COVID-19 Infection Prevention and Control

Communication Toolkit for Long-Term Care Facilities
Introduction to the Toolkit

On 30 January 2020, the World Health Organization (WHO) declared the outbreak of the novel coronavirus (COVID-19) as a Public Health Emergency of International Concern (PHEIC). Responding to COVID-19 requires critical preparedness and response which includes equipping all levels of healthcare facilities and healthcare providers with information, procedures and tools required to safely and effectively work.

Long-term care (LTC) facility populations are at high risk of being affected by respiratory pathogens like COVID-19. As demonstrated by the COVID-19 pandemic, a strong infection prevention and control (IPC) programme is critical to protect both residents and staff.

Within this toolkit, ‘Facility’ refers to long-term care facility and ‘Staff’ refers to any employee of the LTC facility who provides care and support.

Purpose

The purpose of this communication toolkit is to protect residents and staff from infection and prevent potential spread of COVID-19 and other respiratory pathogens within LTC facilities. It contains a series of simplified messages and reminders based on WHO’s technical guidance on infection prevention and control in the context of COVID-19.

This toolkit can be used with reference to the ‘Guidance on COVID-19 for the care of older people and people living in long-term care facilities, other non-acute care facilities and home care’, the COVID-19 Infection Prevention and Control Preparedness Checklist for Long-Term Care Facilities and training videos.

Target Audience

This toolkit is intended for LTC facilities management and staff to support with strengthening IPC practices.
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STOP

VISITORS
CONTRACTORS
VOLUNTEERS
STAFF/CAREGIVERS
CURRENT RESIDENTS
FUTURE RESIDENTS

REMEMBER

Please do not enter the facility if you are feeling unwell

Practice hand hygiene when entering and leaving the facility, before and after visiting residents

Ensure you are maintaining at least 1 metre distance from others

Consider alternative non-touch greetings

Observe all facility procedures and follow staff instructions at all times

FIND MORE INFORMATION: https://www.who.int/emergencies/diseases/novel-coronavirus-2019
5 THINGS TO KNOW

1. WHAT IS COVID-19?
   COVID-19 is a disease caused by a new coronavirus, which has not been previously identified in humans.
   
   Coronavirus are a large family of viruses found in both animals and humans.

2. SYMPTOMS OF COVID-19
   Mild symptoms include: cough, fever, sore throat and tiredness.
   
   This can lead to more severe problems.

3. HOW DOES IT SPREAD?
   COVID-19 spreads primarily through close contact with someone who is infected, but it can also spread if you touch contaminated objects or surfaces.

4. WHO IS MOST AT RISK?
   • Older people
   • People with certain medical conditions (i.e. diabetes and heart disease)

5. WHAT IS THE TREATMENT FOR COVID-19?
   There is currently no known cure or vaccine.
   
   However, some of the symptoms can be medically treated and can improve over time.

5 THINGS TO DO

1. KEEP YOUR HANDS CLEAN
   Wash your hands with soap and water or, if your hands are not visibly dirty, use an alcohol-based handrub.
   
   This will remove the virus if it is on your hands.

2. COVER YOUR MOUTH AND NOSE
   Cough or sneeze into your bent elbow or into a tissue.
   
   Immediately throw away the used tissue and clean your hands.

3. PRACTICE PHYSICAL DISTANCING
   If possible, keep distance of at least 1 metre.

   COVID-19 appears to spread more easily when in close contact with an infected person.

4. AVOID TOUCHING YOUR FACE
   Avoid touching your eyes, nose and mouth. If you do, clean hands after touching your face or mask

5. LOOK AFTER YOUR HEALTH
   If you have a fever, cough or difficulty breathing, seek medical care.
   
   Phone ahead and inform the health center prior to visiting

   Always follow the guidance of your healthcare professionals and national health advisories.

FIND MORE INFORMATION: https://www.who.int/emergencies/diseases/novel-coronavirus-2019
Screen everyone before entering the facility.

Display posters and flyers to remind patients and visitors to practice good hand and respiratory hygiene.

Have alcohol-based handrub dispensers or soap and water stations easily available for staff, residents and visitors.

Ensure the waiting area has seating that is at least 1 metre apart.

Look out for anyone who shows symptoms such as cough, fever, shortness of breath and difficulty breathing.

**BE READY**

Notes for staff

Here’s how you can protect your residents, visitors and each other from any infection.

Perform hand hygiene frequently.

Be trained on the importance, selection and proper use of Personal Protective Equipment (PPE).

