



Clinician Alert #11 – Hospital Coronavirus disease (COVID-19)

Monday 2 March 2020

NEW INFORMATION

- Test for COVID-19 in patients with a clinically compatible illness who have travelled or transited through a higher (**mainland China, Iran, Italy or South Korea**) or moderate (**Cambodia, Hong Kong, Indonesia, Japan, Singapore, Thailand**) risk country in the last 14 days.
- Healthcare workers who have returned from a higher risk country (**mainland China, Iran, Italy or South Korea**) should not work in a hospital or residential care setting for 14 days after leaving the higher risk country.

For an up to date list of countries visit:

<https://www1.health.gov.au/internet/main/publishing.nsf/Content/ohp-covid-19-countries.htm>

Healthcare workers (HCWs) in hospitals and residential care settings

- HCWs who have returned from any higher risk country should not undertake work in a hospital or residential care setting, including aged care facility, for 14 days after leaving the higher risk country.
- HCWs returning from moderate risk countries should self-monitor for any symptoms for 14 days after leaving the moderate risk countries, and self-isolate if symptomatic.

Suspect case

Fever or acute respiratory infection (e.g. shortness of breath or cough) with or without fever, AND

- travel or transit through **a country considered to pose a risk of transmission*** in the 14 days before the onset of illness, OR
- close or casual contact in 14 days before illness onset with a confirmed case of COVID-19.

*Countries considered to pose a risk of transmission:

- Higher risk: Mainland China, Iran, Italy, South Korea
- Moderate risk: Cambodia, Hong Kong, Indonesia, Japan, Singapore, Thailand

<https://www1.health.gov.au/internet/main/publishing.nsf/Content/ohp-covid-19-countries.htm>

Isolate patients suspected to have COVID-19 until results are available.

Testing

- Dry swabs for PCR testing: a nasopharyngeal swab AND an oropharyngeal (throat) swab placed in transport medium.
- Lower respiratory tract samples for PCR testing: sputum, bronchoalveolar lavage, tracheal aspirate, pleural fluid if obtainable.
- Serum “to store” for use when serology testing becomes available.

Send samples to your pathology laboratory with an urgent request for ‘respiratory virus panel and SARS-CoV-2’ with their travel/case contact history.

Infection control for suspect and confirmed cases

- **Routine care:** contact and droplet precautions.
- **Higher level care:** use contact and airborne precautions for aerosol generating procedures, non-ICU patients requiring high level/high volume hands-on contact, and patients in ICU.
- **Prolonged care:** use powered air purifying respirators (PAPRs) for additional comfort and visibility when providing prolonged continuous care (e.g. more than an hour) in a patient’s room.

Reporting

Suspected COVID-19 is urgently notifiable to the Department of Health.

Metro 9222 8588 / 1300 MDCWA (1300623292)	Kimberley 9194 1630	South West 9781 2350
Goldfields 9080 8200	Midwest 9956 1985	Wheatbelt 9690 1720
Great Southern 9842 7500	Pilbara 9174 1660	After hours/on call 9328 0553

Refer to the [COVID-19 Series of National Guidelines](#) for more information.

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