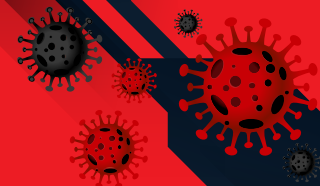




NEHAWU SUBMISSION ON HEALTH AND SAFETY AND PERSONAL PROTECTIVE EQUIPMENT

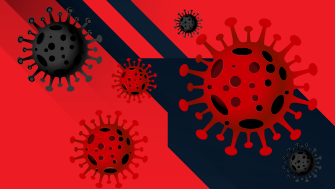
1 INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 This document consolidates NEHAWU's demands on the compliance with the Occupational Health and Safety Act in terms of the provision of the Personal Protection Equipment (PPEs) in the face of the danger posed by COVID-19 to frontline health and social care workers.
- 1.2 Specifically, the document is intended to empower NEHAWU representatives in their participation in different processes and structures such as Occupational Health and Safety Committees geared at ensuring that the employer complies with the Act in terms of the provision of PPEs. Thus, this would be an even more important at the workplace.
- 1.3 The document outlines the required PPEs as designated according to different categories of the cadre of the frontline health and social care workers. In this regard, we rely on the knowledge and experience of the World Health Organisation (WHO), which more or less also guides the South African government.
- 1.4 The Department of Health together with the National Institute of Communicable Diseases (NICD) have issued some guidelines, but these are not consolidated in a single document and they are not just focused on the occupational health and safety. The more relevant of such guidelines in relation to our immediate concern regarding the health and wellbeing of the frontline workers are the *Guidelines for Case-finding, Diagnosis, Management and Public Health Response in South Africa* and the *COVID-19 Environmental Health Guidelines* (which are attached).
- 1.5 On the 19 March 2020, WHO issued an "Interim Guidance" entitled *Rational use of Personal Protective Equipment for Coronavirus Disease (COVID-19)*. Indeed, WHO is in a better position to provide such guidance given its global surveillance of the pandemic as well as its infrastructure and capacity to draw from empirical research and experiences dealing with this new disease across the world. However, a few of its recommendations have been shifting as a result of discoveries of new information, e.g. on the use of face-masks and the emergence of asymptomatic infected individuals who turn out to be even more effective but unconscious agents of the Coronavirus.
- 1.6 Whilst we rely on the recommendations of the WHO, we do make additional proposals that take into account the recent heightened level of precautions from WHO and our government arising from the deepening of knowledge and experience in dealing with the pandemic in different countries, especially on the face masks.
- 1.7 In this document we follow the WHO specific definition of the PPE, which accordingly "includes gloves, medical masks, goggles or a face shield, and gowns, as well as for specific procedures, respirators (i.e. N95 or FFP2 standard or equivalent) and aprons".

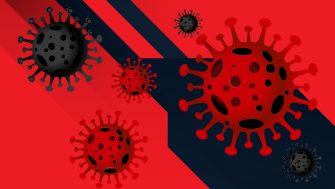


2 THE REQUIRED PERSONAL PROTECTING EQUIPMENT

HEALTH WORKER CATEGORY	INTERVENTIONS AND ACTIVITIES	PROTECTIVE EQUIPEMENT WHO RECOMMENDATIONS	NEHAWU PROPOSALS
Nurse	Providing direct care to COVID-19 patients	- Medical mask - Gown - Gloves - Eye protection (goggles or face shield)	- Disposable caps. - Disposable boots.
	Aerosol-generating procedures performed on COVID-19 patients	- Respirator N95 or FFP2 standard or equivalent. - Gown - Gloves - Eye protection - Apron	- Disposable caps. - Disposable boots.
Nurse in the emergency room	Triage Nurse: Preliminary screening not involving direct contact	- Maintain spatial distance of at least 1 metre. - No PPE required	- Medical mask - Gloves - Eye protection (goggles or face shield)
	Triage Nurse: Any activity in helping patients without respiratory symptoms.	No PPE required	- Medical mask - Gloves - Eye protection (goggles or face shield) - Disposable caps. - Disposable boots.
	Triage Nurse: Any activity in helping patients with respiratory symptoms	- Any activity in handling the patient - Maintain spatial distance of at least 1 metre. - Provide medical mask if tolerated by patient.	- Medical mask - Gloves - Eye protection (goggles or face shield). - Disposable caps. - Disposable boots.
Nurse in the Waiting Room	Patients with respiratory symptoms	- Provide medical mask if tolerated. - Immediately move the patient to an isolation room or separate area away from others; if this is not feasible, ensure spatial distance of at least 1 metre from other patients.	- Medical mask - Gloves - Eye protection (goggles or face shield) - Disposable caps. - Disposable boots.
	Patients without respiratory symptoms	No PPE required	- Medical mask - Gloves - Eye protection (goggles or face shield)
Nurse and/ or Doctor in the Consultation room	Physical examination of patient with respiratory symptoms	- Medical mask - Gown - Gloves - Eye protection	- Disposable caps. - Disposable boots.
	Physical examination of patients without respiratory symptoms	PPE according to standard precautions and risk assessment.	- Medical mask - Gown - Gloves - Eye protection