Be trained to identify symptoms of potential COVID-19 infection and offer medical masks to suspected cases.

Isolate a suspected case promptly.

Know criteria for identifying suspected COVID-19 cases and isolate immediately.

Understand criteria to discharge residents from isolation.

Remember to look out for each other’s health and if you have concerns talk with your supervisor.

MANAGING PLACEMENT
- Immediately isolate suspected and confirmed cases of COVID-19
- If possible, place residents in single rooms with their own bathroom
- Suspected and confirmed cases should be kept separate
- Proper precautions should be followed
- Maintain at least 1 metre distance between all residents.
- Do not put more than one resident in a single bed
- Reduce stress and anxiety by communicating with residents about what you do and why you do it.

MANAGING ENVIRONMENT
- Limit the movement of residents to reduce potential spread of infection throughout the facility
- If the resident needs to be moved, plan the move ahead
- All staff and visitors should wear their Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) if they are to be in direct contact with the infected resident
- Perform regular environmental cleaning and disinfection
- Maintain good ventilation If possible, open windows
- Dedicate equipment for residents in isolation

MANAGING VISITORS
- Check symptoms of all visitors before entering the facility
- Limit the number of visitors per resident
- All visitors should wear the required Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) and visits should be recorded to allow for contact tracing

FIND MORE INFORMATION: https://www.who.int/emergencies/diseases/novel-coronavirus-2019
Be respectful, polite and empathetic.

Be aware that residents may be panicked, stressed or afraid.

Listen carefully and respond to questions and concerns.

It is okay to comfort the residents, when wearing PPE.

If there are specific questions that you do not know the answers to, it’s okay to admit it.

Share information with residents and visitors in ways they will easily understand. These may include printed material in clear view posted around the facility.

Explain the facility procedures for COVID-19 in advance and prepare residents for possible changes.

Organize distance family / visit support (e.g. telecommunication) when visits are not permitted.

FIND MORE INFORMATION: https://www.who.int/emergencies/diseases/novel-coronavirus-2019
Families play an important role in protecting their relatives from COVID-19.

1. **Please stay away if you are sick**
   or if you have been in contact with someone who is sick

2. **Practice hand hygiene**
   Wash your hands with soap and water or using alcohol-based handrub before and after visiting and after coughing or sneezing

3. **Cover your nose or mouth**
   Cover your nose or mouth with your bent elbow when coughing or sneezing and wash your hands

4. **Please limit your visit**
   and avoid spending time in communal areas of the facility

5. **Make use of telecommunication**
   Consider contacting your relatives using telecommunication when visiting is not possible

6. **Follow facility protocol**
   Please follow all instructions as directed by facility staff to keep you and our residents safe

Thank you for assisting long-term care facilities to protect the health of your relatives in the event of a COVID-19 outbreak.

FIND MORE INFORMATION: https://www.who.int/emergencies/diseases/novel-coronavirus-2019
It is normal to feel sad, stressed or overwhelmed during a crisis. Below are a few tips that might help with navigating your own health during this time.

Stay socially connected.

Speak to loved ones and people you trust.

Engage in hobbies and activities that you enjoy or try to learn something new.

Maintain a healthy lifestyle with proper diet, sleep and exercise.

Avoid using alcohol, smoking or other drugs to deal with fear or anxiety.

Be aware of negative or unhealthy thoughts and emotions.

Try thinking of three happy thoughts every day.

If you have concerns, talk with your supervisor.

If you start feeling unwell, tell your doctor immediately.

FIND MORE INFORMATION: https://www.who.int/emergencies/diseases/novel-coronavirus-2019
VISITOR REMINDERS
Please check with staff before entering the room.

1. Perform hand hygiene
   - Soap and water
     Wash hands for 40-60 seconds.
   - Alcohol-based handrub
     Rub hands for 20-30 seconds.

2. Wear a long-sleeved medical gown

3. Wear a mask

4. Wear eye protection
   - Face shield OR goggles

5. Wear gloves
   Ensure gloves are placed over the cuffs of the gown.

! REMEMBER
Do not touch your face, eyes or nose, whilst wearing PPE.
Perform hand hygiene during removal of PPE.

FIND MORE INFORMATION: https://www.who.int/emergencies/diseases/novel-coronavirus-2019
Caring for a resident with suspected or confirmed COVID-19

- Goggles/Face Shield
- Medical Mask
- Gown
- Gloves

Avoid touching your eyes, nose or mouth. If you do, clean your hands.
When entering a room, or caring for a suspected or confirmed resident with COVID-19, you should be wearing the following:

1. Eye protection (goggles or face shield)
2. Medical mask (covering nose & mouth)
3. Long-sleeve medical gown
4. Disposable gloves

Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) should be changed between use and for each different patient.

