

COVID-19 PREPAREDNESS AND RESPONSE PLAN FOR OUTBREAK CONTROL

Guidelines for Home Isolation of Persons with COVID-19

Version 1- 2 April 2020

A Public Health Emergency of International Concern (PHEIC) was declared for the COVID-19 outbreak caused by the SARS-CoV2 virus on 30 January 2020 by World Health Organisation (WHO) Director General (DG) based on the number of persons affected and territories affected. Following widespread human to human transmission, the WHO officially declared the outbreak of COVID-19 a pandemic on March 11, 2020.

Jamaica detected its first confirmed case on March 9, 2020 and as of the date of publication of this guideline, transmission in Jamaica is classified as local transmission with sporadic clusters. The Ministry of Health and Wellness (MOHW) is issuing this as the first edition of guidelines for staff at the parish health departments and infection prevention and control (IPC) professionals and healthcare personnel who are coordinating the home care and isolation of person with confirmed or suspected COVID-19 infection, including persons under investigation. This guidance is based on the *WHO Interim Guidance for Preventing Coronavirus Disease 2019 (COVID-19) from Spreading to Others in Homes and Communities to the patient, caregiver, and household members.*

This document does not apply to patients in healthcare settings.



Persons for Home Isolation includes:

- patients evaluated in an outpatient setting who do not require hospitalization (i.e., patients who are medically stable and can receive care at home) **or**
- patients who are discharged home following a hospitalization with confirmed COVID-19 infection.

In general, affected individuals should adhere to home isolation until the risk of secondary transmission is thought to be low. **The decision for home isolation is determined by the parish health department in consultation with the Ministry of Health & Wellness Emergency Operations Centre (MOHW EOC). This consultation may be done remotely and COVID-19 cases for home isolation must be registered within the MOHW EOC.**

Home Isolation for cases of COVID-19 considers ***four essential features***:

- Suitability of the residential setting for maintenance of infection prevention and control standards of home care
- Likelihood of maintenance of Source Control on the case of COVID-19 for Home Isolation
- Capability for the household to apply and adhere to Standard Precautions
- Adequacy of environment controls for IPC

1. SUITABILITY OF THE RESIDENTIAL SETTING FOR HOME CARE

Through consultation with Health EOC at National Level, Regional Health Authority and Parish Health Department, a healthcare provider shall assess whether the residential setting is appropriate for home care.

Considerations for isolation care at home include whether:

- The patient is stable enough to receive care at home.
- Mental capacity of patient
- Comorbidities and status of these
- Appropriate caregivers are available at home.
- There is a separate bedroom where the patient can recover without sharing immediate space with others.
- There is a separate bathroom which the patient can use without sharing immediate space with others
- Resources for access to food and other necessities are available.
- Accessibility for health staff to visit the residence
- The patient and other household members have access to appropriate, recommended personal protective equipment (at a minimum, gloves and facemask) and are capable of adhering to precautions recommended as part of home care or isolation (e.g., respiratory hygiene and cough etiquette, hand hygiene);
- Absence of household members who may be at increased risk of complications from COVID-19 infection (e.g., older people and people with severe chronic health conditions, such as heart disease, lung disease, and diabetes).

Guidance for implementation during home care is provided by the Parish Health Department and includes:

- Provision of further information and counselling concerning your possible exposure to the SARS-CoV2 and compliance with these control measures.
- Criteria for discontinuing such measures.

The MOHW EOC Helpline remains available for further information.

2. SOURCE CONTROL

Persons with COVID-19 are to remain at home for at least two weeks (14 days) after being completely recovered. At this time, persons with COVID-19 are diagnosed by laboratory confirmation. The COVID-19 positive person **must remain at home until 2 consecutive negative laboratory results** have been returned.

Sampling sites have been established throughout the island and is accessible via an appointment system. The schedule for the appointment system is available on the MOHW Website or COVID-19 Helpline or by contacting Parish Health Department. The decision for sampling is done by the Parish Health Department in consultation with the MOHW EOC.

