



**MINISTRY OF HEALTH**  
SINGAPORE

MH50:30-17

21 February 2020

Licensees of X-ray Laboratories

**MANAGEMENT OF SUSPECTED PNEUMONIA PATIENT AND INFECTION CONTROL MEASURES**

In view of the local COVID-19 situation, this circular informs licensees of x-ray laboratories of the measures and disinfection procedures to be taken for the management of suspected pneumonia patients.

Patient Management

2 Medical practitioners have been advised to refer (i) patients who meet the COVID-19 suspect case definition; and (ii) patients clinically assessed to have pneumonia not meeting the suspect case definition, to hospitals using the dedicated ambulance service. However, as such patients may still present to X-ray facilities, as a precautionary measure, licensees are advised to:

- (a) Screen all patients for fever or respiratory symptoms and travel history based on prevailing case definition;
- (b) Adopt a separate patient flow for patients who meet the prevailing case definition, and the recommended use of PPEs enclosed with this circular for staff handling or in close contact<sup>1</sup> with suspected cases, particularly when positioning the patients for imaging procedures; and
- (c) Notify the referring doctors<sup>2</sup> immediately for patients who have radiological evidence of pneumonia.

3 To minimise contact time, licensees should advise all patients to either return to their referring doctors or their homes<sup>3</sup> after diagnostic imaging is completed instead of waiting at the x-ray laboratory for their reports. The referring doctor will contact the patients regarding their results, and if there is any radiological evidence of pneumonia, the referring doctor will call the designated ambulance service to send the patient to the nearest A&E of the public sector institutions.

4 We would also like to remind licensees that they should not turn away or reject any radiological requests for diagnostic imaging procedures (e.g. CXRs) from other healthcare practitioners.

<sup>1</sup> Close contacts' is defined as approximately within 2 metres to the case with prolonged contact time.

<sup>2</sup> Licensees could ask for the contact details of the referring doctors so as to ensure that they could close the loop on the results of the radiological investigations

<sup>3</sup> If the referring doctors have already prescribed the appropriate medications and management plan to the patients



## Infection Control and Disinfection

5 In addition to usual infection control and disinfection practices in the laboratory, licensees shall also ensure that the laboratory conducts a wipe down of general surfaces and disinfection of the equipment used after performing any radiological procedures on every suspect case.

6 Licensees shall ensure that a wipe down of the general surfaces and the disinfection of the x-ray equipment used are performed with one of the following cleaning and disinfection methods<sup>4</sup>:

- (a) Bleach (diluted to 1000 ppm or according to the manufacturer's instructions. E.g. for sodium hypochlorite concentration between 5% and 5.25%, dilute 1-part bleach in 49 parts water). Bleach solution should be prepared fresh and left on the surface for a contact time of at least 10 minutes;
- (b) Alcohol impregnated wipes (e.g. isopropyl 70%, ethyl alcohol 60%) for the wipe down of surfaces for up to 15 minutes where the use of bleach is not suitable, e.g. metal; and
- (c) Any other disinfectants that are effective against coronavirus. Disinfectants should be prepared and applied with the appropriate contact time in accordance with the manufacturer's instructions, before removing any disinfected materials.

7 We thank you for your support to manage the current COVID-19 situation. If you have any queries or require further clarifications, you may contact MOH at [elis@moh.gov.sg](mailto:elis@moh.gov.sg).



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<sup>4</sup> Referenced from the interim guideline jointly issued by the National Environmental Agency (NEA), the National Centre for Infectious Diseases (NCID) and MOH. More information on the interim guideline can be found at: [www.nea.gov.sg/environmental-cleaning-guidelines](http://www.nea.gov.sg/environmental-cleaning-guidelines). There are other adjunct non-touch cleaning methods such as hydrogen peroxide vaporiser. However, the proposed cleaning and disinfection methods above would be sufficient. The adjunct non-touch cleaning methods can be included as an added precaution.