

## Community Pharmacy Update – Infection Prevention & Control Overview Updated 9th April 2020

### Important points for all pharmacy staff to consider:

1. Is your front entrance well sign posted? E.g., posters displayed to alert customers what to do if they have respiratory symptoms? [Link](#)
2. Is your front entrance secure? Do you have staff at the front entrance limiting the number of customers who enter your pharmacy or a sign with instructions?
3. Have you considered protective barriers, e.g., perspex screen, 2m floor markings, ropes, cones or barriers to ensure customers are practising social distancing?
4. Have you protected your retail section, e.g., roped off these areas and staff collect essential products for customers?
5. Do your staff know how to regularly apply hand hygiene, either hand washing using soap & water or an alcohol-based sanitiser? Do you have posters displayed to support staff with hand hygiene practices?
6. Do you know when it is appropriate to use personal protective equipment (PPE), and how to safely put it on, take it off and dispose of it?
7. Do you know the dos and don'ts of wearing a mask? [Link](#)
8. Do you know how to clean and disinfect any areas that may be contaminated within your pharmacy?

### Being prepared and keep staff safe

<b>Door Signs and Customer Instructions</b> <a href="#">Link</a>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• It is important that you display signs at all your entrances alerting customers to use hand sanitiser and put on a mask if they have any respiratory symptoms.</li> <li>• It is recommended that you limit the numbers of customers entering your pharmacy at any one time, therefore assign a staff member to monitor the numbers of customers or ensure your signage reflects this e.g. one customer leaves, one may enter.</li> <li>• Encourage 'unwell' customers or close contacts to stay away from the pharmacy and have other relatives/friends collect prescriptions or use home delivery.</li> </ul>
<b>Hand Hygiene</b> <a href="#">Link</a>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Have hand sanitiser readily available for both customers and staff</li> <li>• Hand hygiene is the single most important step in reducing the spread of infection.</li> <li>• <b>All</b> customers should be asked to use <b>hand sanitiser</b> when they <b>enter</b> your pharmacy - this is for their protection as much as for the protection of staff.</li> <li>• Use an alcohol-based hand sanitiser that contains at least 70% alcohol.</li> <li>• The 5 moments of Hand Hygiene:               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ <i>Moment 1: Before customer contact e.g. at the counter</i></li> <li>○ <i>Moment 2: Before a procedure e.g. CPAMS or Immunisation</i></li> <li>○ <i>Moment 3: After a procedure e.g. CPAMS or immunisation</i></li> <li>○ <i>Moment 4: After customer contact e.g. handling money</i></li> <li>○ <i>Moment.5: After contact with customer's surroundings e.g. counter, EFTPOS</i></li> </ul> </li> </ul>
<b>Maintaining a clean environment</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Review your workplace cleaning schedule. Does it include what items and areas that need to be cleaned and how frequently? Refer to the latest update of PSNZ '<b>Sector Group Pharmacy Practice during COVID19 Pandemic</b>' – COVID-19 Cleaning guidance for community pharmacy - 3 April 2020 <a href="#">Link</a></li> <li>• Remember some viruses can remain viable on hard surfaces for up to 4 days therefore these surfaces, e.g., reception, bench tops, doors, door handles, tills, EFTPOS machines, telephones, computer keyboards, etc should be cleaned regularly throughout the day.</li> <li>• Cleaning &amp; disinfecting process in a consultation room after a customer <b>WITH</b> respiratory symptoms - Wipe over all surfaces contacted by customer (including chair) with detergent &amp; water and dry with a new disposable cloth. Then disinfect area with a disinfectant. A cost-effective option for a disinfectant is a solution of 0.1% Sodium hypochlorite-Bleach. Ensure the spray nozzle is directed for "squirt" not "spray" to avoid the spread of any potential pathogens.</li> </ul>

## Personal Protective Equipment (PPE)

Recommended level of personal protective equipment (PPE) to be used in the context of COVID-19 when working with customers who present at the pharmacy.

**Close contacts of people with confirmed, probable or suspected COVID-19 cases should not be coming into the pharmacy. However there may be circumstances in your practice where you need to do things over and above the evidence based practice.**

**\*\* Based MOH Personal protective equipment (PPE) used by community pharmacy for prevention of COVID-19 8<sup>th</sup> April, 2020 [Link](#)**

**Criteria for prioritisation include: risk of being exposed to someone who has or potentially has COVID-19, length of exposure (more than 15 minutes at a distance less than 2 metres, and type of exposure).**

