



1.0 Background

AIIMS Rajkot has commenced OPD services at permanent campus wef 31 Dec 2021. With the recent surge in Covid 19 cases health care workers working in OPD are at increased risk of acquiring the COVID-19 disease, if there is a breach in the personal protection while managing patients.

2.0 Purpose

The purpose of the document is to provide guidance on the following:

- Prevention measures to be observed at the Institution level.
- Testing and isolation measures for staff of AIIMS Rajkot.

3.0 Institutional Mechanism for preventing and responding to Healthcare Associated Infections (HAIs) among HCWs

It is the responsibility of Hospital Infection Control Committee (HICC) for implementing the Infection Prevention and Control (IPC) activities and organizing regular trainings on IPC for HCWs.

Following members of HICC are nominated to address all matters related to Healthcare Associated Infections (HAIs)-

Nodal Officer- Dr Sanjay, Associate Professor, Dept of Pulmonary Medicine

Infection Control Officer- Dr Mayuri Bhise, Assistant Profesor, Dept of Microbiology

They will ensure that-

- Healthcare workers working in OPD shall use PPEs appropriate to their risk profile.
- Training on Infection Prevention and Control is imparted to all healthcare workers and the staff is aware of common signs and symptoms, need for self-health monitoring and need for prompt reporting of such symptoms.
- Regular (thermal) screening of all hospital staff is done
- All HCWs are vaccinated with 2 doses of the COVID vaccine and also take the precautionary third dose as per prescribed protocol.
- Provisions have been made for prompt reporting of breach of PPE by the hospital staff and follow up action.

4.0 Action for Healthcare Workers

- Ensure that all preventive measures like frequent washing of hands/use of alcohol based hand sanitizer, respiratory etiquettes (using tissue/handkerchief while coughing or sneezing), etc. are followed at all times.
- Appropriate mask/PPE is used at all times while on duty.
- A buddy system* to be followed to ensure that there is no breach in infection prevention control practices.
- Any breach in PPE and exposure is immediately informed to the nodal officer.



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- (e) HCWs must follow physical distancing and masking at all times to prevent transmission to/acquiring infection from other HCWs who may be positive.
- (f) Pregnant/lactating mothers and immuno-compromised healthcare workers shall inform their medical condition to the hospital authorities for them to get posted in appropriate areas.

*Buddy system: Under this approach, two or more-person team will be formed amongst the deployed hospital staff who share responsibilities for his/her partners safety and well-being in the context of

- (i) Appropriately donning and doffing of PPEs,
- (ii) maintaining hand hygiene and
- (iii) taking requisite steps on observing breach of PPEs.

5.0 Testing Strategy for COVID-19

5.1 HCW who may be tested:

- (a) Symptomatic (cough, fever, sore throat, loss of taste and/or smell, breathlessness and/or other respiratory symptoms) individuals.
- (b) At-risk contacts of laboratory confirmed cases.
[At-risk contacts are elderly (>60yr) and individuals with co-morbidity such as diabetes, hypertension, chronic lung or kidney disease, malignancy, obesity etc].

5.2 HCW who need not be tested:

- (a) Asymptomatic individuals
- (b) Contacts of confirmed cases of COVID-19 unless identified as high risk based on age or co-morbidities

6.0 Health care worker deployment during COVID-19

6.1 SOP to be followed in case HCW reports exposure/breach of PPE

All the Healthcare workers must report every unprotected exposure/ breach of PPE while managing COVID-19 patients to the nodal officer immediately.

Such exposed HCWs shall continue to work wearing appropriate PPE and get themselves tested at day 5 of the exposure or if symptoms develop anytime within 14 days from the day of exposure.

6.2 SOP to be followed in case HCW reports symptoms suggestive of COVID-19

6.2.1 If any healthcare worker who is manifesting signs and symptoms suggestive of COVID-19, he/she will be tested & isolated immediately and if tested positive the following actions shall be taken:

- (a) In case of mild case, HCW will have an option of home isolation, subject to the conditions stipulated in the ICMR guidelines for Home Isolation (available at: <https://www.mohfw.gov.in/pdf/RevisedHomeIsolationGuidelines05012022.pdf>).
- (b) In cases where home isolation is not feasible, such mild cases will be referred to a COVID Care Center.



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- (c) HCW under home isolation will end isolation and resume duty after at least 7 days have passed from testing positive and no fever for 3 successive days and they shall continue wearing masks.
- (d) Moderate/Severe cases that require oxygen therapy shall be referred at a Dedicated COVID Health Center for management.

6.2.3 Those HCWs who test negative and continue to be symptomatic, will be treated as non-covid patient as per their clinical diagnosis. They can resume work based on the clinical diagnosis and the medical certification by the treating doctor.

6.2.4 Quarantine/isolation of healthcare workers, other than stipulated above is not warranted.

7.0 References

- (a) ICMR Revised Advisory for managing Health Care Workers (HCWs) working in COVID and Non-COVID areas of the Health Care Facilities dated 09 Jan 2022.
- (b) ICMR Advisory on Purposive Testing Strategy for COVID-19 in India (Version VII, dated 10th January 2022)



Sd/-

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