

GUIDANCE ON COVID-19 MANAGEMENT IN HOSPITAL USM

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1. SCREENING AND TESTING

1.1 SCREENING AND TESTING FOR PATIENT/ HCWs

- Only patients/HCWs with **COVID-19-related** symptoms (e.g. influenza-like illness (ILI) symptoms, shortness of breath etc) require evaluation and testing.
- Screening of asymptomatic patients/HCWs at any health-access point is **not required**.

*Postmortem screening tests for COVID-19 will no longer be mandatory for BID cases but shall be done on a case-by-case basis.

1.2 SCREENING AND TESTING FOR CARETAKER AND VISITORS

- Caretakers or visitors with COVID-19 related symptoms (e.g., influenza-like illness (ILI) symptoms, shortness of breath etc) are required to do COVID-19 self-test before coming to healthcare facilities.
- Screening of asymptomatic caretakers or visitors are not required.
- Caretakers with confirmed COVID-19 are **not recommended** to come to healthcare facilities.

2. PERSONAL PROTECTIVE EQUIPMENT (PPE)

2.1 Suspected/Confirmed COVID-19 Patients

- Patients are required to wear well-fitted surgical masks if tolerated and have no contraindications and practice proper cough etiquette during close interaction with healthcare workers (HCWs) or when they need to leave the isolation/ cohort area (e.g. being transported for medical care or procedures) within a healthcare facility.

2.2 HCWs Managing Suspected/Confirmed COVID-19 Patients

- HCWs looking after a patient should follow guide in the table below

Table 1: HCWs Managing Suspected/Confirmed COVID-19 Patients

Risk stratification	Mask	Eye protection (face shield/ goggles)	Isolation Gown/Apron
LOW RISK No physical contact e.g. taking clinical history	Surgical masks	x	Based on risk assessment of contact with fluids or anticipating splashes
MODERATE RISK Minimal contact with a patient and splashes not anticipated e.g. taking vital signs	Surgical masks/ N95		
HIGH RISK Prolonged contact e.g. changing diapers, performing AGPs or daily cleaning with patient in the room and/or within poor ventilation area/room	N95	√	Isolation gown(fluid-repellent long-sleeved gown)
Perform hand hygiene with alcohol-based hand rub if no visible soiling before PPE use, after PPE removal, and as indicated while providing care. <i>^aConduct a risk assessment prior to attending patient e.g. prolonged exposure or patient on nebulizer(AGP)</i> <i>^bIf no contact is anticipated, plastic aprons/gowns can be omitted</i>			

2.3 MASK POLICY

2.3.1 Mask Policy For Healthcare Worker (HCW)

- Masking requirements in healthcare facilities will follow the above table.
- HCWs are **encouraged** to wear masks although there is no anticipated interaction with symptomatic patients in clinical areas i.e. wards or clinic
- However, HCWs who have acute respiratory symptoms are required to wear a well-fitted surgical mask at work whenever interacting with others, in crowded places, or in a poorly ventilated environment even if their COVID-19 test is negative until symptoms have resolved.
- HCWs should keep their Influenza and COVID-19 vaccinations up to date based on the latest recommendations.

2.3.2 Mask Policy For Care Taker & Visitor

- In general, caretakers and visitors are encouraged to wear masks at all times whenever in clinical areas and common patient's waiting areas even if they are asymptomatic.
- Individuals with acute respiratory symptoms should refrain from visiting or caring for patients in healthcare facilities whenever possible.
- Individuals with confirmed positive COVID-19 are **NOT RECOMMENDED** to visit or care for patients in healthcare facilities.
- However, if the presence of a caretaker/visitor is necessary and they are symptomatic, they should wear a well-fitted surgical mask and adhere to respiratory etiquette and hand hygiene while in the facility even if their COVID-19 test is negative until symptoms have resolved.
- Caretakers/visitors for confirmed/suspected COVID-19 patients or other respiratory infections are required to consistently wear well-fitted surgical masks and practice hand hygiene.

3. PROCEDURE FOR SYMPTOMATIC SUSPECTED/ CONFIRMED COVID-19 CASES

3.1 Symptomatic Suspected or Confirmed COVID-19 Patient/ Non-HCW

- Follow standard precautions and droplet precautions for any visit, appointment or procedures.
- Patients are required to wear well-fitted surgical masks if tolerated and not contraindicated and practice proper cough etiquette while waiting for and during procedures.
- Appointments should be scheduled to avoid exposure to others in common waiting areas.
- Minimize patient contact and transport time as much as possible and review patient pathways to the procedure room to minimize the risk of people mixing.
- Restrict direct contact with the patient to the least number of personnel possible.



- Whenever possible, elective surgical procedures shall be postponed and rescheduled.
- Emergency surgical procedure shall be continued with precautions and OR staff must be informed in advance.
- PPE requirements for HCW - refer to **Table 1**
- Medical Certificate(MC) and hospital referral will be issued based on the evaluation of the treating doctor.
- Home Surveillance Order (HSO) is no longer mandatory in COVID-19 positive individual and they are not required to update COVID-19 status in MySejahtera Apps.

3.2 Symptomatic HCWs with Confirmed COVID-19

- Regardless of severity, assessment should be made for the risk of severe COVID-19 infection and transmission at the workplace e.g. working with immunocompromised, elderly, etc.
- Appropriate treatment should be given according to clinical staging and risk of disease progression
- Symptomatic HCWs are required to adhere to respiratory hygiene and wear a well-fitted surgical mask whenever interacting with others, or being in a crowded place, or in a poorly ventilated environment.
- HCW should wear a well-fitted surgical mask at work place for at least 5 days from symptom onset or until symptoms have resolved, whichever is longer.
- HCW working with severely immunocompromised patients e.g. patients on chemotherapy should be considered for temporary reassignment during the infectious period.
- Medical Certificate (MC) and hospital referral will be issued based on the evaluation of the treating doctor.
- Home Surveillance Order (HSO) is no longer mandatory in COVID-19 positive individual and they are not required to update COVID-19 status in MySejahtera Apps.



4. CLEANING, DISINFECTION, AND STERILISATION

- Terminal cleaning of a procedure room/ OR is not indicated unless the patient has other contact precaution indication e.g. **MDRO case**.
- Upon procedure completion, procedure room/OR should be cleaned focusing on frequently touched surfaces as per standard protocol.
- Medical equipment, machine, instruments, and devices should be disinfected and sterilized **as per standard protocol** and manufacturers' advices.

5. COMMUNICATION & SIGNAGE

- Ensure clear signage of transmission-based precautions at room entry
- Adequate alcohol-based hand rub, PPEs and patient's care equipment should be made available near the isolation room or cohort area.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

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