

GOVERNMENT OF ANDHRA PRADESH
HEALTH MEDICAL & FAMILY WELFARE DEPARTMENT

Order No. 144/COVID-19/2020-21

Date:24.01.2022

COVID INSTANT ORDER -144

Sub:- HMFWD-COVID19-Communication of GOI advisory on managing Health Care Workers (HCWS) working in COVID and Non COVID areas of the Health Care Facilities - issued- reg

Ref:-Guidelines issued by MoH& FW Government of India dated 9th January 2022.

Health being human intensive service delivery system, the trained work force is a valuable resource in managing the pandemic. The health care personnel working in hospitals are at increased risk of acquiring the COVID-19 disease, if there is a breach in the personal protection while managing patients. It is important to ensure proper advisory to protect Health care Workers (HCWs) particularly in context of safety from Healthcare Associated Infections (HAIs) while managing COVID-19. Accordingly, the Government of India has communicated the advisory on managing Health Care Workers (HCWS) working in COVID and Non COVID areas of the Health Care Facilities. Main issues are preventive measures to be taken up by the health facilities and testing and isolation measures to health care workers. Accordingly the following guidelines are being issued

1. Institutional Mechanism for preventing and responding to Healthcare Associated Infections (HAIs) among HCWs

- All health facilities shall activate its Hospital Infection Control Committee (HICC). The HICC in the health facility is responsible for implementing the Infection Prevention and Control (IPC) activities and organizing regular trainings on IPC for HCWS.
- A Nodal Officer (Infection Control Officer) shall be identified by each health facility to address all matters related to Healthcare Associated Infections (HAIS). With reference to preventing such infection among healthcare workers.
- The responsibilities of the nodal officer (preferably the Resident Medical Officers shall be appointed) will ensure that:

- i. Healthcare workers in different settings of hospitals shall use PPEs appropriate to their risk profile.
- ii. All healthcare workers have undergone training on Infection Prevention and Control and ensure that they are aware of common signs and symptoms, need for self-health monitoring and need for prompt reporting of such symptoms.
- iii. Provisions have been made for regular (thermal) screening of all hospital staff.
- iv. All HCWs are vaccinated with 2 doses of the COVID vaccine and also take the precautionary third dose by 15th January 2022 as per prescribed protocol.
- v. Provisions have been made for prompt reporting of breach of PPE by the hospital staff and follow up action.

2. Action for Healthcare Workers

- i. Ensure all preventive measures frequent washing of hands/use of alcohol based hand sanitizer, respiratory etiquettes (using tissue/handkerchief while coughing or sneezing), etc. are followed at all times.
- ii. Appropriate PPE is used at all times while on duty.
- iii. A buddy system to be followed to ensure that there is no breach in infection prevention control practices.
- iv. Any breach in PPE and exposure is immediately informed to the nodal officer/HoD of the department
- v. HCWS after leaving the patient care units (wards/OPDs/ICUs) at the doctor's duty rooms/hostels/canteen or outside the Health care facility must follow physical distancing and masking to prevent transmission to acquiring infection from other HCWs who may be positive.
- vi. Pregnant/lactating mothers and immuno-compromised health care workers shall inform their medical condition to the hospital authorities for them to get posted in appropriate areas.

*Buddy system: Under this approach, two or more-person team is formed amongst the deployed hospital staff who share responsibilities for his/her partner's safety and well-being in the context of (i) Appropriately donning and doffing of PPEs, (ii) maintaining hand hygiene and (iii) taking requisite steps on observing breach of PPEs.

3.1 SOP to be followed in case HCW reports exposure/breach of PPE

All the Healthcare workers must report every unprotected exposure/ breach of PPE while managing COVID-19 patients to the concerned nodal officer and HoD of the concerned department immediately. Such exposed HCWs shall continue to work wearing appropriate PPE and test themselves at day 5 of the exposure or if symptoms develop anytime within 14 days from the day of exposure.

3.2 SOP to be followed in case HCW reports symptoms suggestive of COVID-19

3.2.1 If any healthcare worker who is manifesting signs and symptoms suggestive of COVID-19, he/she will be tested & isolated immediately and if tested positive the following actions shall be taken:

a. In case of mild case, HCW will have an option of home isolation, subject to the conditions stipulated in the covid instant order 138. Such cases would end their home isolation after 7 seven days if no fever for successive three days during the period of isolation.

b. Moderate cases that require oxygen therapy shall be managed at a designated COVID Hospital.

c. Severe cases will be managed in a Dedicated COVID Hospital.

3.2.2. HCWs can resume duties while wearing appropriate PPEs if symptoms have resolved (except mild cough), and they are afebrile for 3 successive days.

3.2.3. Those HCWs who test negative and continue to be symptomatic, will be treated in non-COVID ward as per their clinical diagnosis. They can resume work based on the clinical diagnosis and the medical certification by the treating doctor.

3.2.4 Discharge of positive HCWs will be in accordance with the discharge policy (available at: <https://www.mohfw.gov.in/pdf/RevisedDischargePolicyforCOVID19updatedon9thJanuary2022.pdf>).

3.3 Regular quarantine/isolation of healthcare workers after performing duty in COVID-19 areas is **not warranted** unless tested positive

Hence the District Collectors, DMHOs and Superintendents of the Hospitals are requested to follow the above guidelines in ensuring infection control measures in the health care facilities, use of PPEs and management of health care staff and appointment of nodal officers for Infection control measures.

Encl: GOI guidelines for HCWs



Principal Secretary to the Govt. HMFWD dept.

All District Magistrates & Collectors in the state
All Joint Collector(V, WS & Development) in the state
All DMHOs in the state
All superintendents of the Government and private Hospitals in the state through
DME, APVVP, APNA and ASHA