

GOV UK APPROVAL RECEIVED FOR REVOLUTIONARY TRANSPARENT FACE MASK

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NEW CONTECHS MASK WELCOMED BY HEALTHCARE PROFESSIONALS

Compliant to GOV.UK transparent face mask technical specification
Approved by 4 Nations Panel (26 individuals from 9 x Governing Bodies)
Approved by 2 x NHS Technical Assurance regulatory teams
12 Months of design, development, testing and user trials
6.25million GBP investment

A consultant neurologist and avid campaigner for the deaf and hard of hearing, has voiced her support for a ground-breaking transparent face mask produced by Contechs that has been approved for medical use.

Dr Helen Grote, who has been deaf since birth, has welcomed the approval of Contechs' transparent face mask, as for the first time it provides an innovative solution for use in a clinical setting to support communication between healthcare staff and patients who are deaf or hard of hearing.

Believing that transparent masks should be available for use by all healthcare and medical professionals across the UK, Helen hopes that Contechs' transparent face masks will progressively be rolled out across the NHS.

Utilising the most advanced manufacturing techniques, Warwick based Contechs, a leading automotive design, engineering, and recruitment specialist, has developed the Transparent Fluid Resistant Surgical Face Mask compliant with 'Transparent Face Mask technical specification' to help those who rely on lip-reading – while also ensuring to meet the required level of protection required by the DHSC and NHS.

An industry first – the new transparent face mask has received full approval from NHS England's Technical Assurance Division and Four Nations Review Panel. Following 12 months of development the new transparent facemask has exceeded design and performance requirements for single-use transparent face masks, which are intended to provide comparable protection to a standard Type IIR medical mask.

Paul Chivers, Team Lead, PPE Reuse, Innovation and Sustainability for NHS England and NHS Improvement commented: "Throughout the approval process, Contechs has responded professionally at every level demonstrating their commitment to deliver a compliant product.

"I can confirm the Contechs transparent face mask is now fully compliant and I wish to thank them for their engagement, professionalism and patience."

Contechs' transparent face masks will also be the only mask of its kind authorised for use in medical settings nationally and its manufacture – which represents an investment of 6.25m GBP by Contechs –

will create 150 jobs in the UK.

Contechs Managing Director Peter Jarvis commented: “We are delighted that our Transparent Face Masks have been approved by NHS England’s Technical Assurance Division and Four Nations Panel becoming the first ever transparent face mask in the UK that meets the stringent GOV UK requirements needed.

“We have made a substantial investment to ensure we achieved technical excellence, drawing on our automotive design and manufacturing expertise to produce a mask that is both cost effective and fit for purpose.

“Wearing a mask has caused tremendous difficulty for medical professionals working with people who are deaf and hard of hearing as well as children and the elderly. For this reason, we wanted to provide an affordable, sustainable and inclusive solution to ensure that medical and healthcare professionals across the UK are able to communicate with their patients as well as one another.”

Simon Clarke (Procurement) Managing Director BSOL Procurement Collaborative whose team was involved in one of the many user trials commented: ‘We have worked with Contechs for the past 18 months during which time they have leveraged their superior design and customer first approach to deliver vital products when we needed them most.

“Our SALT (Speech and Language Therapy) team trialled the transparent face mask earlier this year and the feedback was excellent across all scoring criteria including comfort, visibility, protection, ease of use, anti-fog performance and anti-irritancy. The whole team loved it and our first order here at the trust will replace approximately 10% of our existing TYPE IIR usage.

“The UHB will be recommending the mask to other trusts given its exceptional quality, great value for money and the massive potential to improve wellness of patients and practitioners alike.”

With one in six people in the UK either deaf or hard of hearing – rising to 71 per cent of those over 70 years old – Dr Helen Grote has stressed the importance of transparent face masks in boosting clear communication across all healthcare settings

Helen’s concerns have also been reflected by The Royal College of Speech & Language Therapists’ report (RCSLT) earlier this year, which highlighted that the rise in the use of face masks was making it increasingly harder for both medical professionals and people with hearing difficulties to communicate with one another.

Dr Helen Grote explains: “I have seen and experienced first-hand the frustration of struggling to communicate with others due to increased face covering usage, so the approval of Contechs’ transparent face mask is welcome news.

“Although face masks were vital in ensuring the safety of healthcare workers and patients across the UK, they also inadvertently had an adverse effect on the doctor patient relationship – and what became increasingly apparent when working at my hospital trust throughout the pandemic was that for myself and the elderly patients on my ward, communication became incredibly difficult, especially for those such as

myself who rely on lip reading.

“This in turn made patient care far more difficult as without clear communication between patient and doctor, communicating in a way that a patient understands – as the GMC requires – becomes incredibly problematic.

“Thanks to the hard work of Contechs, the introduction of an approved transparent face mask will not only provide healthcare staff the means to communicate more effectively with patients who have hearing loss, but also to those with aphasia, autism, dementia, or learning disabilities. Furthermore, the development of this mask will also significantly help staff working in healthcare settings who are deaf, and rely on lipreading to communicate with colleagues.

“With the Contechs face mask now approved for use in medical settings, it’s my hope that transparent masks become a staple and widely used PPE medical device throughout the NHS.”

Contechs Medical TFM - YouTube

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