

**Basketball**  
Northern Ireland



# RETURN TO PLAY



## CORONAVIRUS (COVID-19)

**WE ALL  
MUST DO IT  
TO GET  
THROUGH IT**



**STAY SAFE**



**SAVE LIVES**



# RETURN TO PLAY



Guidelines for the following will be found in this document:

- A letter from the Basketball NI Board
- Update Sport NI Information
- Sport NI Phased Management Response
- Basketball NI Road Map Summary
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It's been a while, but it's time for the Physical Return! Some of you have already begun and many of you are tentatively putting plans in place. Things are changing rapidly and it will take a while to adjust to a new way of doing things. There is lots of in-depth guidance in our Return to Play document but if you have any questions email [returntoplay@basketballni.com](mailto:returntoplay@basketballni.com).

**WE ARE ASKING ALL CLUBS AND ALL INDIVIDUALS ASSOCIATED WITH BASKETBALL TO TAKE RESPONSIBILITY FOR REDUCING THE RISK OF COVID-19**

# A LETTER FROM BASKETBALL NI BOARD

CORONAVIRUS (COVID-19)

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SAVE LIVES

Dear Members,

Thank you for your patience regarding the return to our sport of basketball. Our 'Return to Play' protocol is under the direction and guidance of the NI Executive. This document is supported by Sport NI, NI Sports Forum, FIBA Restart and the National Governing body of Basketball Ireland.

From 23rd April, structured outdoors sport training restrictions evolve and with it the welcome return of internal club competition. All competition is to be mitigated and managed as per our Return to Play Guidelines Below.

We encourage our Clubs to take care during this next phase of sub-steps of Phase 2 to allow your members to socialise, rebuild the friendships and team morale which may have suffered due to the long period of non-participation.

Our indoor sport of basketball is hopeful for a return, pending guidance, on the 24th of May 2021. We would ask our members to complete their 'Risk Assessments' in preparation for the Indoor Return in advance and share this information with the [returntoplay@basketballni.com](mailto:returntoplay@basketballni.com) account.

Please note your Risk Assessment will guide you through each step making sure that all of the correct data is collected and stored safely as we all aim to help mitigate unnecessary contact and help stop the spread of Covid 19.

Sport NI and Department for Communities have advised Basketball NI to put in place 'Return to Play' protocols with sanctions to affiliated clubs and members. We ask all our members to respect and adhere to the protocols and sanctions put in place by Basketball NI and that everyone in the basketball community takes a responsibility for and complies with hygiene and social distancing directives to ensure a safe return to our sport.

<https://www.executiveoffice-ni.gov.uk/news/statement-executive-decisions>

Basketball NI has worked closely with The NI Sports Forum, Sport NI and DfC with an aim to help aid the Return for Activities of basketball and we appreciate the support of clubs at this time. We have lobbied intensively to help bring our sport back. We ask that you respect this process and others in sport by supporting the next steps as we return.

We appreciate that everyone is missing our indoor sport of basketball but it is vitally important that we treat the stage with extreme care and caution as we take small steps in returning to our great game as we know it.

We appreciate your support during this time and hope to see you all playing safely on the courts in the year ahead.

Yours in Sport

Basketball NI Board



## GUIDANCE NOTE

This document should be read in conjunction with the Basketball Ireland's Return to Play and the Northern Ireland Executive Government's and Sport NI's Return to Sport Road Map.

The information in this document is intended for the guidance of Basketball Northern Ireland (BNI) and is not intended to replace the guidance and restrictions of the Government and public health authorities.

This document is primarily for use by BNI Clubs, Players, Coaches, Volunteers, Family members and Fans who are looking for guidance in the restart of basketball in their local area.

## MANAGEMENT OF THE RETURN TO TRAINING OUTDOORS

From 12th April, structured outdoor sport training for up to 15 people (including coaches) can resume if organised by clubs/individuals affiliated to recognised sports governing bodies or representative organisations for sport and physical activity. For the purposes of this guidance, recognised sports governing bodies and representative organisations for sport and physical activity is defined as: Organisations that regulate and provide advice and guidance to their members/clubs on matters relating to sport and physical activities. These bodies/organisations must have developed Return to Sport Covid protocols and be in a position to engage with their members on the implementation of protocols aimed at ensuring compliance from all participants. To comply with the regulations any individual / club organising outdoor sport training needs to be able to satisfy the following criteria:

**(a) they are affiliated to or have membership of a body / organisation that has oversight of the standards of their provision**

**(b) they have appropriate Return to Sport Covid protocols in place**

The intention is to enable those who provide sports training in well-regulated environments to play their part in delivering cautious first steps in the return of outdoor sport. Qualified providers with appropriate affiliations and protocols will be able to meet the criteria.

# SPORT NI PHASED MANAGEMENT OF RETURN TO TRAINING

## Guidance note on Phase 2 of the Pathway out of Restrictions for Outdoor Sport

### Background

The NI Executive recently announced the Pathway out of Restrictions, which included a strand for Sport and Leisure activities. Two infographics have been created to help Outdoor sports plan their approach to Phase 2 of the Pathway. The first infographic shows preparation that is necessary to ensure that Phase 2 is successful. That fact that Phase 2 is called 'Cautious First Steps' indicates the need for sports to progress gradually and sequentially through a number of sub steps. These sub steps are shown in the second infographic.

The timeframe for each Phase will be dictated by data related to health, economic and community factors. Progression will only take place if the data is positive.

### Preparation for Phase 2

This infographic summarises the key responsibilities of Governing Bodies, clubs and coaches. In practical terms, it is important that Governing Bodies take responsibility for their clubs and take a leadership role in providing guidance on protocols, training plans and modifications to training practice. Governing Bodies can advise how best to implement the training in small groups whilst maintaining the integrity of the information shown in the second infographic. It is key that Governing Bodies keep a strong hand on the activities of their clubs, taking the lead on providing guidance and education to clubs on best practice. In some sport and leisure situations there may not be a recognised Governing Body. However, there will be representative organisation that regulates providing advice and guidance to members / clubs on matters relating to sport and physical activities. These organisations should take responsibility for the activities listed against Governing Bodies in the preparation infographic.

Clubs are required to risk assess their situation and build their own action plans using the Governing Body Protocols for guidance. There are some good protocols in existence from the earlier phase of the Covid-19 journey but these should still be revisited and if necessary refreshed in preparation for Phase 2. There are resources available on <http://www.sportni.net/return-to-sport/> that can help with protocol design.

Coaches may design a training plan for the whole of Phase 2 but need especially to focus on modifying training practice for sub step (a) which is where they will begin. Competitive sport outside of elite level will not return until the end of Phase 2.

Governing Bodies / representative organisations are asked to consider and put in place appropriate sanctions for non-compliance by clubs or individuals. This is necessary to help ensure that the integrity of Phase 2 and each of the sequential sub steps is retained.

Clubs will need to refresh signage and ensure supply and use of sanitation products. Promoting public health messages remains a key part of the Covid-19 response. Indoor facilities remain closed (with the exception of a toilet for emergency use).



## Cautious First Steps

**Outdoor Sport**  
Pathway Out of Restrictions - Preparation for phase 2

**Phase 1** | **Phase 2** | **Phase 3** | **Phase 4** | **Phase 5**

**In Preparation:**

**Governing Bodies**

- Refresh Protocols
- Educate members
- Consider sanctions for non-compliance

**Clubs**

- Refresh risk assessments / action plans
- Promote HANDS - FACE - SPACE through signage
- Keep records for contact tracing
- Build training plans - Be ready to start at sub-step (a)
- Modify training practices to minimise close contact until sub-step (c)
- Enforce rules on no spectators
- Keep indoor facilities closed

For details of activities permitted see **Cautious First Steps**

Department for Communities | An Roinn Pobal | Department for Communities

Progression driven by positive health, economic & community data

### Pathway Out of Restrictions for Sport: Update 16 April 2021

The NI Executive made further announcements regarding the Pathway out of Restrictions for Sport on 15 April 2021. These announcements relate to sport below elite level and provide dates for movement to Phase 2 sub-steps (b) **outdoor training in squad groups** and (c) **outdoor competitive sport without spectators**. Further information is available below.

#### Until 23rd April

Only outdoor sport in groups of 15 and organised by a club, individual or individuals affiliated, in each case, to a relevant sporting body or to an organisation that regulates and provides advice and guidance to members on matters relating to sport and physical activities is permitted. There must be no competitive sport below elite level.

#### From 23rd April

*The following relates to non-elite level outdoor sport affiliated to recognised sports governing bodies or representative organisations for sport and physical activity*

**Outdoor sport organised by a club, individual or individuals affiliated will be extended to include squad training.**

- Activities such as outdoor fitness classes, yoga classes or equivalent should remain at group sizes of 15.
- Squad training in some sports may be larger but only to the level that is necessary to prepare for competitive sport. This must not be a signal to congregate squads with much greater numbers than the minimum required to prepare for competition.

## PLEASE NOTE THE FOLLOWING INFORMATION ON NOT EXCEEDING NUMBERS AT SESSIONS

**Competitive outdoor sport can be organised by a club, individual or individuals affiliated, with numbers (including participants, officials, management and essential support personnel) not exceeding 100 and no spectators permitted.**

*In many cases competitive sports events can be held with numbers significantly below 100. This should be the norm for many sports. Numbers are set around essential participants only e.g. athletes, officials, coaches. Sports should think about the minimum number of participants required to stage the event safely. The absolute maximum on site at any time should be 100 and in the case of many events will be much less. If events cannot be held within this capped number then they must not take place at this time.*

*If for example 42 individuals are required to stage an event, sports cannot permit a further 58 individuals to observe. Remember **there are to be no spectators at all**. Governing Bodies, clubs and individuals are expected to be fully compliant with the regulations and have protocols in place to manage this; this includes protocols for responsible adults who may be involved in drop off and pick up of younger participants.*

### **From 30 April**

Individual activities in gyms, swimming pools and other large venues will be permitted. One to one training/coaching (with social distancing) will be allowed and a carer will be permitted to be present where required.

