

Novel coronavirus (COVID-19)

Northern Region

Interim Health Professional Home Visit Guideline

Version 11. 22/09/2021 (Interim Alert Level 3 Guidance)

Note: This is interim advice and may change in the future as viral transmission risks are better understood.

NORTHLAND DISTRICT HEALTH BOARD
Te Paari Hauora Ā Rohe O Te Tai Tokerau



Waitematā
District Health Board
Best Care for Everyone



Undertake a risk assessment ahead of each visit. Carefully consider whether the visit needs to take place. Consider alternative options such as telehealth and what can be done outside the home where there is better ventilation.

YES

YES

Phone client before visit, asking whether **the client or any household member** :

- Is a case of COVID-19 OR
- Is unwell with acute respiratory symptoms including cough, sore throat, shortness of breath, coryza (runny nose), temporary loss of smell, altered taste, with or without fever

NO

Check that COVID-19 testing is being organised for the client or symptomatic household member.

If an appointment or home visit is necessary, staff should:

- Advise the client that you will be wearing PPE
- During the visit:
- Maintain physical distancing from client and household members who need to be in the room (remain > 2m).
 - Perform hand hygiene
 - Provide the person with symptoms or who is a case with a **mask for source control**
 - **Use a P2/N95 respirator, gown, gloves and eye protection.**
 - Reinforce cough, sneeze and hand hygiene with the client.
 - Change PPE after each client and dispose of it safely after leaving the client's residence.

YES

If an appointment or home visit is necessary, staff should:

- Advise the client that you will be wearing PPE
- During the visit:
- Maintain physical distancing (remain more than 2m).
 - Perform hand hygiene
 - Provide the person with a **mask for source control**
 - If you need to be within 2m, for example to provide clinical care, you should adhere to **droplet precautions (medical mask and eye protection)** and any other PPE indicated by standard precautions.
 - **When care is provided in a confined poorly ventilated space wear a P2/N95 particulate respirator in addition to eye protection**
 - Reinforce cough, sneeze and hand hygiene with the client.
 - Change PPE after each client, and dispose of it safely after leaving the client's residence.

In the last 14 days has the client or household member had contact with a COVID-19 case, been at a current location of interest at a time of concern, or is in one of the other COVID-19 potential exposure groups listed overleaf?

NO

Adhere to standard precautions. In addition, wear a **medical mask and optional eye protection and provide the client with a mask to wear.**

It is important to use and dispose of a face mask properly. The instructions on the correct use of a face mask, and an explanation of standard precautions are included on the next page.

It may be harder for clients to hear or understand you if you are wearing a mask, please take extra care when communicating.

If the client or family have any questions at any time please:
Refer them to the dedicated COVID-19 line 0800 3585453 or recommend they phone their GP.

Potential COVID-19 exposure groups

In the last 14 days have you:

- had contact with a COVID-19 case,
- been at a Location of Interest at a time of concern,
- travelled internationally (excluding travel by air from a country/area with which New Zealand has quarantine-free travel (QFT)),
- had direct contact with a person who has travelled internationally in the preceding 14 days (excluding travel by air from a QFT country/area),
- exited an MIQ facility (excluding recovered COVID-19 cases),
- worked on an international aircraft or shipping vessel (excluding aircraft from a QFT country/area),
- cleaned at an international airport or maritime port in areas/conveniences visited by international arrivals (excluding areas/conveniences for travellers by air from a QFT country/area),
- worked in cold storage areas of facilities that receive imported chilled and frozen goods directly from an international airport or maritime port, or
- any other criteria requested by the local Medical Officer of Health.

Standard precautions

Standard precautions are a set of infection prevention and control practices used to prevent transmission of diseases that can be acquired by contact with blood, body fluids, non-intact skin and mucous membranes.

Standard precautions should be used for all patient care activities. They're based on a risk assessment and make use of common-sense practices and personal protective equipment use that protect healthcare workers from infection and prevent the spread of infection from patient to patient.

Standard precautions include:

1. hand hygiene
2. use of personal protective equipment as indicated
3. respiratory hygiene / cough etiquette
4. patient placement
5. safe handling of needles and other sharps
6. safe injection practices (ie, aseptic technique for parenteral medications)
7. sterile instruments and devices
8. safe handling of linen and laundry
9. cleaning and disinfection of environmental surfaces.

Wearing a medical face mask

It is important that face masks are worn and removed correctly. Masks should fit snugly and fully cover your nose and mouth.

How to wear a mask:

- place over nose, mouth and chin
- fit flexible nose piece over nose bridge
- secure on head with ties or elastic
- adjust to fit – secure on your head, fitting snugly around your face with no gaps
- avoid touching or adjusting your mask during use.

How to remove a mask:

- avoid touching the front of the mask
- if the mask has ties, untie the bottom, then top tie
- remove from face
- discard, do not use again
- wash hands with soap and water or use hand sanitiser immediately.

Masks should be used once only. They should be removed prior to eating and drinking or if they become soiled, and discarded. If working in a community setting, masks should be removed and safely discarded after each client. Seal the used mask in a plastic bag and then discard in the general waste.

Wearing a P2/N95 particulate respirator

Seal/fit checking is necessary to ensure wearing a P2/N95 respirator is maximally effective, and must be undertaken each time a person dons a P2/N95 respirator.

In the unlikely event that a person who is meant to be visited becomes a COVID-19 case, is not transferred to a managed facility, and requires essential home care, urgently discuss this situation with public health to understand their requirements/expectations.