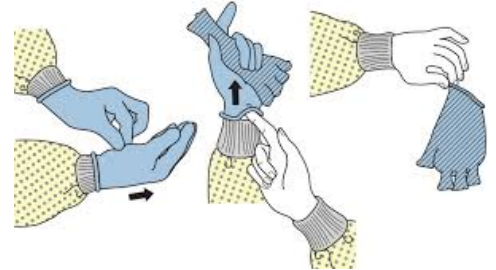
Target Personnel	Activity	Type of PPE
Triage staff	Triage/managing flow of customers at Pharmacy entrance	No PPE required. If <b>unable</b> to maintain a 2 metre distance wear a surgical mask.
Customers <b>WITH</b> respiratory symptoms (after triage)	Any	At entrance to pharmacy provide a surgical mask.
Customers with <b>NO</b> respiratory symptoms	Any	No PPE required.
Pharmacy Staff	Providing advice over the counter	No PPE required If <b>unable</b> to maintain 2 metres wear surgical mask.
Pharmacist	Providing close contact pharmacist services to a <b>WELL</b> customer e.g. CPAMS, OST vaccinations	Gloves worn if recommended in standard service protocol. <i>Good hand hygiene required before and after service.</i> <i>Ask customer to turn head away during procedure.</i>
Pharmacist	Providing CPAMS or OST-observed consumption to a customer in self-isolation due to <b>recent travel</b> or is a <b>close contact</b> (with no respiratory symptoms) of a confirmed, probable or suspected COVID-19 case	**Surgical mask **Gloves
Pharmacist	Providing CPAMS or OST-observed consumption, to a customer in self-isolation <b>with confirmed, probable or suspected</b> COVID-19	**Surgical Mask **Gown (fluid resistant)/plastic apron **Eye protection **Gloves
Cleaning, disinfecting & waste disposal	Aim to provide protection from chemicals and contamination.	For <b>routine</b> cleaning use pharmacy's stock of disposable gloves and plastic apron. <a href="#">Link</a> If cleaning a COVID contaminated area wear a surgical mask, gloves, plastic apron and, if risk of splash-back, eye protection (even if you wear glasses) from the PPE kit provided by CPRG & EOC. Place all used PPE in a yellow biohazard bag. When full seal securely with a cable tie and arrange collection and replacement bags through InterWaste (Cara 021 957 196).

## Key points on using gloves and masks

COVID-19 virus is transmitted between people through close contact and droplets (large droplets from coughing or sneezing), not by airborne transmission (very fine mist that can remain in the air). The people most at risk of infection are those who are in close contact with a COVID-19 patient or who care for COVID-19 patients.

### Using gloves safely:

- When you use gloves you will not be washing your hands regularly and risk transmitting infection from your gloves to other surfaces.
- Gloves are designed for single use only, do not wash disposable gloves
- If wearing gloves do NOT use hand sanitiser as well
- Ensure you put on and remove gloves safely
- Gloves must be changed after contact with each patient and hands washed immediately after gloves are removed
- To remove gloves slide ungloned finger under the wrist of the remaining glove and peel off from inside creating a bag for both gloves, discard.



### Wearing a mask correctly: [Link](#)

If you do use a mask, it is important to know how to use it correctly:

- Always wash your hands before you put on a mask
  - a. *Face Mask with Ear loops:* Hold the mask by the ear loops. Place a loop around each ear.
  - b. *Face Mask with Ties:* Bring the mask to your nose level and place the ties over the crown of your head and secure with a bow.
- The mask should cover your nose and mouth with no gaps between your face and the mask
- By using both hands mold the nosepiece to the shape of your nose. Always use 2 fingers as pinching with one hand may result in an improper fit and not be as effective
- Avoid touching the mask while using it



NOTE: If seeing multiple customers within a short period of time, e.g., 1 hour then replace mask after every 4 consultations or if moist or torn or touched with hands.

### How to remove a face mask

- Clean your hands with soap and water or hand sanitizer before touching the mask. Avoid touching the front of the mask. The front of the mask is contaminated. Only touch the ear loops/ties/band.
  - *Face Mask with Ear loops:* Hold both of the ear loops and gently lift and remove the mask.
  - *Face Mask with Ties:* Untie the bottom bow first then untie the top bow and pull the mask away from you as the ties are loosened.
- Put the mask in the yellow waste bag. Clean your hands with soap and water or hand sanitizer.
- Replace masks with a new, clean, dry mask as soon as they become damp or torn
- Do not re-use single-use masks.



### Be aware of face mask limitations:

- It can create a false sense of security that can lead to neglecting other essential measures such as hand hygiene and cough etiquette
- If you use a mask incorrectly, it will be less effective in reducing the risk of spreading the virus.
- Not all masks fit perfectly around your nose and mouth. For men with facial hair it is advised that they shave their beards to ensure a good fit
- It is hard to keep it on for a long period of time
- Once the mask becomes moist or visibly soiled during use its effectiveness is lost
- If a mask is torn or otherwise damaged, remove immediately
- The minute you scratch your nose or touch your mouth behind the mask, or lift the mask to the top of your head or under your chin, you've lost the protection that the mask is supposed to offer.