**From 24 May**, the NI Executive hopes to be able to allow  
The resumption of indoor group exercise and training with numbers limited to suit the venue.

Sport NI would expect to be able to provide further detail regarding the return of indoor sports within the next week.

**Please direct any questions to: [returntoplay@basketballni.com](mailto:returntoplay@basketballni.com)  
FAQ's - Phase 2 of the Pathway out of Restrictions for outdoor sport**



No Basketball of any kind in groups.

Individuals can play at home following government guidelines.



**PHASE 2 UNTIL 23RD**

**OUTDOOR EXERCISE ONLY**

Outdoor Sport between 2 families and maximum of 10 is possible by way of exercise.

Keeping contact to a minimum and practice hygiene measures with hand sanitiser, washing hands and washing equipment.

Individuals & families within the same household can play at home following hygiene measures.

**PHASE 2 SUB STEP A, B, C INCLUSIVE**

15th April to 29th of April  
**OUTDOOR BASKETBALL ONLY**

Coaches should limit contact Basketball within Phase 2 and build during Sub Steps.

Promote Spacial Awareness, Fun and Social Interaction

Coaches should not cross between groups of 15 when possible

Internal Club Game Competition' is allowed but limited to 15 Minutes of Mitigated contact time. See Player Contact Time for details. 1 Hour Scrimmage Equals 15 Minutes of natural contact time.

Basketball practice can proceed outdoors advised with pods of 15 individuals to included coaching staff.

Players are to social distance avoiding unnecessary contact.

Use of individual ball is highly advised to help with mitigation.

Keeping contact to a minimum and practice hygiene measures with hand sanitiser, washing hands and washing equipment advised in 20 minute intervals.

**PHASE 3**

**FROM 30th of April**

Individual activities in gyms and other large venues will be permitted.

One to one training/ coaching (with social distancing) will be allowed and a carer will be permitted to be present where required.

Risk Assessments to be completed and sent for individual 1 to 1 Sessions to [returntoplay@basketballni.com](mailto:returntoplay@basketballni.com)

**PHASE 4**

From 24 May, the NI Executive hopes to be able to allow The resumption of indoor group exercise and training with numbers limited to suit the venue.

Sport NI would expect to be able to provide further detail regarding the return of indoor sports within the next week.

Please note details of mitigation to follow under direction of Sport NI and DfC.

# RETURN TO ACTIVITY

## NEW MEASURES INTRODUCED FOR SPORT NI WITHIN PHASE 2 - PATHWAY OUT OF RESTRICTIONS

**Basketball has been welcomed to return slowly through the use of outdoor facilities. We hope you are tentatively putting plans in place. The situation is changing regularly and it will take a while to adjust to a new way of doing things.**

- Indoor Basketball facilities are closed in use for Elite Purposes ONLY **until 30th of April where 1 to 1 sessions can commence in gyms and large venues**
- Basketball NI asks that all **Risk Assessments** are sent to [returntoplay@basketballni.com](mailto:returntoplay@basketballni.com) before activation your session.
- BNI Advise all clubs to complete "**Contact Tracing Forms**" for all participants and necessary staff present.
- Training can commence in larger groups of participants but BNI Advise sticking to pods of **15 people** and when working in larger groups follow safeguarding guidance for ratios of players ; this includes coaches and is limited to essential participants only - meaning **no spectators present.**
- Larger groups in training should be noted on your risk assessment
- Although the number of people has increased to **100 people** this is with the understanding that it is to be capped at the amount of participants needed for a competitive game.
- 42 Participants is the maximum number for competition games when they return - **Please see page 16 Guidance for Introducing Competition Defining Personnel**
- Where possible children should be dropped off and picked up or parents/guardians should remain in cars. Please note competitive and friendly games are not permitted at this point.
- **NO CAR SHARING IS ALLOWED**
- Coaches are to deliver Skill drills & tactical drills are to be carefully planned to reduce contact time with the inclusion of mitigated competition
- All equipment should be sanitised before, during & after use - **advised 20 minute intervals**
- In all cases, maintain hygiene standards directed by government
- Before and After practice prevent congregations of people
- Retain records of participants attending practice and timeframe for a period of **21 Days**



### ALL CLUBS AND PLAYERS ARE TO CONTINUE TO FOLLOW SOCIAL DISTANCE GUIDELINES OUT SIDE OF ON COURT ACTIVITIES

#### BASKETBALL NI SANCTIONS

- BASKETBALL NI HAVE THE RIGHT TO APPLY SANCTIONS PROPORTIONATE TO THE SEVERITY OF ANY BREACHES IDENTIFIED.
- THESE MAY RANGE FROM TEMPORARY EXCLUSIONS, BANS FROM FUTURE COMPETITION ETC.
- ANY CLUB WHO DOES NOT FOLLOW THE ABOVE STEPS WILL BE SUSPENDED FROM ACTIVITY IMMEDIATELY PENDING FURTHER INVESTIGATION.



# You must **NOT ATTEND** practice if in the past 14 days you:

- Have been unwell or had any flu-like symptoms
- Have been in contact with a known or suspected case of COVID-19
- Have had any respiratory symptoms (even if mild)



## Hygiene & Safety Protocols - Club

- All surfaces, basketballs and equipment are wiped down before and after each practice session with the appropriate anti-bacterial disinfectant wipes or soap, particularly those frequently touched - this includes court entry points and any other high touch areas as well as all equipment including cones and balls
- Hand sanitiser dispensers are provided at both outdoor and indoor court entry points and appropriate points around the court
- Bins are provided around the court and regularly emptied

## Hygiene Protocols-Coaches/Players/Officials

- Wash hands or use hand sanitiser immediately before and after practice and during scheduled breaks
- Do not spit at any time
- Do not share drink bottles and players clearly label their own bottle
- Players to take their worn / used items, home to wash individually
- Clip boards, whistles and pens are not to be shared by coaches
- Use of Toilet and Shower facilities to be used at home before and after training
- DO NOT CARPOOL
- Do not hang around after sessions are complete



For the latest COVID-19 advice and information, go to:  
<https://www.nidirect.gov.uk/campaigns/coronavirus-covid-19>  
<http://www.sportni.net/sport-ni-statements/>

# RISKS WITHIN BASKETBALL

Within a basketball game, there are high levels of contact for all players and staff. These risks can be reduced during training and games by utilising specific guidance. When the government gives the opportunity to return to competitive basketball, members will have to be aware that the return will be managed to reduce the risk of COVID-19 spreading further than is necessary.

Should a teammate or opposition player in a recent training or match develop COVID-19 symptoms, all of those who have participated in the session will require isolation, as per the Government guidelines.

Basketball NI and Basketball Ireland are working under their respective Government guidelines at this time which are both different. BNI also highlight that unlike Basketball Ireland we do not have our own basketball facility. We estimate that just over 80% of our clubs rely on educational institutions as venues. We expect there to be significant disruption to the availability of those educational institutions as each facility will have their own re-opening procedures, which will need to be considered in addition to this plan. Basketball NI have no jurisdictions on these facilities and it is advised that clubs immediately contact schools for updates.



# GUIDANCE FOR COACHING - COVID-19 EDUCATION

While coaching children during this period, it is essential to remember that you are also responsible for continuing to ensure that the environment is safe and that the clubs safeguarding policy is adhered to and up to date.

While some families will have coped well during the lockdown, there are other families who will have faced various difficulties and it is important that you know some children may be struggling. These include being cut off from their friends and other social environments, fear of becoming ill and not knowing how to react in relation to the social distancing and other new measures.

You may have also seen in the media concerns raised in relation to potential increase in abuse (physical, mental etc) in the home and it is important to remain vigilant it's vital you report your concerns. Doing nothing is not an option. Please check-in with the children you are coaching/working with and ask them how they've been and how they're doing throughout this difficult period.



Plan sessions to build up to ensure inclusion of a thorough 'warm up' and 'cool down'. Sessions should start at a low physical intensity with gradual progression to help decrease the risk of injury after a period of low or no activity. It is highly advisable to communicate with your players the importance of strength and conditioning.

Players should bring their own water bottles; assign an area for each player to place water bottles during training to ensure that social distancing can be adhered to during water breaks. Drinks should not be shared. Ensure all equipment is sanitised prior to training. Players should refrain from spitting or clearing of nasal passages; remind participants that if they need to sneeze or cough, do so into a tissue and put the tissue in the bin.



You may have also seen in the media concerns raised in relation to potential increase in abuse (physical, mental etc) in the home and it is important to remain vigilant. It is advised that all clubs review their child protection policy in light of the lockdown pandemic. See Safe-Guarding Update Attached.

# GUIDANCE FOR CLUBS AND FACILITIES

One of the largest challenges basketball faces is access to facilities. With a vast majority of our membership playing in local school gyms, Basketball NI understands the difficulties and impact this will have on your club and our basketball community. It's also a lack of basketball facilities, both indoor and outdoor, that face our sport. Clubs may also be concerned around the costs associated with additional costs of hiring leisure facilities for periods throughout the season. Basketball NI is currently working with Sport NI and the NI Executive to come up with a solution to these issues.

## SCHOOLS ADVICE

Basketball NI would advise all clubs to contact schools to discuss how best to approach the return to play for basketball within our community. Each school will be taking direction from the education authorities however some may be on different timelines. It is important to respect the schools decisions.

## LEISURE CENTRE

Leisure Centre facilities have been told they can reopen to the public. Basketball NI has noted the cost of these facilities and the impact these costs may have on clubs in the current climate. BNI continue to advise clubs that although LC's will follow their own hygiene guidelines it is important that clubs follow risk assessments, contact tracing registers and sanitisation.

## WORKING TOGETHER NEUTRAL VENUE

Basketball NI is working on the possibility of multiple clubs playing a neutral site venues. This is a time for our sport to come together and help keep participants and our members engaged in the sport. Maximising the use of neutral sites and facilities will be important to help in our return to sport.



