spreading an illness or disease.
- ASP will immediately notify clients if their clinician has been required to self-isolate.
- ASP will regularly clean toys and resources. All ASP staff are equipped with a hand hygiene and resource cleaning kit which is utilised at the beginning and end of every session.
- This cleaning kit includes:
  - 92 % Isopropyl Alcohol Surface Wipes
  - Surface Disinfectant
  - Foaming Hand Soap
  - Hand Pump Water Container
  - 75% Ethanol Based Hand Sanitiser
- All ASP staff will thoroughly wash their hands or use hand sanitiser before and after each session.
- ASP will cough or sneeze into their elbow and/or use a tissue. This will be followed by immediate hand washing.
- All ASP staff will attempt to maintain a social distance of 1.5m between themselves, our clients and our clients' parents/ carers/ guardians wherever possible and appropriate to the best of their ability.

*Note: Due to the nature of our therapies and our clients this is not always possible however all ASP staff will attempt to satisfy this requirement as best as they can.*

- It is strongly recommended that ASP staff will wear a face mask or face shield while delivering services to our clients. Clients and their families may request that their clinician wears a face mask/face shield at any time.

- ASP will review, and if necessary, update risk assessment(s) and this policy to determine the level of risk of COVID-19 exposure and ensure control measures are appropriate and effective.
- If an ASP staff member tests positive to covid they will stay away from the workplace for 7 days and until;
  - they have no symptoms (runny nose, sore throat, cough and fever),
  - and receive a negative COVID-19 PCR or RAT test result.

This is to help protect other staff, clients, and their families. During this time if the clinician feels well enough, telehealth sessions will be offered.

- If an ASP staff member has a person that they live with (e.g., partner/spouse, housemate, family member, etc.) test positive to covid they will seek a COVID-19 test (PCR or RAT) even if they have no symptoms (runny nose, sore throat, cough and fever). This is to help protect other staff, clients, and their families.

**It is a requirement of engagement with ASP for any of our services that clients, parents and guardians adhere to the following responsibilities to keep our staff and other clients safe.**

**Non-compliance may result in late cancelation fees or in extreme cases, permanent discharge from our caseload.**

**Client/Parent/Guardian Responsibilities:**

- Client/Parents/Guardians will cancel or reschedule appointments when a child or a child's family member is sick and at risk of spreading an illness or disease or is displaying any symptoms of COVID-19.
- Client/Parents/Guardians will alert ASP immediately if anyone in the household has been required to self-isolate, or, if anyone in the household has come into close contact with any person that has tested positive for COVID-19.
- **Home Visits:** If a client or client's family member living in the same residence tests positive to covid they will reschedule their face-to-face sessions for 7 days and until;
  - they have no symptoms (runny nose, sore throat, cough and fever),
  - and receive a negative COVID-19 PCR or RAT test result.

This is to help protect other staff, clients, and their families. During this time if the client feels well enough, telehealth sessions will be offered.

- **Clinic Visits:** If a client or client's family attending the session tests positive to covid they will reschedule their face-to-face sessions for 7 days and until;
  - they have no symptoms (runny nose, sore throat, cough and fever),
  - and receive a negative COVID-19 PCR or RAT test result.

This is to help protect other staff, clients, and their families. During this time if the client feels well enough, telehealth sessions will be offered.

- **School Visits:** If a client tests positive to covid they will reschedule their face-to-face sessions for 7 days and until;
  - they have no symptoms (runny nose, sore throat, cough and fever),
  - and receive a negative COVID-19 PCR or RAT test result.

This is to help protect other staff, clients, and their families. During this time if the client feels well enough, telehealth sessions will be offered.

- Client/Parents/Guardians will perform all personal and hand hygiene practices.
- Client/Parents/Guardians and their children will thoroughly wash their hands with our therapist on arrival and after every session.
- Parents/Guardians will assist their child to blow their nose, dispose of the tissue and follow this with hand hygiene for both parent and child.

- Parents/Guardians will assist their child to cough or sneeze into their elbow or a tissue and follow this with hand hygiene for both parent and child.
- Parents/Guardians will attempt to maintain a social distance of 1.5m between themselves and ASP clinicians wherever possible and appropriate to the best of their ability.
- Parents/Guardians are strongly encouraged to wear a face mask or face shield while ASP clinicians are present to deliver services.

For further information on infection control, refer to the “Breaking the chain of Infection” brochure by the National Health & Medical Research Council (NHMRC – Australian Government).

Please feel free to contact [info@aspirepeechpathology.com.au](mailto:info@aspirepeechpathology.com.au) or 0468 606 812 with any questions in regard to COVID-19 infection control.

NSW Health strongly recommends people:

- wear a mask indoors including in the office and on public transport
- work from home if they have COVID-19, have had contact with a case, or are at higher risk of severe illness, where possible
- test regularly if they have had contact with a case
- get together outdoors or in well-ventilated spaces.

### **Agree and Sign**

Please sign below to agree to the above outlined policy and procedures.

Please ensure that you have read this policy thoroughly and understand each of the requirements before signing.

Signature of Client/Parent/Guardian

Name of Client/Parent/Guardian

Date Signed