The Statewide Infection Clinical Network (SICN) endorses the recommendations regarding PPE for the management of COVID-19 in the following Queensland Health Guidelines:

Interim infection control guidelines for the management of COVID-19 in healthcare settings
Appendix 2 Placement advice for large numbers of confirmed or suspected COVID-19 patients
Appendix 3 PPE Quick Reference Guide
Appendix 4 Infection control guidelines for fever clinics for COVID-19
Safe fitting and removal of PPE

These are based on the Australian Government Department of Health Communicable Disease Network of Australia advice to public health units, and have also been endorsed by the AMA, and are consistent with recommendations from the Australian Government Department of Health and the World Health Organization.

These guidelines will inform the recommendations of your Infection Control team, however may be adapted locally depending on the circumstances of your Hospital or HHS.

PPE supply chains have been disrupted by the COVID-19 pandemic, therefore we endorse the rational use of PPE and support measures to conserve PPE where it is possible to safely do so.

The threshold for a ‘suspected case’ and recommendations regarding PPE use may change over time depending on the phase of the pandemic in your locality. During sustained community transmission of COVID-19, PPE may be used in broader contexts. Your Infection Control and Infectious Diseases Team and local Public Health Unit will help determine if and when this is appropriate.

In Queensland we are well-placed to understand when sustained community transmission is occurring because:

- We have a high per-capita test rate
- We have a low test positivity rate (suggesting widespread testing)
- We have a low case-fatality rate, indicating a relatively high proportion of mild cases detected
- Sullivan Nicolaides Pathology have added coronavirus testing to their routine respiratory panel, their weekly numbers are reported publicly

SICN also acknowledges with gratitude the benefit afforded to our hospital and healthcare system by the hard work and successful implementation of effective public health measures by our colleagues.

Please contact: Statewide_Infection_Clinical_Network@health.qld.gov.au if you would like further information or questions.

17 April 2020
Healthcare worker PPE decision tree

Patient meets current case definition of suspected, probable or confirmed COVID-19

NO

Standard precautions
or Transmission-based precautions if indicated for another reason (e.g. colonised with MRO, patient has diarrhoea etc.)

NO

Direct patient contact within 1.5 m*

YES

Aerosol generating procedure^2
OR
Critically unwell in ICU
OR
Severe pneumonia outside ICU

NO

Droplet + Contact Precautions
• Gloves
• Long-sleeved fluid-resistant gown
• Goggles or face shield^2
• Surgical mask

NO

Airborne + Contact Precautions
• Gloves
• Long-sleeved fluid-resistant gown
• Goggles or face shield^2
• P2/N95 Respirator (in a negative-pressure room if available)

YES

1. Aerosol generating procedures include: tracheal intubation, manual ventilation before intubation, non-invasive ventilation, tracheostomy, bronchoscopy, CPR, high-flow nasal oxygen.
2. Prescription eyewear is not considered eye protection.

* Patient to wear a surgical mask when being transported

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