## WORKING TOGETHER

Put your club in the best possible position to succeed by communicating your Covid-19 Safety controls with your facility. Respect the other members of the public that also need to use the facility.



## SCHOOLS FACILITIES

Around 80% of Clubs in NI use the school facilities. We are all working through this process to together.

# GUIDANCE WHEN COMPETITION RETURNS

We ask all members to be patient on this journey to the return to Competition. We all want to see a return to competition but this may take a little time. It is important that we return to competition safely. The 2020-2021 basketball season may look a little different in our local leagues and will be discussed with all clubs in the run up to our Annual General Meeting (AGM) in our strategic workshops. Basketball NI current board pre pandemic was in the middle of a Strategic Audit in planning for a new Strategic Development Plan for 2021 to 2031. Basketball NI Strategic group intends to engage with clubs to help this development and build on guidance for competition for the season ahead.

Basketball NI is suggesting the road back to competition will include the strategic development of FIBA's 3X3 Competition across all age groups. This will allow internal club competition that will allow players to engage in competition after the pandemic. The aim of this is to build confidence in full body contact and manage competition expectations with players. See suggested steps below:

## **INTERNAL CLUB COMPETITION**

Stage 1: An example of internal club competition is to focus on a team of 12 players split into 3 teams of 4 players (3 play and one rotationally substitute). 3X3 Competition rules are 10 Minute games or first to 21 points.

## **LOCAL CROSS CLUB COMPETITION**

Stage 2: The competition progression would be for selective teams to play competitively at a geographical local level. This will help with contact tracing and build confidence in our community.

## **REGIONAL CROSS CLUB COMPETITION**

Stage 3: For Basketball NI this would mean having competition at agreed centralised neutral venues allowing all teams/members to compete at a regional level. Bringing more competition back to the game.

## **NATIONAL CROSS CLUB COMPETITION**

Stage 4: This is a return to traveling on a national scale across the country for competitions. The hope would be that all clubs will be in a more comfortable position to travel and compete.

These measures will work both in 5X5 and 3X3 levels for Basketball NI across all age groups and are dependant on a number of variables within government guidelines.



## MAIN DIFFERENCES 3X3 VS BASKETBALL

RULE	3X3	BASKETBALL
HOOP	1	2
COURT	HALF	FULL
PLAYERS	3-A-SIDE	5-A-SIDE
BALL	3X3	BASKETBALL
PLAYING TIME	10'	4 X 10'
GAME OVER	21 PTS	N/A
SHOT-CLOCK	12"	24"
FIELD GOALS	1 OR 2 PTS	2 OR 3 PTS
AFTER SCORING	NO BREAK	INBOUND

For a full breakdown on FIBA 3X3 Rules please visit <https://fiba3x3.com/en/rules.html>

Why 3X3 as part of Return To Play?

- Lower numbers of players in close contact to each other (max of 6 players in a half court setting instead of 10 with 5v5) - but can use both half courts so more players playing (12 players - 6 players x 2 half courts) but in a safer manner
- Close contact time is below government guidelines with ten min games (spending more than 15 minutes face-to-face contact within 2 metres of an infected person\*)
- More space with just 6 players in a half court - less face to face time therefore decreasing the amount of time spent closer than 2 metres
- Can be played outside and inside - all that's needed is a half court and a ball
- Can be played at every age group from U8 - seniors
- Allows players more on the ball time to have fun, develop skills and is played at a high pace (12 sec shot clock) - all points that allow skill development at a faster rate than 5v5
- It is a great teaching tool for basic 5v5 movements and skills. Often times within 5v5, the main offensive operation is performed by only 3 players (e.g. a pick and roll with the 3 players on the ball/strong side or a pass and screen away are some of the most common movements in basketball)
- FIBA 3X3 will be a strategic pathway to high level international competition for Basketball Northern Ireland into Commonwealth Games, European Championships, World & Olympic games

# GUIDANCE FOR INTRODUCING COMPETITION

## DEFINING PERSONNEL 5X5

To help with contact tracing within our sport and the fight against the spread of Covid-19 it is extremely important that we keep track of the personnel attending any events. Basketball NI has provided a sample attendance registration form and is working with government to address any additional needs for contact tracing on a daily basis. Therefore it is extremely important to identify the exact details of each person in attendance at any practice or competitive session. The below is an example of the breakdown of personnel needed to run a competitive 5X5 game and 3X3 game. Government Guidelines are yet to confirm exact numbers allowed indoors until that time each club must define the roles of personnel with a maximum of 30 players.

<b>5X5 Match</b>	<b>42</b>	<b>24 of Which Are players</b>	<b>Supporters only allowed once NI Executive gives direction.</b>
<b>3X3 Match</b>	<b>19</b>	<b>19 of Which are players</b>	
<b>Personnel</b>	<b>Team 1</b>	<b>Team 2</b>	<b>Total</b>
<b>Players 5x5</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>24 Players</b>
<b>Coaches</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>4</b>
<b>Medical / First Aid team / Covid Officer</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>4</b>
<b>Official Referees</b>	<b>2</b>		<b>2</b>
<b>Table Officials</b>	<b>2</b>		<b>2</b>
<b>Club Board / Committee / Management</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>6</b>
<b>Personnel</b>	<b>Team 1</b>	<b>Team 2</b>	<b>Total</b>
<b>Players 3x3</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>8 Players</b>
<b>Coach</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>Referee, Table Official Score Keeper, Table official, Time</b>	<b>3</b>		<b>3</b>
<b>Event Administrator</b>	<b>2</b>		<b>2</b>
<b>Medical / First Aid / Covid Officer / Digital Live Stream</b>	<b>4</b>		<b>4</b>

## COMPETITIVE GAMES

- When directed by the NI Executive we will be able to return to competitive games however as previously stated lack of facilities may become an issue.
- Clubs will have to be resourceful and able to provide safety measures for their members at multiple venues and locations to play competitive basketball.
- Hand sanitiser (minimum 60% ethanol or 70% propanol) is advised:
  - Before and immediately after training
  - When being substituted on and off the court
  - Time-outs
  - End of Quarters and Half-time
  - It should be easily accessible for ease of use at all times by all individuals during the games
- Suitable COVID-19 disposable bins need next to each team bench.
- Bench - use of chairs preferable and spaced 1 metre apart. If use of bench is the only option, marking 1 metre between each player is necessary. Note 2 metres preferred if space allows.
- The benches can be on opposite sides of the court if feasible.
- Substitutions can occur directly from the bench, no need to go to the score table.
- Have 2 match balls for the game, one can be wiped down as the game continues.
- Ball wiping by officials at all major stoppages (at the end of quarters/ time-outs).
- Face covering should be considered by coaches, table officials, statisticians and all other support staff.
- Any staff involved with floor cleaning should wear masks and wash hands immediately at half-time and full-time. There is no requirement to wear gloves as long as hand washing regime is followed.
- The cleaning of any blood/mucus/sputum/vomit should be in adherence with local policies.
- It is the Home Teams responsibility to collect all screening documents and make sure they are all filled out properly by both teams and all officials. Copies of the documents should then be passed onto each teams Club COVID-19 Officer.
- Timeouts will be increased in time length by 30 seconds to 1 minute 30 to accommodate suitable time for hand sanitisation. Every team should conduct their timeout with a minimum of 1 metre between each player or staff member for the duration, in line with suggested guidelines. Both teams to conduct the timeout on the court if unable to distance at the bench.
- Officials to monitor social distancing during timeouts and between quarters.
- Team kits - In order to reduce the risk of transmission, each team is advised to follow hygiene levels of a clean kit to be worn. Spare kits to be on hand if needed. Prior discussion with teams is encouraged here for changing facilities only when allowed by NI Executive

# RETURN TO PLAY



## ADDITIONAL CONSIDERATIONS

To further restrict the amount of contact we are advocating that the below areas are considered and adopted by teams:

1. Limit player huddles on court during dead ball situations or ensure that your players maintain a 2m+ distance with teammates.
2. Do not help teammates who may have accidentally fallen over during play to return to their feet. Although this might sound in contrary to being a good team mate, helping someone to their feet will involve hand contact with another player and provide another opportunity for virus transmission.
3. As per Government guidance avoid handshakes, high fives etc

## TRAINING CONSIDERATIONS

Whereas the above relates directly to a game of basketball we must also consider the training environment in relation to contact training, its duration and mitigation strategies.

The below principles should be applied by clubs, coaches when devising their session plans:

1. Limit player huddles during training or ensure that your players maintain a 1m+ distance with the coach and teammates. Where possible it is advised to keep players spaced out across the court to give instructions etc.
2. Contact training is permitted but should be delivered in short sections of no longer than 20 minutes with breaks for ball and hand cleaning (see points 4 & 5 below).
3. Team based scrimmaging is permitted, please follow the mitigation strategies mentioned above for players not on the court ensuring they are spaced accordingly to allow for a 2m+ space between players.
4. As per our hygiene guidance, balls should be cleaned every 20 minutes during practice sessions.
5. During ball cleaning breaks, players should be advised to clean their hands with hand sanitiser gels/sprays etc.



## AFTER TRAINING/GAMES

- Immediate hand washing or hand sanitising for a minimum of 20 seconds.
- Advised against showering or changing at the venue (local policies may be in place as well).
- No congregating at the venue after your game.
- No handshakes, high fives or other bodily contact.
- Carpooling is not recommended from the venue.

## MITIGATION STRATEGIES

Although the Sport NI initial assessment deems basketball as High Contact and low to medium risk, it doesn't take into consideration a number of main areas of the game that will need clear mitigation to avoid increased contact time. They are:

**1. Bench configuration** - To ensure a 2metre+ distance between players on the bench and the coaching/support staff.

Teams and venues will need to lengthen the player seating area for each team allowing players to be sat (if safe to do so) on the opposite side of the court. Players will have their own nominated seating area which should not be changed during the game. They will also not be required to go to the officials table to enter the game, the game officials will allow the players onto court directly from their chair/bench space.

