

CSS GUIDELINES FOR UPLEDGER CRANIOSACRAL PRACTITIONERS
RETURNING TO WORK
Updated 10th July 2020

We are in extraordinary times and are all facing extraordinary challenges as people and practitioners. As we move closer to re-starting our craniosacral practice we are already planning the ways in which we minimize the risk of Covid 19 viral transfer. There are many steps to be taken as we consider all aspects of our client's experience from their arrival to their departure. Not forgetting the tasks and the time needed between clients to keep our environment as safe as possible. There is no doubt whatsoever that we need to work differently to protect ourselves and our clients for the foreseeable future.

In addition to safely practising Upledger CST as it is taught, we are already beginning to create our own individual Guidelines, Reminders, Documents for our clients to tell them about how we are responding to these challenges and what we expect from them.

We practice in different environments so there really is no 'one size fits all' approach, and some of us have other modalities. Upledger CST is a different modality and there are also key differences between Dr Upledger's work and other cranial approaches.

Essential steps to be taken – you might be asked by your Local authority for evidence of completion.

- Complete a Risk Assessment and keep it up to date.
- Observe UK Government guidelines on Covid 19 and follow them.
- Observe specific requirements for [Scotland](#), [Wales](#), [Northern Ireland](#) and your Local Authority.
- Adopt best practice and procedure indicated by Governing Bodies and your Insurers.
- Follow any guidelines set down by the management of the clinic or salon you work in.

Where you can find help about these steps

1. The HSE has guidance and example of risk assessments. <https://www.hse.gov.uk/simple-health-safety/risk/index.htm>.
2. Balens has produced guidance for practitioners and carries a risk assessment. <https://www.balens.co.uk/media/71999/balens-hpluss-risk-assessment-covid-19-20-07-01-general.pdf>
3. The latest UK Government Close Contact Guidelines <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/working-safely-during-coronavirus-covid-19/close-contact-services>
4. Your local or county Health Authority, plus those in [Scotland](#), [Wales](#) or [Northern Ireland](#) if relevant for you. **If you have doubts about your specific circumstances, please contact your County or Local Health authority for clarification and ask for their answer in writing.**
5. The Cranio Sacral Society website for recommended PPE suppliers and updates on Guidelines related to specific Upledger therapeutic practice and techniques

HOW THIS WILL AFFECT YOU IN PRACTICE

As a result of your RISK ASSESSMENT, and careful consideration of the way you work with your clients, you will have created a list of NECESSARY CHANGES. That list is likely to include all of the following, plus others related to your own situation.

1. **Pre-screen** your clients via telephone or Zoom, ensuring you will be using face-to-face contact time most effectively. For every treatment – be sure to ask them to confirm they are symptom free. Inform your client that where possible, they wear a mask during treatment. Provide a single use disposable one for their session if they don't bring one with them.
2. **Review your schedule** to include time needed for new hygiene and safety measures before and after sessions.

3. **Wear a visor at all times**, as per government guidelines at July 9, 2020. Close contact brings increased risk of aerosol transmission and the **need for PPE**.
4. **Keep adequate supplies of the recommended PPE and use it.** Bear in mind suppliers warn that delivery times are longer than normal.
5. **Ventilate** and air your treatment space between treatments
6. **Create an enhanced and systematic cleaning and sanitising routine**, which is available and on display for clients. Be immaculate in your methods of removing and disposing of gloves, masks, couch tissue and used protective clothing safely.
7. **Continue to keep good records and inform NHS Track & Trace** if you or your clients develop symptoms.
8. **Develop a treatment follow-up** protocol to contact clients within 7 days of treatment to confirm they are still symptom-free.

SOME SPECIFIC GUIDELINES FOR Upledger Practitioners during PANDEMIC CONDITIONS

HIGH RISK ZONES

GOVERNMENT guidelines at July 9, 2020 are clear about limiting risks by avoiding time spent near the face and neck.