Dispose single-use PPE in a bin with a lid and wash your hands thoroughly.

Avoid touching your eyes, nose or mouth. If you do, clean your hands.

If performing an aerosol-generating procedure, such as intubation, use a particulate respirator for example an N95 respirator.

If you develop a cough or fever, report your illness immediately to your supervisor and remove yourself from the workplace.

REMEMBER

5 Moments for Hand Hygiene

Use alcohol-based handrub or wash hands with soap and water:

1. Before contact with a resident or suspected COVID-19 case
2. Before engaging in clean or aseptic procedures
3. After body fluid exposure risk
4. After contact with a resident
5. After being exposed to a resident or surroundings of a suspected COVID-19 case

FIND MORE INFORMATION: https://www.who.int/emergencies/diseases/novel-coronavirus-2019
HOW TO PUT ON PPE
(Personal Protective Equipment)

1. Identify hazards and manage risk
   - Prepare the necessary PPE
   - Plan where to put on and remove PPE
   - Make sure there is a disposal bin
   - Organize a colleague or mirror to check your PPE

2. Perform hand hygiene
   - Soap and water (40-60 sec)
   - Alcohol-based handrub (20-30 sec)

3. Put on long-sleeved medical gown

4. Put on medical mask

5. Put on eye protection
   - Eye protection can be a face shield or goggles.

6. Put on gloves over gown cuff

7. Visually check yourself with a mirror

8. Your PPE is complete

! REMEMBER
For an aerosol-generating procedure, a particulate respirator (i.e. N95, FFP2 or equivalent) should be used.
Do a user seal check for a particulate respirator.

FIND MORE INFORMATION: https://www.who.int/emergencies/diseases/novel-coronavirus-2019
HOW TO REMOVE PPE (Personal Protective Equipment)

1. Remove gloves and dispose safely
   - Soap and water (40-60 sec)
   - Alcohol-based handrub (20-30 sec)

2. Perform hand hygiene
   - Soap and water (40-60 sec)
   - Alcohol-based handrub (20-30 sec)

3. Peel off gown, roll inside out and dispose safely

4. Perform hand hygiene
   - Soap and water (40-60 sec)
   - Alcohol-based handrub (20-30 sec)

5. Safe removal and disposal of eye protection and mask
   - Remove eye protection from behind
   - For eye protection being reprocessed, place in separate container.
   - Remove mask from behind
   - Move mask away from face
   - Do not touch front of mask
   - Do not allow contaminated mask to touch ANY surface
   - Dispose of mask safely.

6. Perform hand hygiene
   - Soap and water (40-60 sec)
   - Alcohol-based handrub (20-30 sec)

Find more information: https://www.who.int/emergencies/diseases/novel-coronavirus-2019
HOW TO WEAR A MEDICAL MASK

1. **Perform hand hygiene**
   - Soap and water (40-60 sec)
   - Alcohol-based handrub (20-30 sec)

2. **Put mask to your face**
   - Position the mask over your nose and mouth allowing the straps to hang freely on the sides of your face.

3. **Secure with straps**
   - Make sure your chin and nose are covered.

4. **Secure nosepiece**
   - Mold the nosepiece to the shape of your nose using fingers.

5. **Once in position, Do not touch mask**

FIND MORE INFORMATION: https://www.who.int/emergencies/diseases/novel-coronavirus-2019
1. Perform hand hygiene
   - Soap and water (40-60 sec)
   - Alcohol-based handrub (20-30 sec)

2. Put respirator to your face
   - Cup the respirator with your hand with the nosepiece at your fingertips, allowing the straps to hang freely below your hand.
   - Make sure your chin and nose are covered.

3. Secure with straps
   - The straps go over your head. Top strap rests high at the back of your head while the bottom strap rests around the neck, below your ears.

4. Secure nosepiece
   - Mold the nosepiece to the shape of your nose using fingers of both hands. Using one hand may make it less effective.

5. Check for leakage
   - Inhale deeply. The respirator clinging to your face means there is no leakage.
   - Exhale sharply. Pressure inside the respirator means there is no leakage.

6. Once in position, Do not touch mask

FIND MORE INFORMATION: https://www.who.int/emergencies/diseases/novel-coronavirus-2019