COVID-19

MINISTRY OF HEALTH
MANATŪ HAUORA
New Zealand Government

GUIDELINES FOR PERSONAL PROTECTIVE EQUIPMENT (PPE) DISABILITY SUPPORT AND CARE WORKERS WHO WORK IN CLIENTS HOMES

IMPORTANT REMINDER
For all patient care and interactions, staff should follow standard precautions and adhere to the '5 moments for hand hygiene'

SUPPORT IN THE COMMUNITY			Wash Hands (Before and After)	Physical Distancing (2 metres)	Surgical Mask	Gloves	Apron	Eye Protection[3]
PUBLIC AREAS (e.g. supermarkets, pharmacies, essential services)	Care Workers, Clients	Avoid if possible - stay home (arrange home delivery)	✓	✓				
PRIVATE GARDEN/ OUTDOORS	Care Workers	Walking in garden (keeping 2m distance)	✓	✓				
		Walking in garden (closer than 2m distance e.g. providing balance support)	✓		✓[1]			
PUBLIC TRANSPORT (e.g. Taxi) or **PRIVATE VEHICLE**	Care Workers, Clients	Avoid if possible - stay home (arrange home delivery) Driving to an essential service (with client)	✓		✓[1]			
SUPPORT AT HOME								
HOME CARE MANAGEMENT Care Workers	Entering the premises		✓	✓				
	Housework (dusting and vacuuming)		✓	✓				
	Food preparation and/or dishes (alongside person)*		✓		?[4]	✓[2]	BAU	
	Food preparation and/or dishes (alone)*		✓	✓		✓[2]		
	Laundry or making/changing beds		✓	✓				
	Cleaning (bathroom and toilet)*		✓	✓	BAU	✓[2]	✓[6]	
PERSONAL CARES Care Workers	Close contact with those with excessive saliva, or behaviours such as spitting and choking		✓		✓	✓	✓	✓
	Assiting a person with transfers in/out of bed or chair		✓		✓[1]			?[5]
	Assisting a person to use or remove a mask for a nebuliser,home oxygen, CPAP or NIV machine		✓		✓[1]	✓[8]	✓[8]	?[5]
	Feeding a person, providing nutritional support, or gastro feeds (if pt gags or has swallowing difficulty etc wear PPE)		✓		✓[9]	✓	✓	?[5]
	Direct medication administration (i.e. nose, mouth, eyes, etc). If carer exposed to mucous membranes (ie oral, eyes or rectal medications) then wear PPE		✓		✓[9]	✓		?[5]
	Bathing/Toileting - showers, bowel & bladder support		✓		✓[9]	BAU	BAU	BAU

YOU NEED TO USE THE PPE SUITABLE FOR ALL OF THE TASKS YOU WILL BE PERFORMING, RATHER THAN CHANGING BETWEEN EVERY TASK.

- **Hand Hygiene** – This includes the use of either soap and water or a hand sanitiser. If soap and water is used the hands need to be dried thoroughly with either a clean cloth or paper towel.
- **Gloves** - disposable medical gloves should be used for personal cares involving any contact with blood or body fluids. General purpose household gloves are suitable for cleaning and home care management.
- **Surgical masks** – are single use. One per Care Worker, for each client (or 4 hourly or until moist or soiled [whichever is sooner])
- **Eye protection** – Prescription glasses do not count as eye protection. Thorough cleaning of any reusable eye-protection equipment is necessary between each visit.

* Follow business as usual processes
BAU: Business As Usual PPE is if carer is required to wear PPE if exposed to blood or body fluids, or as part of their normal duties

1. Undertake risk assessment, if unable to maintain physical distancing - consider wearing mask.
2. Standard household gloves only needed when doing home care management tasks
3. Face shield or goggles.
4. Mask not required when conducting house work, if working directly alongside client, assess the risk of needing to wear before putting mask on
5. Eye protection only required if risk of splashing or exposure to blood or body fluids.
6. Apron is only required when exposed to blood or body fluids
7. N95s only required if pt COVID +ve and aerosol generating procedures are being performed
8. Use provider guideline for this activity
9. Need to assess risk before putting on PPE or use if BAU

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Who is this guidance for?

Support and Care Workers (both formal Care Workers and informal support people) providing disability support cares for, or in close contact with, disabled clients of unknown COVID-19 status within the clients homes.

The guideline reinforces the importance of:

- for all patient care and interactions, staff should follow standard precautions and adhere to the '5 moments for hand hygiene'
- which includes washing and drying hands before and after every activity
- the Support and Care Worker minimises taking any of their personal belongings into the clients home

Why has this guidance been produced?

Community-based and Residential Disability Supports are an essential way of ensuring the health, wellbeing, dignity, and independence of the disabled community. These interactions are often quite different in nature and setting from other health interactions. Clients, Support and Care Workers need detailed and specific information to provide clarity of expectations and support to achieve best practice.

This document is designed to be used alongside other guidance that has been produced, particularly:

- *Guidelines for Personal Protective Equipment Use in Health Care Settings* (16 April 2020)
- *COVID-19 Frequently Asked Questions about PPE* (23 April 2020)

When does this Guidance Apply?

This guidance is for **anyone** providing or receiving community-based disability supports, (including individualised funding, enhanced individualised funding or personal budgets), or informally (as friends, family, and neighbours etc) for at-risk disabled individuals. This guidance does not refer to the specific needs of clients or their likely need or uses of PPE outside of the disability support carer-client interaction.