Until we have more information CSS recommends that you do NOT work inside the client's mouth AT ALL.

There are specific guidelines for beauty care and massage. We do not work in the same way in CST. It is easy to imagine the working posture and very close contact needed for these modalities.

The view of the CSS Board is that even with a brief contact on the cranial bones there are many potential benefits for our clients.

CSS does not aim to supersede Government guidelines, but seeks to clarify that we work differently and more distantly than other modalities in this core area for our clients. So for now, and only if you wish to do so you could consider working in this way.

The Board proposes that for Hyoid technique and all cranial techniques you do the following:

Do not proceed at all unless your client wears a mask which covers their nose and mouth. As therapist you must wear a visor.

Explain the additional risk to your client and if they choose to accept a briefer contact than normal, and understand there may be only a partial release, then consider working this way.

Spend minimal time throughout all stages of the OCB technique, keeping well behind your client and mindful of your posture.

Really focus on the core intent of each stage, and trust the client's body intelligence is well aware of the situation we are all in and will make good use of whatever it is offered in the way of release.

Work in the same way with Frontal, Parietals, Sphenoid (compression/decompression only), Temporals (ear-pull only), TMJ .

You should be able to cover these techniques in a very limited time.

Using listening stations for evaluation – just go as far as shoulders, or if all necessary PPE is in place then use just one vault hold.

A suggested short protocol would be to work thoroughly on the first three diaphragms, then dural tube work. You will be connecting transversely behind the occiput. Sit comfortably for this minimized protocol, so you can maximise contact while keeping distance.

This section is not to be taken as a RULE it is the CSS Board's first reaction when faced with guidelines which do make perfect sense for different modalities and the methods their practitioners use. We believe that WITH CARE AND RESPECT a minimized contact and its potential benefits for clients could be considered.

If you decide for now to avoid the cranium completely then please do not feel you have to go against your judgement.

Length of session and time management

Anticipate that time management will need extra attention, both due to the additional hygiene measures, and also because our clients may feel they need extra time given how long it has been since their last session. Show you recognise that stress and trauma are likely to have built up. Be compassionate, reassure your client that there will be time in future sessions, and encourage them to rebook.

Self care

Make sure you allow enough time to clean and sanitise between clients AND to get some fresh air yourself and to spend some time to ground and centre before your next client. Prioritise receiving your own treatment and contact a Study Group Leader or Mentor if you need to talk.

NEW WAYS OF WORKING DURING THE PANDEMIC

As responsible therapists we need to adapt the way we work in order to maintain distance and minimise risk. Keep aerosol transmission in your awareness, and maintain a quietly confident manner to demonstrate to your clients that you are doing everything possible to make the environment as safe and as comfortable for them as possible.

Aerosol transmission is significantly increased through talking, crying, laughing, and these are just some of the many ways our clients may express emotion or process, and so it is essential to recognise the risks involved and to wear full PPE, and at all times, as these expressions often arise spontaneously.

If a client moves spontaneously into tissue release or expresses emotion, we need to **take additional care with our posture** so that ideally we are behind or alongside them, or standing away a little from the table. It is essential to avoid leaning over your client, and to challenge yourself to find new ways to position yourself more safely. It is still possible to maintain tissue contact, potentially with just one hand anteriorly on the body.

It is particularly important in times of Covid-19 to keep 'everyday' talking to a minimum. Our conversation should be solely relevant to the clients' process, maintaining a deep focus on tissue response and recognising the value of silence.

In addition, those suitably experienced Upledger practitioners who have completed at least the SER1 class can facilitate spontaneous process with therapeutic dialogue, always informed by tissue response. Questions are minimal and simple, and we are mindful of pacing and languaging. The priority in Upledger CST is listening with great attention.

Practising in that client centered way is always recommended, but in the current situation it will naturally minimise the potential for aerosol transmission and allow for the completion of a spontaneous SER.

NOW OUR NORMAL GOOD PRACTICE IS MORE IMPORTANT THAN EVER.