

Coronavirus – County Chess Guidance

To SCCA County Chess Captains

In view of the Coronavirus issue the SCCA Board is monitoring the advice of Public Health England (PHE) and it has also consulted with the SCCU President.

At this stage PHE has not advised against general travel (except to specific foreign destinations) or attending public gatherings in the UK. We are, therefore, currently proceeding on the basis that the remaining county matches for this season will be played.

PHE does provide detailed advice on personal hygiene including protocols for washing hands with soap and water and covering the mouth when coughing. See details below.

“Everyone is being reminded to follow Public Health England advice to:

- Always carry tissues with you and use them to catch your cough or sneeze. Then bin the tissue, and wash your hands, or use a sanitiser gel.
- Wash your hands often with soap and water, especially after using public transport. Use a sanitiser gel if soap and water are not available.
- Avoid touching your eyes, nose and mouth with unwashed hands.
- Avoid close contact with people who are unwell.”

Full details of this guidelines are on the relevant government website: <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/coronavirus-covid-19-information-for-the-public>

Please advise your team regarding the above and also announce at the start of any match about the importance of personal hygiene to minimise the risk of transmission.

Although not mandated by PHE at this time SCCA Board believe that it would be sensible that the usual chess protocol can be suspended – so that players who do not wish to shake hands before and after a match should feel under no compulsion to do so, at this time. We are not opposing handshaking until Public Health England provide that advice but players should be asked to take no offence if their opponent does not want to.

Please ensure that the players in your team have considered whether they might be at a high risk of carrying Coronavirus. This could be the case if they had travelled back recently from high risk locations or have been in contact with an individual who has been told they have Coronavirus. Players who are in doubt as to whether they are a high risk should use the government screening tool <https://111.nhs.uk/covid-19>. Any person who is advised through that tool or by a medical practitioner to isolate themselves should not play in a Surrey county chess match and should be withdrawn from the team

SCCA Board will continue to monitor what is likely to be a fluid situation and further guidance will be provided when there is a need to do so as driven by PHE advice.

Peter Lawrence
SCCA County Match Secretary
2 March 2020