

Vulnerable Persons (COVID-19)

Technical Note

03
September 2020

Acknowledgments

In preparing and publishing this document, OGUK gratefully acknowledges the contribution of members of the Pandemic Steering Group's Health Subgroup.

While every effort has been made to ensure the accuracy of the information contained in this publication, neither OGUK, nor any of its members will assume liability for any use made of this publication or the model agreement to which it relates.

All rights reserved. No part of this publication may be reproduced, stored in a retrieval system, or transmitted in any form or by any means, electronic, mechanical, photocopying, recording or otherwise, without prior written permission of the publishers.

Crown copyright material is reproduced with the permission of the Controller of Her Majesty's Stationery Office.

Copyright © 2020 The UK Oil and Gas Industry Association Limited trading as OGUK

PUBLISHED BY OGUK

London Office:

1st Floor, Paternoster House, 65 St Paul's Churchyard, London, EC4M 8AB
Tel: 0207 802 2400

Aberdeen Office:

Exchange 2, 3rd Floor, 62 Market Street, Aberdeen, AB11 5PJ
Tel: 01224 577250

info@oilandgasuk.co.uk

www.oilandgasuk.co.uk

Vulnerable Persons (COVID-19)

September 2020

Contents

1	Background	4
2	Points for consideration	5
3	Flowchart	7

1 Background

Since the issue of the most recent OGUK technical note regarding vulnerable persons in mid-June 2020, government advice has continued to evolve. [The government guidance now states that, from 1st August 2020, that persons formerly advised to 'shield' need no longer do so.](#)

Persons formerly shielding should, like others, continue working from home where possible. However, if not possible, are able to go to work where the workplace is 'COVID secure'. No precise definition of the term 'COVID secure' is given, but the infection control measures taken by industry are consistent with the principles outlined for other industries where guidance on creating a 'COVID secure' workplace is provided.

2 Points for consideration

Given the change in government advice, it is necessary to review the contents of previous technical notes. It is therefore now advised that:

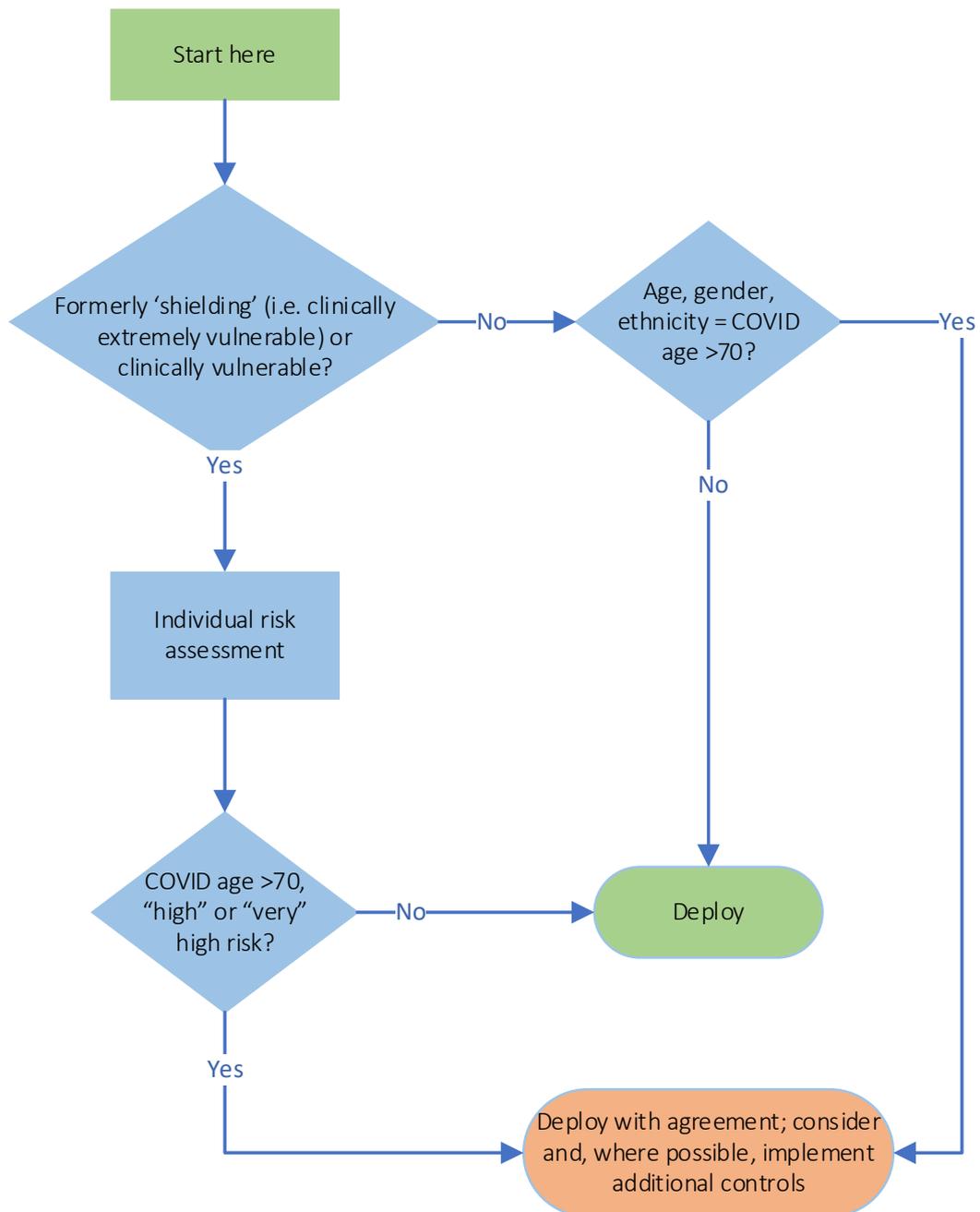
- Shielding has been paused only, and it remains possible that it will be re-instated if infection rates change in future.
- Employers should ensure that mechanisms exist to identify persons formerly shielding in the event that they are advised in future to resume shielding.
- Persons formerly shielding may be considered generally fit for offshore work if their condition is compatible with the fitness for work according to the OGUK Medical Guidelines.
- The concept of 'vulnerability' to the effects of COVID-19 infection is not an 'all or nothing' one, but a matter of variable degree.
- The ["COVID-age" assessment tool](#) remains a useful means of advising individual workers (whether formerly shielding or not); and, with their consent, their employer/operator; of their personal degree of vulnerability. [The tool is used in one UK nation's recommended occupational risk assessment tool.](#)
- Operators and employers remain responsible for setting their own policies with regards the deployment of vulnerable persons to offshore installations, bearing in mind the non-discrimination provisions of employment law and the similar duty to safeguard the health of employees at work. Operators/employers may wish to seek appropriate advice on compliance with legislation when setting policies on vulnerable persons.
- Where examining doctors/occupational physicians are asked to comment on COVID-19 vulnerability, they may use the 'COVID-age' assessment tool as a means of assessing vulnerability.
- In the absence of contrary advice, the general infection control measures applied across industry may be construed as implying a 'COVID-secure' workplace.
- Nevertheless, where a workers COVID age is greater than 70, or where their specific condition confers a 'high' (orange) or 'very high' (red) rating under the COVID-age tool, employers/operators should consider reviewing their COVID-19 risk assessment and applying additional control measures to that particular worker.

Examples of such measures are; a single occupancy cabin where feasible, measures to address possible transmission from a cabin-mate, support in implementing social distancing and hygiene measures.

- Where a workers COVID age is greater than 70, or where their specific condition confers a 'high' (orange) or 'very high' (red) rating under the COVID-age tool, examining doctors asked to comment on vulnerability should ensure that the operator's medical advisor (where there is one) is advised of this (this will typically be done via the vulnerable person's employer).
- Operator, employer and worker should be in agreement on the decision to deploy offshore in relation to the degree of vulnerability. Where this is not the case, employers should advise workers of the available alternative options.

- Employers/operators should not seek advice in the form of statements of 'fitness' or 'unfitness' regarding vulnerability unless they provide definitions of these meanings. For example, couched in absolute or relative risk terms, or in added years, or in COVID-age itself.

3 Flowchart





oilandgasuk.co.uk/guidelines

OGUK Technical Notes

Member companies dedicate specialist resources and technical expertise in providing technical notes in collaboration with Oil & Gas UK, demonstrating a commitment to continually improving and enhancing the performance of all offshore operations.

Technical Notes are part of the OGUK suite of Guidelines, free for our members.

oilandgasuk.co.uk

info@oilandgasuk.co.uk

 [@oilandgasuk](https://twitter.com/oilandgasuk)

 [Oil & Gas UK](https://www.linkedin.com/company/oilandgasuk)

OGUK