During the period of isolation:

- Caregivers should be provided if the COVID-19 positive person is unable to adequately tend to self, e.g., Children < 2 years of age and the Elderly > 65 years of age, persons with physical limitations.
- The person must remain in a well-ventilated single room with own bathroom facilities.
 - Completely avoid common areas of the house

- If the person with COVID-19 has to access common areas of household, a mask must be worn at **ALL** times.
- **Restrict** all other members of family from using the bathroom and shower during this period. If other members of the household must use the same bathroom facility as the person with COVID-19, then these facilities must be sanitized after every use.
- Persons with COVID-19 must at all times cover their nose and mouth when coughing or sneezing.
 - Hand wash using soap and water after coughing and sneezing.
 - Avoid touching eye and mouth especially after sneezing or coughing.
- Regularly perform hand hygiene
 - Especially before and after using the bathroom
 - Before meals
- Alcohol-based hand sanitizer with 62-70% alcohol may also be used to sanitize hands regularly in between general activities.
- There should be **ABSOLUTELY** no movement or travelling outside of the home.
 - Masks should not be touched or handled during use.
 - If the mask gets wet or dirty with secretions, it must be changed immediately.
 - Discard the mask after use and perform hand hygiene after removal of the mask.
- Persons on home isolation should have **NO** visitors during the isolation period.

3. APPLICATION AND ADHERENCE OF STANDARD PRECAUTIONS FOR HOUSEHOLD

- All Persons in the household should wash their hands with soap and water or use 62-70% Alcohol based hand sanitizer **after every contact** with the person with COVID-19 or the room or bathroom used by the person. Use paper towels to dry hands after washing.
- Maintain good ventilation by keeping windows and doors open especially in shared household areas.
- Wash hands with soap and water or use alcohol based hand sanitizer after handling linen used by the COVID-19 positive person. Separate these items from that of the rest of household and launder separately. Sun dry all linen.
- Keep surfaces in area of use, especially bedside tables and bathroom, clean.
- Remove all waste generated from area inhabited by COVID-19 positive person in black garbage bags and discard as per normal schedule.
- Eating utensils can be switched to disposables to minimize washing. If not available, then wash utensils prior and after use with soap and water. Avoid sharing.
- If the affected household member develops worsening symptoms of acute respiratory infection, including fever, cough, sore throat and difficult breathing, then:
 - Contact the MOHW COVID Helpline, emergency services or Parish Health Department immediately
 - Perform hand rub using alcohol-based sanitizer (at least 62% alcohol content) and put on a mask

- Await help
- Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) guidelines are as follows:
 - **Medical mask** must be worn by the **caregiver** who will be **entering the room** occupied by the COVID-19 positive room, but not providing direct care or assistance.
 - **Gloves, medical mask and an apron** (if risk of splash), must be worn by the **caregiver who will be providing direct care** for, or when handling stool, urine, or waste from, a COVID-19 positive person being cared for at home.
 - **Medical mask, gown, gloves and eye protection must be worn by the health care workers** who are providing direct care or assistance to a COVID-19 positive person at home.

4. ENVIRONMENTAL CONTROLS

- Separate cleaning items must be dedicated for use in the area used by the COVID-19 person.
 - Two cleaning rags (Bedroom, Bathroom), mop and bucket must be dedicated to this area alone and not be used to clean any other area of the household.
 - Persons doing cleaning must wear a pair of industrial gloves while undertaking all cleaning procedures.
 - Gloves can be discarded or placed outside to air dry.
- Clean surfaces used by COVID-19 positive person **daily**.
 - Wipe all surfaces that are touched regularly such as the door handle, light switch, bed side table, toys and phones.



- Use mild disinfectants such as Lysol, Pine sol or 70% Alcohol (at least) to clean these areas.
 - Wipe moist and allow to air dry
- Floors should be cleaned **weekly** using soap and water first and then mild disinfectant like Pine sol or 5% bleach (Ajax, Chloro-do, etc.) after and allow to air dry.
 - Mix one cup bleach to nine cups of water in a bucket for mopping and in spray container for bathroom surfaces.
- Linen should be changed and laundered **weekly**.

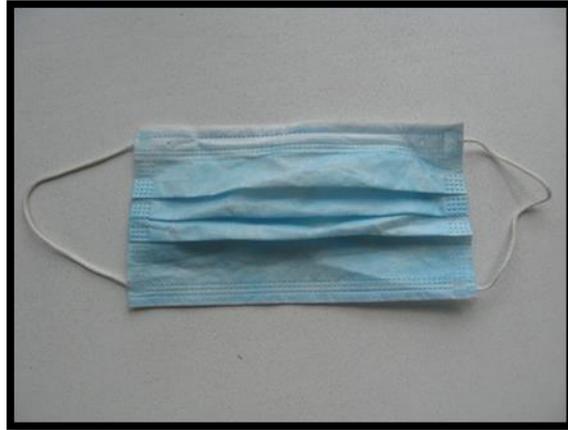


Figure 1: Mask



Figure 2: Industrial Gloves

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