			• Disposable caps. • Disposable boots.
	Physical examination of patients with respiratory symptoms	• Provide medical mask if tolerated.	• Medical mask • Gloves • Eye protection • Disposable caps. • Disposable boots.
	Physical examination of patients without respiratory symptoms	• PPE according to standard precautions and risk assessment.	• Medical mask • Gloves • Eye protection • Disposable caps. • Disposable boots.
Porter	Other areas of patient transit (e.g. wards, corridors).	• No PPE required	• Medical mask • Gloves • Eye protection (goggles or face shield)
Clinician: Doctor	Aerosol-generating procedures performed on COVID-19 patients	• Respirator N95 or FFP2 standard or equivalent. • Gown • Gloves • Eye protection • Apron	• Disposable caps. • Disposable boots.
Clerical and Administration workers	Administrative tasks that do not involve contact with COVID-19 patients.	• No PPE required	• Medical mask
Laboratory Technician	Handling and manipulation of respiratory samples	• Medical mask • Gown • Gloves • Eye protection (if risk of splash)	• Disposable caps. • Disposable boots.
Radiographers	May involved in the imaging for the diagnosis and treatment of symptomatic patients.		• Medical mask • Gown • Gloves • Eye protection (if risk of splash) • Disposable caps. • Disposable boots.
Cleaner	Entering and cleaning the room of COVID-19 patients	• Medical mask • Gown • Heavy duty gloves • Eye protection (if risk of splash from organic material or chemicals) • Boots or closed work shoes	• Disposable caps. • Disposable boots.
	In the Consultation Room after and between consultations of clinicians - with patients with respiratory symptoms.	• Medical mask • Gown • Heavy duty gloves • Eye protection (if risk of splash from organic material or chemicals). • Boots or closed work shoes	• Disposable caps. • Disposable boots.
	Cleaning after and between the transportation of patients with suspected	• Medical mask • Gown • Heavy duty gloves	• Disposable caps. • Disposable boots.



	COVID-19 to the referral health care facility.	• Eye protection (if risk of splash from organic material or chemicals). • Boots or closed work shoes	
Community Health Worker	Patients with respiratory symptoms	• Maintain spatial distance of at least 1 metre. • Provide medical mask if tolerated, except when sleeping.	• Medical mask • Gloves • Eye protection (goggles or face shield) • Disposable caps. • Disposable boots.
Community Caregiver	Providing direct care or when handling stool, urine, or waste from COVID-19 patient being cared for at home	• Gloves • Medical mask • Apron (if risk of splash)	
Ambulance or transfer vehicle (EMS worker)	EMS worker: transporting suspected COVID-19 patients to the referral health care facility	• Medical mask • Gowns • Gloves • Eye protection	• Disposable caps. • Disposable boots.
	Driver: involved only in driving the patient with suspected COVID-19 disease and the driver's compartment is separated from the COVID-19 patient	• Maintain spatial distance of at least 1 metre. • No PPE required	• Medical mask • Gloves • Eye protection
	Driver: no direct contact with patient with suspected COVID-19, but no separation between driver's and patient's compartments	• Medical mask	
Rapid-response team investigators	Interview suspected or confirmed COVID-19 patients or their contacts.	• No PPE if done remotely (e.g. by telephone or video conference). • Remote interview is the preferred method.	
	In-person interview of suspected or confirmed COVID-19 patients without direct contact	• Medical mask • Maintain spatial distance of at least 1 metre. • The interview should be conducted outside the house or outdoors, and confirmed or suspected COVID-19 patients should wear a medical mask if tolerated.	• Medical mask • Gloves • Eye protection (goggles or face shield)
	In-person interview with asymptomatic contacts of COVID-19 patients	• Maintain spatial distance of at least 1 metre. • No PPE required • The interview should be performed outside the house or outdoors. If it is necessary to enter the household environment, use a thermal imaging camera to confirm that the individual does not have a fever, maintain spatial distance of at least 1 metre and do not touch anything in the household environment.	• Medical mask • Gloves • Eye protection (goggles or face shield)