This guidance assumes that neither the client nor the Support and Care Worker meet the case definition for COVID-19.

This means that if the Support and Care Worker has any symptoms of an acute respiratory infection, including:

- Cough
- Runny nose
- Sore throat
- Shortness of breath
- Temporary loss of smell
- Fever

They should **not** be performing any disability support cares. They are a suspected case of COVID-19 until proven otherwise. The Support and Care Worker should notify their employer immediately, self-isolate, and arrange to be tested for COVID-19. They should not resume any care duties until their test result has been confirmed negative to indicate they do not have COVID-19, and have been symptom free for 48 hours.

The Support and Care Worker, prior to commencing any care duties, should also enquire with their client or person they are supporting whether they have any of the above symptoms. This forms part of a set of key questions to ask the client to identify any risk:

Key risk assessment questions

What key risk assessment questions should I ask to determine the need for PPE use if I don't know someone's COVID-19 status?

When you do not know someone's COVID-19 status, ask the following risk assessment questions prior to the interaction where possible, or maintain physical distancing at the start of the interaction while they are asked:

1. Does the patient/client have new or worsening respiratory symptoms including one of the following: cough, sore throat, shortness of breath, coryza (runny nose) or temporary loss of smell, with or without fever?

   If 'yes,' then this person may have COVID-19. They need to be provided a surgical mask to wear while supporting them to have a formal assessment to determine their COVID-19 status. If you need to provide direct care while awaiting this assessment, please consider additional PPE requirements. If you do not need to provide direct care while awaiting this assessment, please only put on a surgical mask.
2. Have they been in contact in the last two weeks with others who have been unwell with respiratory symptoms or fever, or are suspected or confirmed to have COVID-19?
3. Is the patient/client at higher risk of severe illness from of COVID-19 (as per **www.health.govt.nz/covid-19-health-advice-general-public**)?

If the answer is 'yes' to question 2 or 3 and maintaining physical distancing of at least 2 metres is not possible, the care provider should wear a surgical mask, irrespective of the type of care to be provided. This guidance provides an additional level of protection for the very low risk of potential asymptomatic or pre-symptomatic transmission between the health care worker and patient/client. Additional PPE may be required depending on the nature of the care to be provided.

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Why is the PPE guidance provided for each task separately?

There a number of different job titles, roles, and informal supports that disabled people receive from a range of formal and informal Support and Care Workers. In order to remove the need for clinical judgements and rationalising the use of PPE to tasks for which it will be safe and effective, the guidance table can help each Support and Care Worker or client work out what is recommended in most community care situations. The table also highlights what should be business as usual prior to the identification of COVID-19, as a standard precautions approach.

If a Support and Care Worker performs more than one task, the PPE should be selected to meet the requirements of the task that needs the **highest** protection of those to be performed, rather than changing PPE between each task. However, the usual basic hygiene principles still apply i.e. gloves should be changed after toilet/ bathroom cares and before meal preparation etc.

The PPE should be used and disposed of at the clients home or place of residence. PPE should not be transferred or reused from one client to another (unless those clients are already within a single residential bubble).

These guidelines only refer to Support and Care Worker requirements during their care interactions, and not to their requirements in other non-contact aspects of their role, interactions with other staff, during their travel to and from the client's residence, or in their non-work life.

How do I use PPE?

Many Support and Care Workers may not have had to use PPE in their usual duties before. Using PPE does not guarantee that you cannot get COVID-19. Correct use is vital to ensure the equipment is effective. If PPE is used, the Support and Care Worker needs to assume when wearing it, and especially when removing it that it has been contaminated with Coronavirus. This means taking it off needs to be done very carefully, with the PPE disposed of safely.

The most important aspects of you (and your client's) personal protection are a whole system of actions, not just one aspect. These include (in order from most important):

1. Maintaining your own COVID-19 safety when you are not at work (keeping your personal bubble small and practising physical distancing when out of your home) – so you don't come into contact with COVID-19;
2. The honest assessment of your health, and that of your client (i.e. not performing disability cares if you are unwell);
3. Thorough hand hygiene before, after, and throughout your care duties;
4. Avoiding touching of your face or eyes;
5. Physical distancing wherever possible;
6. The appropriate selection and use of PPE equipment; and
7. The safe removal and disposal of used PPE.

There are useful resources and training videos on how to remove PPE safely. All Support and Care Workers need to be thoroughly familiar with this process before using PPE for the first time. If not removed correctly contaminated PPE can actually increase a Support and Care Worker's exposure to the virus from which the equipment was intended to protect.

Some useful links are below:

Hand Hygiene:

- www.health.govt.nz/your-health/healthy-living/good-hygiene/hand-washing

Minimising Personal Belongings:

- www.health.govt.nz/system/files/documents/pages/how-to-keep-your-home-bubble-safe.pdf

Wearing and Removing PPE:

- www.tepou.co.nz/resources/Te Pou PPE Guide/943
- teawakairangihealth.org.nz/wp-content/uploads/2020/03/Don-Doff-PPE-PRIMARY-Health.pdf

Other useful COVID-19 information can be found at these trusted websites:

- www.health.govt.nz
- www.covid19.govt.nz

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