Covid-19 Risk Assessment requirement

As isolation is eased and people return to work, we need to consider completing a Covid-19 risk assessment as part of the path to resuming normal activities as a Lion.

Coronavirus (Covid-19) provides a significant risk of harm to people exposed to the virus. We **must** consider the implications posed by the virus before we resume "normal life".

Before a risk assessment is undertaken, the assessor must first ask who is doing what and how, where they are doing it, why they are doing it and what they are using. Understanding the tasks or activities is vital to assess exposure and to qualify any subsequent control decisions.

In some circumstances the risk posed is too high and the activity should not go ahead.

Risk assessment

Hazard

The risk assessment must recognise the virus as a hazard. It should also reflect that the virus is spread in minute water droplets that are expelled from the body through sneezing, coughing, talking and breathing. The virus can be transferred to the hands and from there to surfaces. It can survive on surfaces for a period after transfer (depending on such things as the surface type, its moisture content and temperature). The risk assessment should conclude that if it is passed from one person to another, while many survive infection, some may die from the disease. It should be regarded as a high hazard.

Likelihood of exposure

- How do people travel to events and does this expose them to public crowds?
- Do you know which volunteers have vulnerable medical issues that make them more susceptible to the disease - how do you identify them?
- Do you know which volunteers have people in their households who may have increased exposure to the disease?
- Where are volunteers meeting people who may have the disease and does this increase exposure (e.g. in a confined space, in a well-ventilated environment or outside)?

Once the answers to these questions are understood, controls to mitigate them can be better considered and implemented.

Control

The safety hierarchy of control can serve you well in considering what can be done. Any mitigation controls devised and implemented must reduce exposure of volunteers and anyone else who could be infected by our actions.

Covid-19 hierarchy of control

⬆ Most effective:

Elimination (not applicable) Awaiting vaccine.

Substitution (not applicable)

Engineering controls (ventilation, physical barriers, pre-planned cleaning and sterilisation of equipment and surfaces during the course of an event etc.)

Administrative controls - (training on distancing, distance markings and signage. - People from at risk categories to be excluded from face to face events including Lions, helpers and members of the public. Persons exhibiting any of the accepted symptoms of the disease should not attend events.)

⬇ Least effective:

PPE/RPE (masks, respirators, gloves) (relies on people using items correctly- perhaps frequent hand washing and sterilisation is a better option)

Completion of a risk assessment does not control risk. It is the actions of individuals who apply controls that mitigate risk.

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