Vaccine PPE advice – low, moderate and high risk settings

Background
The PPE advice for the COVID-19 vaccine rollout have been identified through:
• review of clinical guidelines to identify the types of PPE required for different levels of risk for community transmission of COVID-19; and
• engagement with clinical stakeholders to identify where PPE usage in practice may diverge from clinical guidelines.

Review of clinical guidelines
The PPE requirements for the COVID-19 vaccine rollout have been identified through the review of clinical guidelines, including:
• Pandemic Response Guidance: Personal protective equipment in healthcare delivery (source: Queensland Health);
• Interim infection prevention and control guidelines for the management of COVID-19 in healthcare settings (source: Queensland Health);
• Australian Immunisation Handbook (source: Australian Government, Department of Health); and
• Australian Guidelines for the Prevention and Control of Infection in Healthcare 2019 (Source: Australian Government, National Health and Medical Research Council).

As at February 2021, it is recommended that standard precautions be applied to the vaccination program in accordance with the ongoing assessment of risk of community transmission of COVID-19 and the Queensland Health Pandemic response guidance.

The Queensland Health Pandemic response guidance details PPE escalation according to the risk of unexpected COVID-19 infections. The guidance details three levels:
• low risk - no or few cases only in quarantine or small numbers of linked cases;
• moderate risk – as determined by CHO, no or few cases or cases only in quarantine or small numbers of linked cases; and
• high risk –as determined by CHO, a series of unlinked cases; high numbers of locally acquired cases; cases with high numbers of local contacts.

For each of these three levels of risk, Queensland Health has indicated the PPE requirements for healthcare delivery in HHS facilities. These requirements have been summarised in Table 1 and applied to the COVID-19 vaccine rollout.

Consultation with clinical stakeholders
Consultation with clinical stakeholders has been undertaken to identify any differences between the PPE requirements in the clinical guidelines compared with the expected usage of PPE for the COVID-19 vaccine rollout. This consultation process has enabled the guidelines to be built upon to reflect actual or planned use of PPE in practice.

The expected usage of PPE in practice for the COVID-19 vaccine rollout has been detailed in Table 1.

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Assumptions:
- vaccine will be diluted and drawn up by a different person to the person administering the dose (where applicable); and
- the vaccine will be administered to non-COVID-19 recipients.

Table 1: PPE for COVID-19 vaccine rollout – guideline requirements.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Groups</th>
<th>Low risk</th>
<th>Moderate risk</th>
<th>High risk</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Vaccine recipients</td>
<td>Guidelines: • No PPE</td>
<td>Guidelines: • Surgical Mask (Level 1)</td>
<td>Guidelines: • Surgical Mask (Level 1)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vaccine preparers (e.g. staff preparing doses who will not have direct contact with vaccine recipients)</td>
<td>Guidelines: • Aseptic techniques and procedures</td>
<td>Guidelines: • Surgical Mask (Level 2)</td>
<td>Guidelines: • Surgical Mask (Level 2)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vaccine administrators (e.g. doctors or nurses who will have direct contact with vaccine recipients)</td>
<td>Guidelines: • Aseptic techniques and procedures</td>
<td>Guidelines: • Optional: Exam Gloves – Nitrile • Surgical Mask (Level 2) • Protective Eyewear</td>
<td>Guidelines: • Optional: Exam Gloves – Nitrile • Surgical Mask (Level 2) • Protective Eyewear</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other staff specific to vaccination process (e.g. admin staff and operational staff who will not have direct contact with vaccine recipients)</td>
<td>Guidelines: • No PPE</td>
<td>Guidelines: • Surgical Mask (Level 2)</td>
<td>Guidelines: • Surgical Mask (Level 2)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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Version 1.0 developed in consultation with PPE working group
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