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National Focal Point for IHR



## **Guidelines**

### **Home and community Quarantine in COVID-19 Outbreak**

#### **Background:**

COVID-19 is a prevailing situation and day by day escalating number of suspected and confirmed cases calls for a robust quarantine facilities.

Sudden need to accommodate a large number of people has emerged who need health monitoring, food, water and proper toilet facilities as well as means to communicate with their families and friends. Many people can be quarantined in their own homes if basic hygiene and facilities are available like hand wash and environmental cleaning and disinfection, provided the condition of patient does not require a hospital admission. In certain situations, an alternative quarantine may be needed if there is a fear of spread of COVID-19 to other family members and/or community and where adherence to guidelines are frequently breached.

Contingencies planned at National Institute of Health-Pakistan are enlisted here to provide guidelines for community and home quarantine.

Quarantine facilities encompasses need for medical care of curative as well as preventive nature. Curative care being provided in terms of hospital care, medication and rehabilitation while prevention can be well maintained at home or community quarantine facilities.

#### **Home Quarantine:**

In home quarantine, a well separate room from rest of the house is needed. Basic knowledge and adherence to preventive activities is a must that may demand a short training of the caregivers.

##### **1. Disinfectants:**

Alcohol based disinfectants or 0.05% chlorine for body and 0.5% chlorine for surfaces can be used to keep the environment clean. Special focus should be made on door handle, railings. Surfaces should be kept dry and no spillage of sputum and/ or nasal secretions on the open surfaces.

##### **2. Protective clothing:**

Patient should wear mask and strictly observe coughing etiquettes. Hand shaking, hugging and kissing with family members should be avoided. Where necessary plastic sheets and gloves should be used.

##### **3. Disposal of waste:**

Human waste should be disposed of carefully. Toilets and soiled cloths should be washed with water and disinfected frequently with chlorine 0.5%.

**4. Medicine supplies:**

Essential medical supplies are provided with the caregivers and can be stocked at home. Special focus should be made on masks, hand sanitizers and other basic supplies.

**5. Communication with outer environment:**

No communication with outer environment should be made or at least kept at minimum. Supplies should be provided at doorstep so quarantine people do not step out of their home and to keep such people from congregating in large crowd.

**6. Care of Children:**

Small children should be limited to clean area. Children's belonging should be, cleaned, washed and disinfected as required. Cuddling with children and kissing should also be avoided.

**7. Care of caregivers:**

All care givers should strictly follow disinfection rules. Use of mask, gloves, and protective clothing should be observed strictly.

**Community Quarantine:**

In some special situations, community quarantine can be a good option. Important supplies need to be taken into account are:

**1. Disinfectants for environment:**

Frequent and regular disinfection with chlorine 0.05% for body and chlorine 0.5% for environment should be done. Area should be kept clean and dry with minimum interaction with outer environment. Toilets and washrooms should be clean washed and disinfected with chlorine 0.5% on regular basis.

**2. Protective clothing:**

Use of mask is a must. Touching nose and mouth should be avoided. Plastic sheets and other barriers can be used within a quarantine facility to separate different sections.

**3. Disposal of waste:**

Human waste should be disposed of properly, either buried or burned as required. Soiled sheets and utensils should be washed, cleaned and disinfected

**4. Communication with outer world:**

No communication should be made with outer world or kept at minimum. All devices used by quarantine people should be disinfected and cleaned properly. Grocery and other supplies should be provided at facility.

**5. Care of care givers:**

All caregivers should strictly observe PPE and use of gloves and masks are a must. Medical equipment and other utensils should be cleaned and disinfected frequently.

**Pregnant and Lactating Mothers:**

Risk of transmission from mother to child has not been established yet, neither mortality rate in pregnant women has been compared with general population. so pregnant women will be considered as having significantly increased risk. Vertical Transmission has not been established however newborn could potentially be infected by droplets from mother herself.

If breast feeding mother needs to be quarantined, it could be very stressful for both mother and baby, hence strict measures should be observed if baby is decided to be with mother.