**2. Time-outs** - To avoid lengthy huddles where players are inside 2m contact with multiple players.



Timeouts should be increased in duration (assessed by the Referee) from 1 minute to 1 minute 30 to allow for all players to configure themselves safely on the court to undertake the timeout. Timeouts must not be conducted in a close huddle therefore the only safe way to undertake this is to conduct the timeouts on the half of the court opposite their team bench. All players will be required to use hand sanitiser at this point as well.

The added duration for the timeout will also allow for the officials to wipe down the ball as per hygiene guidance.

# GUIDANCE CHECKLIST FOR CLUBS AT FACILITIES

- National government or Local Government regulations take precedence
- There has been confusion in regards to the amount of players that can take part in an outdoor or indoor “session of play”. BI and BNI are working under their respective Government guidelines at this time which are different.
- Additional venue requirements/procedures may be required for consideration by your club - It is advised to communicate regularly with your venue for updates
- Abide by guidelines set out by the NI Executive.
- All hygiene measures to be in place and it is advised to make Hygiene Procedures to be visible to all in attendance
- Emergency Operating Procedures to be visible
- Robust cleaning procedures in place and available on request- this is to include cleaning of equipment.
- When it is permitted by the NI Executive basketball can return to the use of indoor courts. (Note this may not relate to the school facility your club may use)
- If using outdoor courts be sure to do a full risk assessment on the court before planning to play on it and additionally keep in mind of general public.
- Plan time for changeover of teams after sessions so there is time to deep clean all common areas and surfaces - clubs can discuss with relative venues who is responsible for the management of changeovers.
- Take time to train club staff on management of spectators once we can bring them back to the game
- Venue has to maximise ventilation opportunity - open doors, windows etc - in order to reduce aerosol spread.
- Use of toilets to be made available
- Recommended that toilets with restricted access or reduced availability have a 1 in, 1 out rule.
- Suitable hand washing facilities must be available
- Water fountains cordoned off
- Hand sanitiser available at entrance to the building
- Recommended:
  - Coaches, Players and Staff to wear facemasks when it is appropriate (Note: not while playing)
  - Hand sanitiser on court
  - Regular disinfection of heavily used areas and surfaces
  - Increased waste disposal bins and dedicated COVID-19 disposal signage
  - Separate entrance and exits to the court and main building clearly signed
  - COVID-19 symptom checker/poster at the entrance
  - Available PPE for medical emergency and staff with knowledge on how to apply
  - Exceptions to above may apply for disability athletes or those requiring assistance to play Basketball.

# HYGIENE CONSIDERATIONS

We play a sport with bodily contact along with a high moisture level. Sweat, saliva and moisture-rich breath will all be in potential contact with all players and staff during a game or training session. This is increased when playing indoors. This is the current guidance on maintaining good hygiene for all within basketball.

These guidelines have been prepared to best reduce the amount of virus transmission. Transmission may come in a number of forms:

- Person to person
- Equipment to person
- Surfaces to person

The higher the number of people in one area, the higher the risk of transmission. Appendix 7 highlights the risk of transmission from 'Contact': 'within 1 metre of another person'. We believe that basketball is a medium risk sport (compared to other sports) due to our 'Contact' time. However, that risk is only set at that level if the following hygiene guidelines and the screening guidance is adhered to.

## PREPARATION

- Arrive to the venue already changed and ready to play
- After going to the toilet, thoroughly wash hands for a minimum of 20 seconds with soap or alcohol gel (minimum 60% ethanol or 70%)

## DURING TRAINING/PLAYING

- Ball washing/wiping down with wipes prior to starting each session with individuals to clean their own ball
- When appropriate it is advised to use a single ball. It could be shared ONLY within a household as long as it is wiped down before and after playing
- Within a club environment, everyone has to play with their own ball that has already been disinfected unless working on team drills and game situations
- In order to reduce infection risk further we are recommending stopping training and disinfecting the balls every 20min
- No use of bibs unless brought directly by the player
- No shared towels.
- No shared water bottles.
- All water bottles clearly labelled with the individuals name on it
- No 'crates' of water to be provided by clubs/coaches
- No handshakes, high fives or other bodily contact
- Have plenty of hand sanitiser available court side with regular stoppages every 20 minutes for application
- Social distancing rules apply until informed by the NI Executive - Respect social distancing at all times
- Relaxed social distancing will apply during competition elements within training environment but maintenance of 2-metre, and when necessary distancing rule used during close contact drills
- No use of changing facilities until directed by NI Executive
- Strongly advise against carpooling to venues
- Avoid public transport where possible
- Avoid touching high-contact surfaces such as door handles, benches, chairs, public computer keyboards etc.
- Coaches / Volunteers and players to wear facemasks when appropriate

# PLAYER CONTACT

Contact is defined as being 'within 1m of another person', this doesn't necessarily mean that physical contact has been made and can be further classified in a number of ways dependant on whether your position relative to the other person is:

- side to side
- front to front
- front to back

Basketball Northern Ireland have met with Basketball England who have undertaken a small research project where games spanning male, female, senior, youth, recreational and professional settings were assessed to understand the total amount of 'contact' takes place in a game of basketball to ascertain whether the sport is at a low, medium or high risk when returning to competitive training and games.



For each game, players in guard and forward positions were tracked as per below:-

- Total number of contacts (defined as being inside 1m)
- Contact type (Side to Side, Front to Front, Front to Back)
- Duration of the contact (more or less than 3 seconds)
- Duration of the contact if over 3 seconds
- Purpose of the contact if over 3 seconds

INITIAL FINDINGS ARE ON THE FOLLOWING PAGES

# CONTACT TIME INITIAL FINDINGS FOR GUARDS

- 56 contacts per 10 minutes played
- 48 are less than 3 seconds
- 8 are more than 3 seconds
- Average contact time of more than 3 seconds is 8 seconds
- Contact types for forwards are ranked as below:
- Side by Side - 65%
- Front to Back - 25%
- Front to Back - 10%
- Purpose of contact over 3 seconds
- Jump ball situation (side by side)- Average 8 seconds
- Being pressured full court defensively (face to face) - Average 4 seconds
- Team huddles on the court during dead balls (face to face) - Average 5 seconds
- Free throws (side by side) - Average 15 seconds

In summary, Guards are exposed to an estimated 2.6 mins of contact per 10 mins, which is 10.66 mins if they play the full 40 min game.

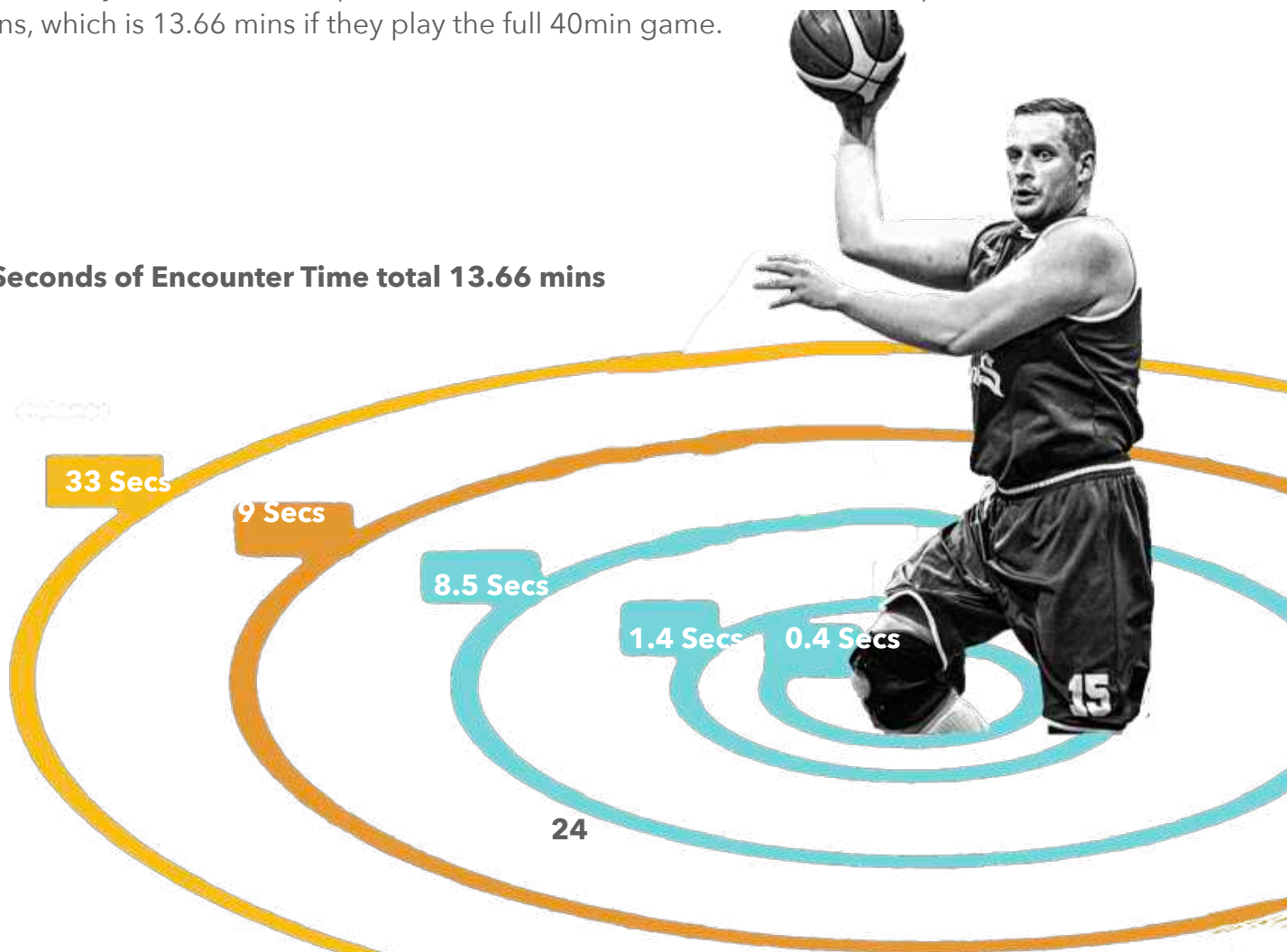


# CONTACT TIME INITIAL FINDINGS FOR FORWARD & CENTRES

- 84 contacts per 10 minutes played
- 75 are less than 3 seconds
- 9 are more than 3 seconds
- Average contact time of more than 3 seconds is 6.1 seconds
- Contact types for forwards are ranked as below:
- Side by Side - 70%
- Front to Back - 22%
- Face to Face - 8%
- Purpose of contact over 3 seconds
- Jump ball situation (face to face) - Average 8 seconds
- Backing down a player to the basket (front to back) - Average 4 seconds
- Boxing out (varies) - Average 3.5 seconds
- Team huddles on the court during dead balls (face to face) - Average 5 seconds
- Free throws (side by side) - Average 15 seconds

In summary, Forwards are exposed and estimated to 3.4 mins of contact per 10 mins, which is 13.66 mins if they play the full 40min game.

