

Respiratory illness

Infection Prevention and Control tips for initial clinic patient management



Government of South Australia
SA Health



Aboriginal Health Council
of South Australia Ltd.

Patient Presents to Health Clinic (preliminary assessment at reception)

Patient has symptoms of respiratory illness? (e.g. cough, sore throat)

Ask the patient to:

- Clean their hands with soap and water or alcohol-based hand gel.
- Put on a mask (if tolerated).
- Cover coughs and sneezes with a tissue or elbow.
- Dispose of used tissues in the bin.
- Clean their hands after coughing or sneezing.
- Isolate the patient in another room if possible, or away from other patients in the waiting room (at least 1 metre).

Patient Assessment (by clinical staff)

Clinical staff to:

- Implement appropriate **standard and transmission-based precautions (TBP)** - **contact and droplet**, hand hygiene and recommended PPE based on symptoms.
- Use PPE for patient contact and blood and body fluid exposure risk: surgical mask, eye protection, gown and gloves.
- Where aerosols may be generated (e.g. nebulisers or intubations), wear a particulate filter respirator (PFR e.g. P2/N95) instead of a surgical mask.
- Note: Clinic to ensure staff are up to date with vaccinations as appropriate (e.g. diphtheria, influenza). Refer to local policy.
- Encourage patient to continue to wear a mask (if tolerated).

Clinical Management of the Patient

- Manage patient as per usual practices.
- Consider differential diagnoses considering clinical presentation and current epidemiological factors.
- Provide patient information as appropriate. See Additional Information.
- After assessing or managing the patient, remove PPE as per manufacturer and local procedures and perform hand hygiene.
- Clean surfaces and equipment using detergent and disinfectant (as per manufacturers recommendations) wearing appropriate PPE (e.g. gown and gloves +/- eye protection). Refer to local procedures.
- Manage linen and waste as per standard and transmission-based precautions.

*Personal Protective Equipment (PPE)

Standard precautions always apply for all patients

TBP as per risk assessment



Hand hygiene



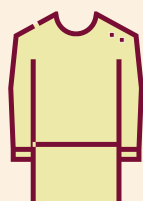
Surgical mask



Gloves



Eye protection/face shield



Long sleeved gown



PFR – P2/N95 (if required)

Additional Information

- Call Communicable Disease Control Branch on **1300 232 272** as required
- Provide patient information as required
- Useful resources:
 - [Healthcare: infection prevention and control \(IPC\) | SA Health](#)
 - [Staff protection from infections: infection prevention and control principles | SA Health](#)
 - [You've Got What? | SA Health](#)
 - [Health alerts | SA Health](#)