



Advice for General Practitioners in relation to assessment and management of patients with suspected Novel Coronavirus infection.

General Measures

For patients presenting to Primary Care with acute viral respiratory illness, tissues, surgical masks and alcohol hand rub should be available in Reception

- Information posters for display are available on the [HPSC website](#)
- Risk assessment algorithm for use in primary care is available on the [HPSC website](#)

Update to date information and resources are available on the HPSC website www.hpsc.ie

Patients telephoning to practice

Risk assessment should be performed over the telephone. If the person fits both the epidemiological AND clinical criteria, then transfer to a local hospital irrespective of the severity of symptoms is indicated. Contact the National ambulance service who will organise the patients transfer

For patients presenting to Primary Care

Provide the patient with surgical mask and tissues and ask them to decontaminate their hands with alcohol rub.

Patient should be moved to a room away from other patients and limit exposure of staff. The door should remain closed. If there is no available room, where possible the patient should sit at least 1m away from others. If the patient has driven to the surgery and there is no immediate clinical concern it may be reasonable for the patient to remain in their car whilst waiting to be reviewed.

Apply Contact and Droplet precautions with appropriate PPE. If available a disposable long-sleeved gown is recommended. If not available wear a plastic apron and roll up sleeves. Wear gloves, eye protection (face shield or goggles) and respiratory protection (surgical face mask). Avoid physical examination and remain 1m from patient where possible.

If a case is considered possible when a consultation is already in progress, withdraw from the room, close the door and decontaminate your hands. Apply appropriate PPE before completing assessment.

If the person fits both the epidemiological AND clinical criteria, then transfer to hospital is indicated irrespective of clinical severity of symptoms. Contact the National Ambulance Service who will organise transfer to a receiving hospital

Following patient transfer

Ensure room remains closed for one hour prior to environmental decontamination.

PPE should be worn for cleaning and decontamination of the room

Clean and disinfect the environment and furniture after use with a detergent clean followed by disinfection with a product containing 1000 parts per million available chlorine (ppm av.cl.) or with combined detergent disinfectant solution at a dilution of 1000 (ppm av.cl.). Products with these specifications are available in different formats including wipes. Pay special attention to frequently touched sites e.g. door handles and to horizontal surfaces.

Waste should be disposed of as healthcare risk waste and bag sealed for disposal

Further infection prevention and control guidance is available on the [HPSC website](#)

Follow up of contacts

- Make a list of all patients in the waiting room who may have had potential exposure – see definitions of close contacts as per risk assessment algorithm
- Make a list of practice team members who may have had potential exposure.
- **No action is required until the suspect case is confirmed**
- If the suspected case is confirmed, the local Department of Public Health will contact the GP/Practice regarding follow-up of contacts.