**Seconds of Encounter Time total 13.66 mins**



# REFEREES, TABLE OFFICIALS AND STATISTICIANS

- Arrive in playing kit and do not use the changing rooms.
- It is recommended to arrive at the game in adequate amount of time to perform your duties and to warm up.
- It is not necessary to arrive directly 1 hour prior to tip-off therefore we suggest the clubs contact the officials 1 week from the game to advise on game details, facility logistics and any other information. This will allow the minimal amount of time prior to the game commencing.
- Please enter the court 20 minutes from tip-off.
- It is recommended that there is a designated area for ball wiping that is away from the main Table Officials i.e. on the far side of the court or at either end. Referees are responsible for the condition of the ball.
- If possible, attempt to limit amount of time near Table Officials or Statisticians and abide by 2 metre social distancing rules
- Substitutions can occur directly from the bench rather than from a chair next to the Table Officials.
- Table Officials and Statisticians advised to maintain distancing appropriate to carry out their tasks to reduce risk of infections.
- Table Officials and Statisticians are advised to wear a facial covering.
- Referees, Table Officials and Statisticians are able to wear face visors if they wish, however the evidence is not clear that it will reduce the risk of infections.
- Referees will have to stop the game if they feel that social distancing or inadequate hygiene regulations are being used.
- Referees and officials to allow suitable time for anybody treating an injured player, to follow suitable hand hygiene guidance following treatment of the injury before returning to the bench prior to the game recommencing. There will be the following sanctions that could be implemented if the officials deem a team to be breaching the social distancing or hygiene guidance:
  - The Referee should use common sense with a duty of care to all participants.
  - A warning followed by an in-game sanctions: Technical Fouls
    - Club Wide Sanctions: Re-education of the RTP, potentially leading to a club meeting with BNI Board Level discussing if that club are unable to adhere to the guidance in this document and they are putting any members of the basketball family at risk
    - Any issues are to be reported on the back of the teams score sheet or if the referee can send an individual report by email
- The clinician/first aider should strongly consider wearing face coverings/masks and eye protection (glasses/goggles) during examination or treatment (close contact).
- The clinician/first aider should consider whether it is appropriate to give the players or member a face mask while treatment or close contact is being carried out.
- Keep close contact (within 2 metres) to the absolute minimum. Consider alternatives where appropriate to reduce close contact time.
- Medical professionals should keep a record of who they see, even during a game, to help NHS Test and Trace.

# PERSONAL PROTECTIVE EQUIPMENT

Facial Coverings - coaches, support staff, table officials and statisticians are recommended to wear facial coverings to reduce infection risk. Players are not required to wear facial coverings during play but it is advised once practice or the game is complete. It is acknowledged that referees may be able to wear a lightweight plastic visor at their own discretion. We have seen a number of providers market the use of face coverings for athletes. Normal surgical type mask may prohibit full lung function therefore we are advising against these. However for referees and players, the athlete centred face masks maybe better as information is still being gathered at this time.

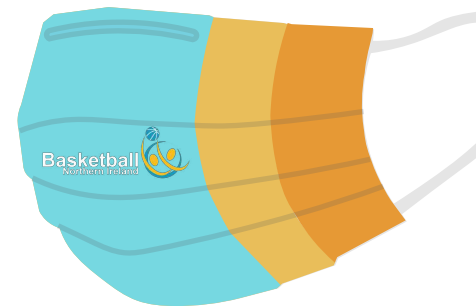
While the evidence is limited, facial coverings help reduce the risk of infection by:

- Reducing the water droplet effect from coughing, sneezing and generally breathing.
- Reminding the wearer to not touch their eyes, nose and mouth.

(see **Use of masks** - <https://www.bmj.com/content/369/bmj.m1435>)

It is recommend reusable masks to help with sustainability however if these are not available as good facial coverings:

- Surgical masks
- Three layered masks
- Fabric or cloth masks
- Athlete centre face masks



Note: FFP3 masks should be reserved for clinical use by the NHS and stocks preserved for this important work. As the individuals will be screened, we do not perceive there to be a need for FFP3 masks, although this relies on all clubs to screen properly. First Aiders should use their own clinical judgement.

## TEAM RISK

- Large gatherings and high numbers within a confined space are likely to increase the risk of infection. Competitive games are allowed however clubs running camps do so at their own risk and must follow NI Executive guidance for official numbers for attendance.
- Small group sessions will reduce the infection risk - follow government guidelines at all times.
- The NI Executive has relaxed the rules for a full squad training to take place (including coaches and support staff - all personnel to be contact traced in register attendance sheet)
- Outdoor training is likely to reduce the infection risk due to the reduction in the virus' ability to travel in that environment - aerosol spread.

## NATIONAL RISK

- Increased travel distances increase the likelihood of viral spread, coupled with pressure on transport systems.
- Basketball Ireland and Basketball NI are not advocating carpooling and public transport is not advised where possible in an aim to limit contact time.
- As competition resumes we may re-introduce competition on a local/regional basis first and expand to national pending government advice.
- Use of minibuses and coaches is also not advised for game travel, due to the close confines of individuals within them.
- Increased movement of people can spread the virus and poses challenges in contact-tracing.

Due to the close contact nature of basketball, we are advocating screening of anyone playing or participating in basketball to ascertain whether individuals are able to take part safely. We are asking both clubs and all individuals associated with basketball to take responsibility for reducing the risk and spread of COVID-19.

Before leaving the house to participate in basketball, please check you:

- Do not have symptoms of a high temperature (feeling hot, feeling cold, shivers, feeling under the weather).
- Do not have a new persistent cough.
- You have not got a loss of taste or smell.
- You have not been in contact with a person with suspected COVID-19 within the past 48 hours.
- You have not been advised to self-isolate due to a third party from another setting (i.e. another sport session) that has been infected with COVID-19.
- No-one within your household has COVID-19 symptoms as outlined above, which would require the whole household to go into isolation as guided by Government guidelines .
- Individuals must not attend a basketball session if any of the above are true.
- There should be no pressure placed upon a player to attend a training session or game if they have symptoms or they feel like the environment is unsafe for them.
- If during a session an individual feels uncomfortable with the management of the session, then there should be no pressure placed on that individual if they decide to opt-out of that session.
- All individuals should be up to date and have read the Basketball NI COVID-19 Risk Information..

## CLUBS

- The priority is to keep your players and staff healthy.
- Any individual coming to training/a game needs to be screened before entering the venue and their attendance documented.
- Contact details are required in order to help NHS Test and Trace service if a suspected case of COVID-19 arises.
- The attendance records of all individuals attending the training or game is to be held with the Club COVID-19 Officer in a secure place and records should be maintained in line with the clubs existing policies and procedures.
- Screening temporary records are to be securely kept for 21 days after the training session before being confidentially destroyed or kept for an agreed period by the club.
- We would remind clubs to be mindful of GDPR regulations. Please check the Information Commissioner's Office (ICO) regarding holding data during this pandemic.
- Clubs are required to provide all staff and players with education on COVID-19 and the potential risks associated with playing basketball - Risk Information.

