

Case study

Patient experience of giving blood during the Coronavirus

I had made an appointment to give blood a couple of months ago, and when the date came round, I found myself a bit anxious – having not been in any enclosed spaces for the last month, apart from a couple of hurried food shops. Having now given blood I thought it would be useful to share my experience.

What happened on the day...

As I went into the Church, which was temporarily being used as a blood bank, before I was allowed to touch anything I was asked to use the hand sanitiser available. A nurse was there to ask me about 20 questions to the effect of ‘Have you had any Coronavirus symptoms in the last 2 weeks? Have you been in contact with anyone who has?’. The sparsely spaced seats in the waiting area were all taken so I was invited to sit in another room that had been made available.

After a short wait, during which I read through the information leaflets, I was called through to have my finger pricked to test for anaemia, and more questions about my recent travel history. The special donation chairs were more spaced out than usual, and wiped down in between each donor using them. All the staff were using hand-sanitiser frequently; and wearing face masks with funky headbands to button them onto, to prevent sore ears from the elastic. While I was ‘plugged in’ I chatted to the nurse looking after me, who was warm and friendly and included me in the conversation she was having with a colleague about trying to get hold of a Cookie Monster costume for her granddaughter. Then before I knew it, I was all finished and it was time for a drink of squash and a biscuit.

If you [are able](#), and not vulnerable/shielding due to long-term health conditions (or living with anyone who is), I would encourage you that it is still safe to donate blood. It felt good to do something relatively normal when the rest of my life has been turned on its head; I enjoyed chatting to other people outside of my household. And not to forget the most important reason, of course, is that giving blood saves lives!

For more information or to give blood please visit: <https://www.blood.co.uk/>

If you would like to contact Healthwatch Warwickshire please visit: www.healthwatchwarwickshire.co.uk
call 01926 422823 or email info@healthwatchwarwickshire.co.uk

