



We hope that you are staying safe and well during this pandemic. We know that the on-going lockdown has had a huge effect on the income of many of our members. Below are links to a new UK tax helpline and a reminder of where to access information about the UK government support package which was announced in March.

Financial Support

The UK government has launched a helpline to support small businesses and self-employed people affected by COVID-19 who are worried about paying their tax bills. Possible offers of help include paying tax in instalments and cancelling penalties and interest in some circumstances. The helpline is open Monday – Friday, 8am - 4pm: 0800 024 1222.

<https://www.gov.uk/government/news/tax-helpline-to-support-businesses-affected-by-coronavirus-covid-19>

Information about the financial support package for the self-employed which the government, announced in March: -

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/support-for-those-affected-by-covid-19>

The advice charity Citizen's Advice, who specialise in offering free, independent advice on a range of issues, give clear information about the government's financial support offer on their website: -

<https://www.citizensadvice.org.uk/work/coronavirus-if-youre-self-employed/>

They also have a network of local independent charities which offer on-line and phone advice. If you think it would help to talk to one of their advisers, search for your nearest branch here: -

<https://www.citizensadvice.org.uk/about-us/contact-us/contact-us/contact-us/>

Creative Ways of Working

We are impressed with how many of you are using your skills to offer your clients bespoke, homemade aromatic products including: -

- Offering consultations over Skype or Zoom to formulate bespoke aromatherapy inhalers and other products.
- Inhaler sticks and diffuser blends to aid a range of issues including immune support (whilst recognising that essential oils cannot guarantee protection against the Coronavirus), anxiety, sleep and deep breathing.
- Massage oils
- Shower gels and bath oils
- Hand creams
- Hand massage tips for clients over Skype, Zoom or similar platform.

Tips for making bespoke products: -

- Hold a consultation first. This could be over a digital platform such as Skype, Face Time or a regular phone call. In many cases consultations need not take very long. You could also consider creating an on-line consultation form (for instance via Google Forms) or email a Word document, which you could follow-up with a quick phone call.
- Label your products carefully and give your clients clear instructions for use and storage.
- Record the consultation and blend details, just as you would with your face-to-face clients.
- Consider sanitising your product before packaging, e.g. by wiping it with hand sanitizing gel.
- Consider in advance how you will get the product to your clients. Some post offices are currently closed, and packages may take longer to arrive than usual. UK members can check the Post Office website to see how your local branch is affected. <https://www.postoffice.co.uk/coronavirus-help-support>
- Instead of posting your products can you deliver them by car, foot or bike, perhaps by combining delivery with a food shopping trip? If you choose to personally deliver products decide the maximum distance you are prepared to travel.
- Instead of delivering products, can you offer a collection service? Invite clients to collect their products from your doorstep whilst taking their daily, permitted exercise.
- Decide in advance how you will charge for your time, resources, and expertise. If you do not already accept payments via bank transfer or PayPal, then this could be a good time to start!

Thank you to IFPA member Mandy Pitcher for assistance with compiling these tips.

The 'IFPA Members Group' on Facebook is a great place to share ideas about products and different ways of working and to get support from fellow aromatherapists. It is a closed group (i.e. its only open to IFPA members). If you are not already part of our Facebook community and would like to be then visit the page and send us a joining request.

Stay safe and keep well.

15th April 2020