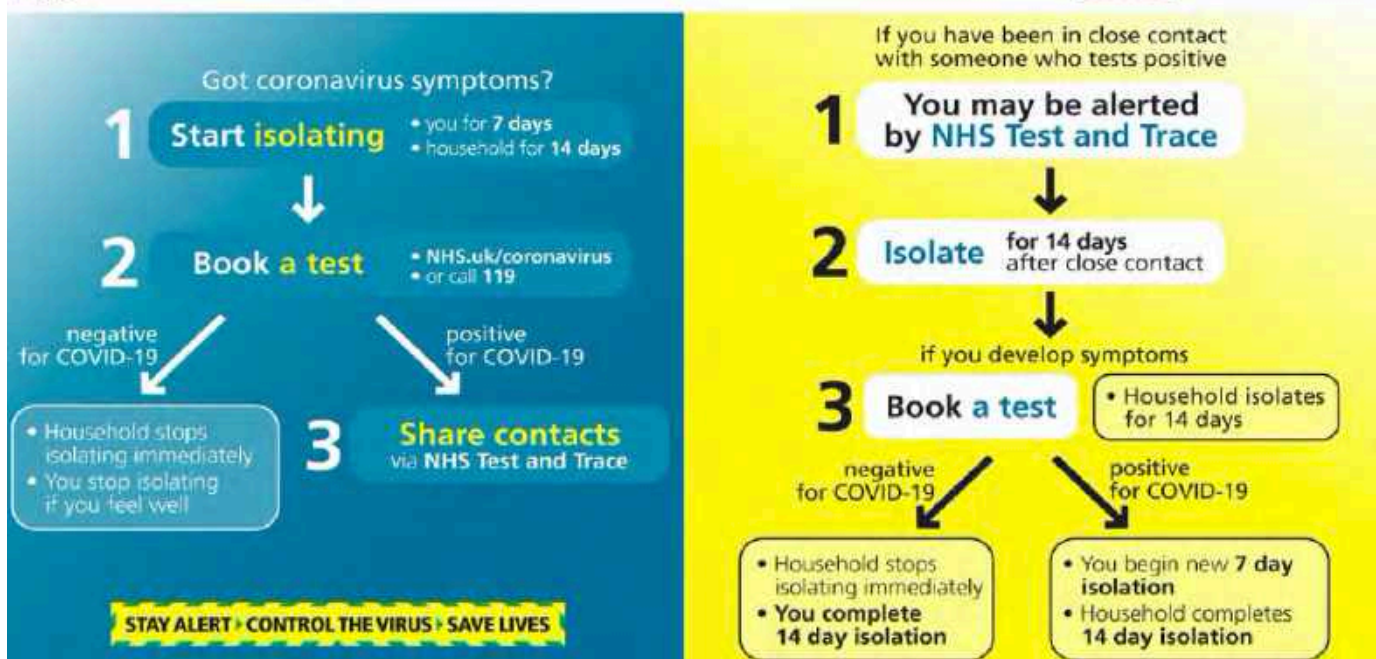
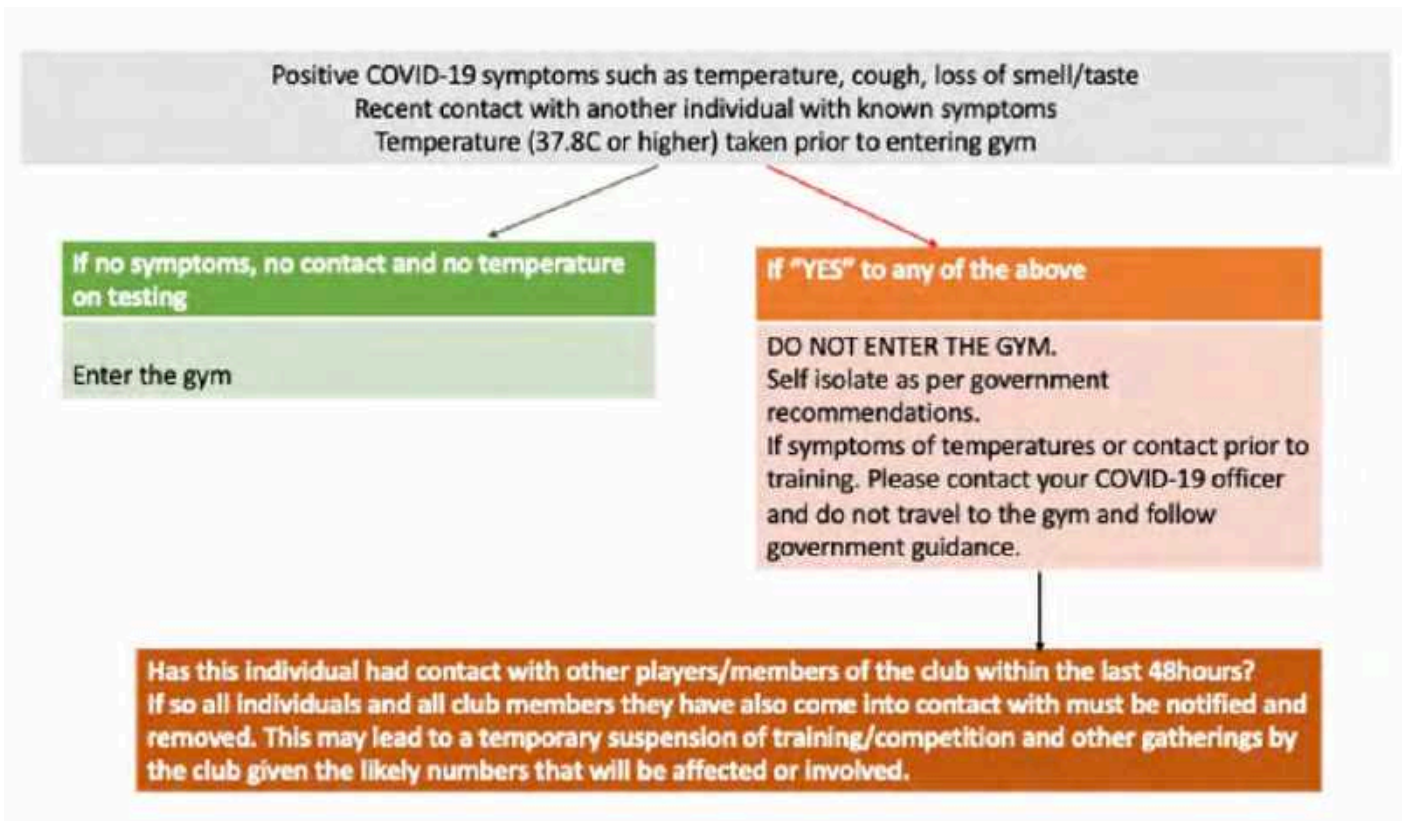
- Where possible, all face-to-face contact should be reduced. Consider video consultation if suitable and appropriate.
- The medical room size must be factored in when considering number of people allowed in the room to allow appropriate social distancing.
- Only essential people should be in the medical room.
- It would be advised to use an appointment system to reduce unnecessary congestion of the room.
- As players and first aid / physio / or medical staff (therapist/doctor) are in close contact, ensure any consultation is conducted 2 metres apart.
- Therapist's need to be happy their insurance will cover them to treat individuals in the sport environment.
- The clinician/first aider should strongly consider wearing face coverings/masks and eye protection (glasses/goggles) during examination or treatment (close contact).
- The clinician should consider whether it is appropriate to give the players or member a face mask while treatment or close contact is being carried out.
- Keep close contact (within 2 metres) to the absolute minimum. Consider alternatives where appropriate to reduce close contact time.
- Medical professionals should keep a record of who they see, even during a game, to help NHS Test and Trace.
- If an injury occurs during the game, there will be a requirement that the individuals treating the player would be allowed time after the incident to be able to fully comply with hand hygiene requirements before the game recommences.

**Ensure all first aiders are up-to-date with resus guidelines during COVID-19 pandemic <https://www.resus.org.uk/media/statements/resuscitation-council-uk-statements-on-covid-19-coronavirus-cpr-and-resuscitation/covid-community/>.**

- To be conducted until directed otherwise by government.
- Screening sheet in named 'BNI Sample - Return to Play Screening Document.'
- Ensure screening is conducted in a suitable area away from venue entrances, ensuring good social distancing practices, i.e. far end of car park.
- Temperature to be taken on arrival to the venue, outside in the carpark and documented.
- Temperature to be taken ideally with a handheld infrared thermometer which can be purchased online.
- All individuals entering the gym (coaches, players, officials) to complete screening. Note down name, along with their temperature and document answers to all screening questions, **see separate sample 'BNI Sample - Return to Play Screening document'**. Only essential coaching staff to run the session should be present, no observers etc.
- Any positive answers to the questions will mean that the individual cannot attend the session and they should be advised to return home to self-isolate as per the Government's guidelines. Club COVID-19 Officer needs to complete BE COVID-19 Reporting Form.
- Screening documents are to be temporarily kept within the club for 21 days after the session, under the jurisdiction of the Club COVID-19 Officer in order to trace any individual who at a later date reports COVID-19 symptoms. Clubs must ensure compliance with data protection and GDPR and be guided by the ICO.

## IF COVID-19 SYMPTOMS REPORTED AFTER THE SESSION

- All participants (players, coaches and support staff) in the training session have a responsibility to notify the Club COVID-19 Officer should they get symptoms of COVID-19 within 48 hours of the training session.
- Anyone with symptoms should ask for a test online or call to arrange a test by calling 119. They have to complete the test within 5 days of the symptoms starting.
- Club COVID-19 Officer to direct the infected individual to the National Government's Test and Trace procedures. In England, this will mean that the individual will have a test within 48 hours. Each nation: England, Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland, currently have different procedures.
- In addition to the above advice, the Club COVID Officer must contact all individuals that attended the training session in question to advise that an individual within that group has reported symptoms. If the individual is a coach, then all participants of all sessions will need to be contacted.
- If a member of the club presents with symptoms within 48 hours of a training session/game and has been in contact with players and officials in the interim, then training/practice/matches played by the club must be suspended and a period of isolation as set out by the government followed - 14 days for members of the household.
- The name of the infected individual is not to be disclosed to protect anonymity.
- All attendees of the session should be advised to isolate for 14 days (as per government guidelines) in case symptoms arise.
- COVID-19 Officer should complete the following **BNI COVID-19 INCIDENT REPORTING FORM**.



# IMPORTANT INFORMATION:

## WHAT HAPPENS IF I HAVE BEEN IN CONTACT WITH AN INFECTED PERSON?

The NHS currently recommends that close contact (within 1 metre of someone with the virus for 15 minutes or more) with an infected person requires that individual to be isolated for 14 days from the last time they were exposed to the infected person. You may have been informed of this via NHS Test and Trace system. If you are worried that this may relate to you, you should follow the

### NHS Isolation Guidelines.

Further guidance is contained within NI Direct Website on the below link <https://www.nidirect.gov.uk/articles/coronavirus-covid-19-staying-home-and-self-isolation>



## INFECTION AMONGST BLACK, ASIAN AND MINORITY ETHNIC (BAME) COMMUNITIES

Government guidelines advise there is a higher risk of infection amongst these communities. Please refer to this link for guidance '<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/covid-19-understanding-the-impact-on-bame-communities>'.



## SAFEGUARDING

The lockdown period will have affected children in many different ways. While most will have had a positive time with family, others may have had negative experiences and could be at increased risk. There are a few simple steps clubs can take to support children at this time. Please continue to follow the process outlined in our Safeguarding Policy for reporting concerns.

- Remind all staff and volunteers how to respond if a child or adult at risk talks about a concern. Please go to this link from the NSPCC which includes information, advice and posters which can be shared with staff and volunteers.
- Continue to share contact details of key support services through your social media and other

channels:

Further help and advice available from Local Social Service Gateway Teams:

- Belfast HSC Trust 028 9050 7000
- SE HSC Trust 0300 1000 300
- Northern HSC Trust 0300 1234 333
- Southern HSC Trust 0800 783 7745
- Western HSC Trust 028 7131 4090

Regional Emergency Social Work Service 028 9504 9999 | **NSPCC** 0808 800 5000

Concerned by behaviour or someone else's? Contact STOP IT NOW! UK & IRELAND on 0808 1000 900

For more information contact [https://www.psnipolice.uk/advice\\_information/child-protection/](https://www.psnipolice.uk/advice_information/child-protection/)

## WHAT IS COVID-19?

Coronavirus Disease 2019 (COVID-19) is an ongoing Worldwide pandemic caused by the Severe Acute Respiratory Syndrome Coronavirus 2 (SARS- COV-2). This virus appears to be highly infectious and at present, we do not have an effective treatment for it. Most people (80%) who are infected have mild symptoms and some do not have any symptoms at all. Because this is a new virus, there is much we do not know about it. However, like other viral infections, we know that many individuals who are infected, are infectious for up to 2 days (48hrs) before they have symptoms. This means it is easy to spread this disease before you are aware you have it.

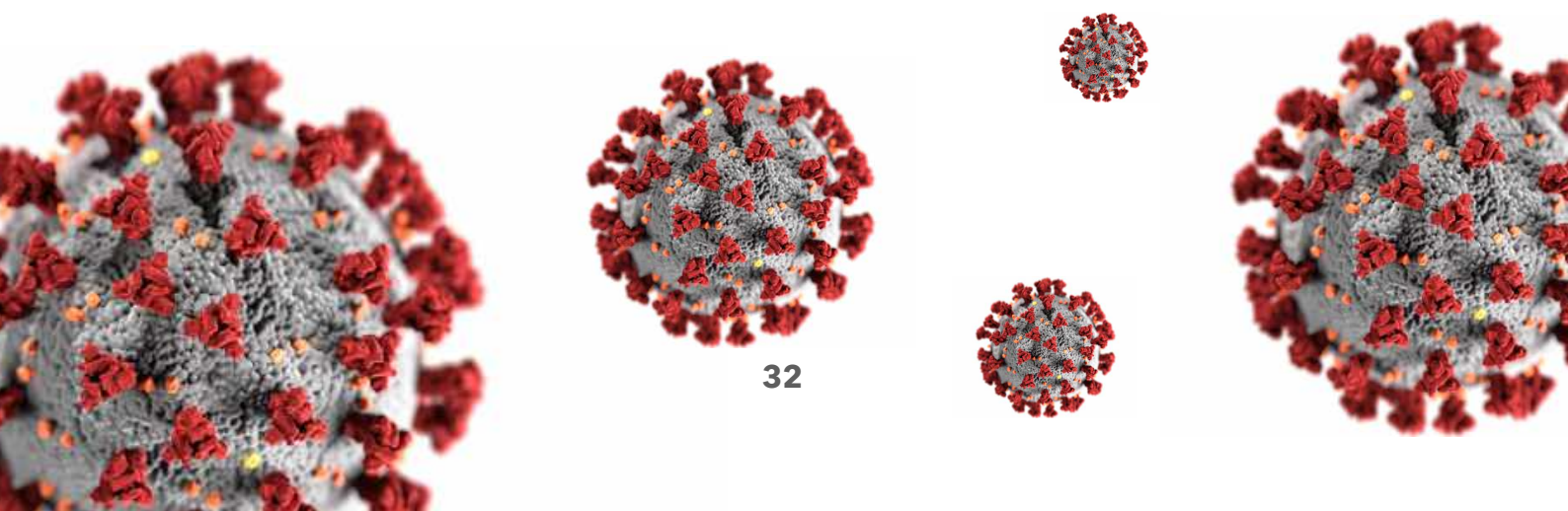
While the majority of those who become symptomatic can be managed at home, 15-20% who contract the virus become unwell and may require hospitalisation. A small number (5%) require intensive care, some of whom require breathing support through ventilation. These patients are more likely to be male, older (> 60) and have underlying conditions such as cardiovascular disease, raised blood pressure chronic lung disease, or diabetes.

There is growing evidence that individuals from Black, Asian & Minority Ethnic (BAME) communities appear to have higher rates of serious illness from COVID-19 (up to 1.9 times more likely to die from COVID-19 compared to white people). Given that a large proportion of the basketball family (58%) come from these communities, the guidance should be seen as especially important for these individuals.

The exact mortality rate associated with COVID-19 infection is unknown, but it may be as high as 1- 2% overall and is higher in vulnerable groups. COVID-19 will likely remain a potentially deadly virus until an effective vaccine is created, but vaccination is unlikely to be available for several months to years.

Younger healthy people appear to be less likely to develop severe symptoms based on current knowledge. However, anyone can spread the disease, infecting those they love, their friends, colleagues, and teammates.

Governments and health authorities around the world have instigated social distancing requirements, restrictions on public gatherings, quarantine measures and limited travel to and from other countries to slow the spread of the disease and to enable health care systems to cope with the potential increased demands associated with managing the disease. The basketball community has a responsibility to support these.



## SIGNS & SYMPTOMS

In the UK, the National Health Service (NHS) describe common symptoms of COVID-19 to include:

- High temperature over 37.8°C
- New and persistent cough
- Loss of taste or sense of smell

In addition, other symptoms can include:

- Hoarseness
- Runny nose
- Sneezing
- Shortness of breath
- Sore throat
- Wheezing
- Tiredness

Though these are common symptoms of other illnesses, there may be signs an individual has been infected by COVID-19, and it is vital that you do not infect teammates, colleagues, your friends and family or the general public.



## WHAT CAN YOU DO TO STAY SAFE?

**Please see NHS hygiene guidelines for most up to date guidance**

- Wash your hands - regularly and thoroughly clean your hands with soap (for a minimum of 20 seconds) or an alcohol-based (minimum 60% alcohol or 70% isopropanol) hand rub. Washing your hands with soap and water or using alcohol-based hand rub kills viruses that may be on your hands.
- Maintain social distancing rules - maintain at least 2 metre distance and where not possible, at 1 metre plus between yourself and others. When someone coughs or sneezes, they spray small liquid droplets from their nose or mouth, which may contain the virus. If you are too close, you can breathe in the droplets, including the COVID-19 virus, if the person coughing has the disease.
- Avoid touching hands to the face, mouth or nose - hands touch many surfaces, and surface to hand transfer can spread the virus. Once contaminated, hands can transfer the virus to your eyes, nose or mouth. From there, the virus can enter your body and can make you sick.
- Catch it, bin it, kill it - Make sure you, and the people around you, follow good respiratory hygiene. This means covering your mouth and nose with your bent elbow or tissue when you cough or sneeze.

## RETURN TO BASKETBALL DISCLAIMER

The Basketball NI Return to Play described and Outlines in this document, link with the NI Executive, Sport NI, Basketball Ireland, FIBA and UK Government's guidelines set out to govern the return to social and physical contact.

However, individuals must remember that there can never be risk-free basketball and any basketball activity will come with inherent COVID-19 risks until there is a proven vaccine or treatment and a significant reduction of the disease in the population. It must also be stated that in the same light that the government risk levels are subject to change at any time, so will the levels of the Basketball NI. The levels may also change per region or local council should there be a local or regional lockdown imposed by the government.

## PERSONAL RISK

- Players should be aware of all signs and symptoms of COVID-19 and should aim to reduce risk of infection as much as possible
- (see COVID-19 symptoms and Hygiene Advice).
- Increased numbers at training will increase risk of exposure to the virus
- Playing sport indoors has a higher risk than playing outdoors.
- Individuals (or members of their household) suffering from other underlying illnesses may have a higher risk than others, if exposed to COVID-19. Underlying medical issues may include:
  - Cardiovascular problems
  - High blood pressure
  - Diabetes
  - Chronic kidney or liver disease
  - Compromised immunity diseases
  - Obesity (BMI 40+)

These individuals have an unquantifiable risk with current research predicting possible risk. Therefore, ALL individuals within the club need to have read the information sheet of this document prior to re-commencing basketball to understand the associated risks of participating. A club's COVID-19 Officer or Secretary should pass on any documents that should be shared with all members to educate them on the Return to Play. Following this, members should all be aware of the risks of playing basketball with others and that they consent they are happy to play despite the increased risk to their health.

# RETURNING TO BASKETBALL AFTER HAVING COVID- 19



Given the nature of this pandemic, the information, research and advice that is coming from all sources is constantly changing. The severity of the symptoms will be different between everyone. Coupled with the fact that most will have mild symptoms if any at all, providing guidelines of any sort is difficult.

In severe cases of COVID-19, it is known that there can be an effect not just on the lungs but also on the heart. Myocarditis is a serious condition where inflammation of the heart muscle can put extra strain on the ability of the heart to function properly. We are aware therefore that the length of time to return to physical activity in individuals that have had moderate to severe symptoms may be longer than expected.

**Please refer to this [LINK INFOGRAPHIC](#) from Imperial College London on symptoms and returning to sport.**

<https://www.imperial.ac.uk/media/imperial-college/administration-and-support-services/sport/public/Return-to-Training-Following-COVID-19-Infographic.pdf>

It is also advised that all members visit the Return to Sport section of the Basketball Ireland website for further information on recovery strategies, injury prevention, mental health, nutrition and more to aid their own recovery if they have had COVID-19.

**For the latest COVID-19 advice and information, go to:**  
**<https://www.nidirect.gov.uk/campaigns/coronavirus-covid-19>**  
**<http://www.sportni.net/sport-ni-statements/>**

# COVID-19 CLUB OFFICER - ROLE AND KEY RESPONSIBILITIES

Basketball Ireland direction is that each club is to nominate an individual to become the Basketball Clubs COVID-19 Officer - details of the individual will need to be provided during team entry/registration process. This individual should have a knowledge of safeguarding, GDPR and be able to access further information on this evolving pandemic. It is suggested that the clubs Safeguarding Officer or Club Secretary could undertake this role.

The key roles and responsibilities will include:

- Ensure the Club is compliant with Basketball NI and NI Executive COVID-19 guidance and current Government guidance (formation of a COVID-19 Committee may help to distribute roles and responsibilities across a club during this re-start phase).
- Responsible for completing appropriate COVID-19 risk assessments.
- Keeping abreast of developments within the UK and Ireland to help reduce the risk of COVID-19 infection and communicate it to all club members. Sources of information may include:
  - Basketball Northern Ireland **Website**
  - Basketball Ireland **Website**
  - Basketball England **Website**
  - Basketball NI **Social Media Outlets**
  - FIBA **Website**
  - **NHS Website**
  - UK Government. **Website**
- Lead on screening of all players and staff for each training session or game, in accordance with the guidelines in this document.
- Up skill other staff or coaches to be able to conduct the screening.
- Responsible for the collection and appropriate storage of screening forms and attendance forms.
- Responsible for contact-tracing in relation to the individuals that have been in contact with a suspected case of COVID-19 within the basketball session, once an individual has notified the club that they have been infected with COVID-19.
- Responsible for directing an individual that has been infected by COVID-19 to report this to the NHS and get a test in order to commence NHS led contact tracing.
- Report any current COVID-19 infection to Basketball NI via email to [returntoplay@basketballni.com](mailto:returntoplay@basketballni.com)

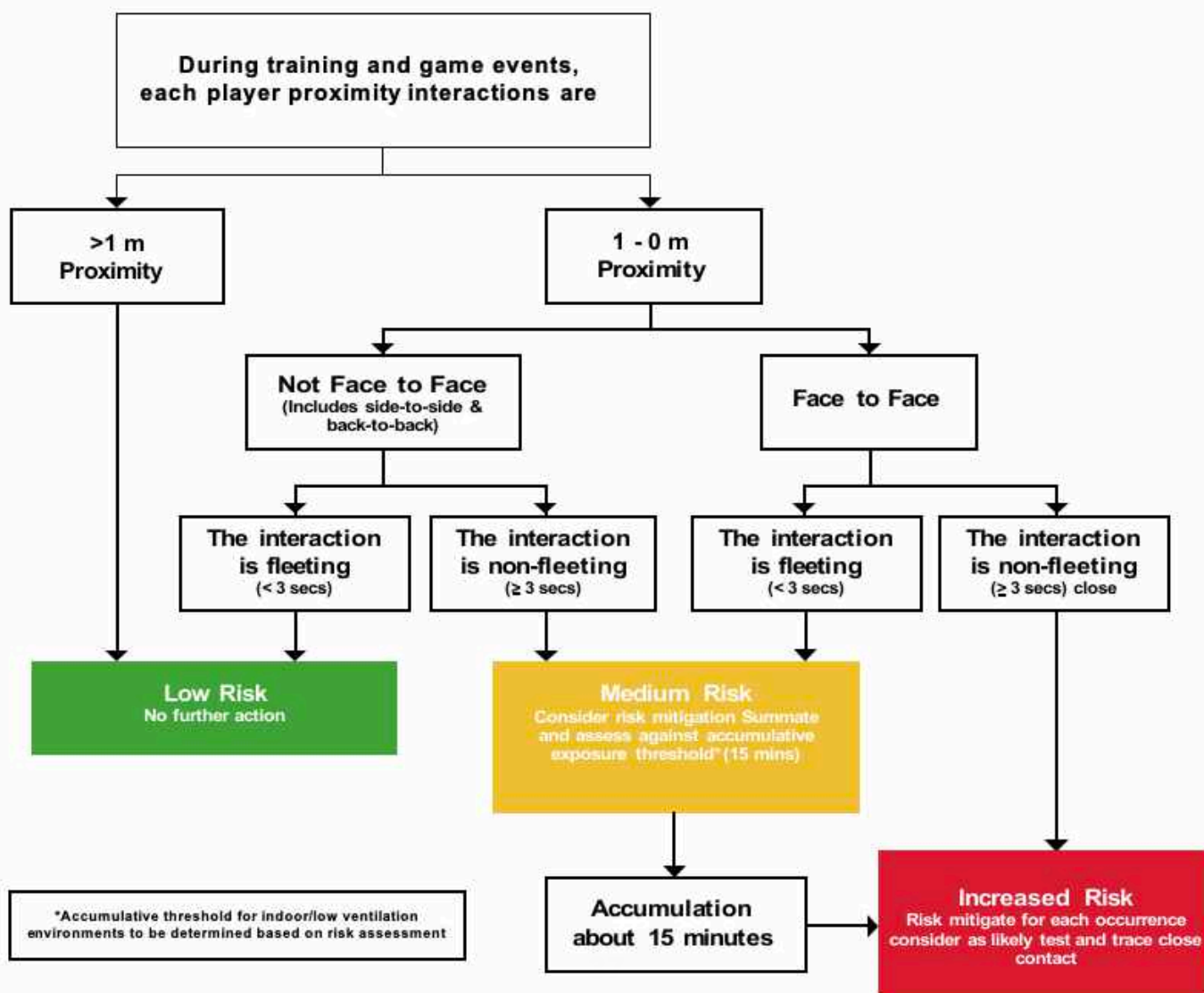
# CONTACT IN COMPETITIVE BASKETBALL MITIGATION STRATEGIES

In our Return To Play we will be reintroducing team based training and competitive basketball.

In addition to the guidance already provided in relation to hygiene, venue and screening we have assessed the level of contact in the game of basketball in comparison to the risk exposure this would open the basketball community up to in the event that our screening processes don't flag up a participant with COVID-19.

Basketball England in partnership with the Department of Culture, Media & Sport (DCMS) a group of 5 team sports (Football, Rugby Union, Netball, Rugby League, Basketball) have come together and have devised a 'Return to Recreational Team Sport' strategy that is predicated on the below 'Exposure Framework':

## A TEAM SPORT RISK EXPOSURE FRAMEWORK TO INFORM RISK MITIGATION STRATEGIES & SUPPORT TEST & TRACE



# RESOURCES

## COVID-19 INFORMATION



**Sport NI Return to Sport - [www.sportni.net/return-to-sport/](http://www.sportni.net/return-to-sport/)**

**Basketball Ireland Return to Sport - Website**

**FIBA Return to Play - Website**

**NI Executive - [DIRECT LINK](#)**

**Basketball England Return to Play - Special Thanks to COO Peter Griffith - [DIRECT LINK](#)**

**Irish Football Association - Website**

**Dr Dane Vishnubala COVID-19 Blog - [LINK](#)**

**NHS - <https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/coronavirus-covid-19/>**

**PHE - <https://www.gov.uk/government/organisations/public-health-england>**

**WHO - <https://www.who.int/emergencies/diseases/novel-coronavirus-2019>**

**ONS - Deaths per ethnic group <https://www.ons.gov.uk/peoplepopulationand-community/birthsdeathsandmarriages/deaths/articles/coronavirusrelated-deathsbyethnicgroupenglandandwales/2march2020to10april2020>**

**ICO COVID-19 Data holding - <https://ico.org.uk/global/data-protection-and-coronavirus-information-hub/data-protection-and-coronavirus/work-place-testing-guidance-for-employers/>**

**NHS Testing and tracing - <https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/coronavirus-covid-19/testing-for-coronavirus/>**

**Returning to Sport after COVID-19 - <https://www.imperial.ac.uk/media/imperial-college/administration-and-support-services/sport/public/Return-to-Training-Following-COVID-19-Infographic.pdf>**

**Outdoor Sport and Recreation Guidance - <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/coronavirus-covid-19-guidance-on-phased-return-of-sport-and-recreation/guidance-for-the-public-on-the-phased-return-of-outdoor-sport-and-recreation>**

**INMATO - Social Distancing in Football**

### HYGIENE INFORMATION

**WHO - <https://www.who.int/emergencies/diseases/novel-coronavirus-2019/advice-for-public>**

**NHS hand washing - <https://www.nhs.uk/live-well/healthy-body/best-way-to-wash-your-hands/>**

**Use of masks - <https://www.bmj.com/content/369/bmj.m1435>**

### SOCIAL DISTANCING

**NHS - <https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/coronavirus-covid-19/staying-at-home-to-avoid-getting-coronavirus/>**

**PHE - <https://publichealthmatters.blog.gov.uk/2020/03/04/coronavirus-covid-19-what-is-social-distancing/>**

### ISOLATION INFORMATION

**NHS - <https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/coronavirus-covid-19/what-to-do-if-you-or-someone-you-live-with-has-coronavirus-symptoms/staying-at-home-if-you-or-someone-you-live-with-has-coronavirus-symptoms/>**

## VENUE GUIDELINES

**UK Active** - <https://sportengland-production-files.s3.eu-west-2.amazonaws.com/s3fs-public/2020-05/ukactive%20framework%20for%20re-opening%20the%20gym%20and%20fitness%20industry.pdf?lirYhkBXmffAVf9ffdPMjpDrN-6vmEW1P=>

**Cleaning** - <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/covid-19-decontamination-in-non-healthcare-settings>

## MENTAL HEALTH SUPPORT

**Mind.org** - <https://www.mind.org.uk/information-support/coronavirus-and-your-wellbeing/>

**HSENI - Wellbeing at work** - [www.hseni.gov.uk/stress](http://www.hseni.gov.uk/stress)

**\* THIS DOCUMENT IS UP TO DATE AS OF 9TH OF APRIL AS THE RECOVERY OF THE PANDEMIC IS AN EVOLVING STATE ELEMENTS OF THIS DOCUMENT WILL BE OUT OF DATE PLEASE REFER TO THE MOST UP TO DATE GUIDELINES OF LOCAL GOVERNMENT \***