

## Question & Answers Webinar *Managing staff, trainees and residents* (April 19, 2020)

### PPE, infection prevention and protection protocols

- What personal protective equipment is recommended? Only mask and slash shield and popular gown is enough or something else recommended? (Dr. Aliasghar Kamali, Iran)
  - Answer: Surgically yes but with full donning/doffing procedures eg remove outer layer after prone positioning, so initial prep with two layers of gowns.
- What kind of PPE in OPD, ward and OR? for covid + and covid suspect? (Dr. Varun Agarwal, India)
  - Answer:surgical mask in patent tested Covid-free environment. FFP3 otherwise
- Is there an increased risk for OR personnel with laminar flow system in OR? (Dr. Cheralathan Senguttuvan, India)
  - Answer:High air turn over is likely better for OR staff in that theatre but where the air is vented to needs thought if staff there are unprotected. (e.g corridor space)
- Any protocols to minimise covid 19 cross infection in clinics, wards, OR as these places are hot spots currently? (Dr. Surbhi, India)
  - Answer:cohort your patients so that there is no unnecessary cross contamination. Discharge patients early. Our overall inpatient numbers are currently very low and this should be the case for most specialties
- What is the level of personal protection needed in different clinical situations like hospital wards and Outpatient clinics (Dr. Anirban Chatterjee, India)
  - Answer: as above
- Anyone read the guidelines from trauma and Orthopaedics in New Zealand and not to use, laminar flows , anyone stopped using laminar flow ? (Dr. Yahya Elhassan, Ireland)
  - Answer:we have not as yet

### Replied during the webinar:

- From OMFS, should we continue practice with precautionary measures or stop practice at least till the time comes for flat curve of COVID-19???? (Dr. Asif Nazir)
  - Answer (Dr. Michael Grant): I would continue with full precautions
- What kind of PPE for surgeries for cover suspects and cover confirmed?
  - Answer (Dr. Michael Grant): I use a PAPR or a N95 and a full face shield for maxillofacial procedures
- Does surgical mask together with face shield adequate for high risk MaxFax surgery? (Dr. Abd Jabar Nazimi, Malaysia)
  - Answer (Dr. Michael Grant): A regular surgical mask, FFP 1 level protection with a face shield is not considered adequate protection in aerosol generating procedures - like MaxFax
- Can anyone give a clarification or protocol on tracheostomy in COVID +ve patients, apart from using the proper protective measures? (Dr. Ved Poorun, Mauritius)
  - Answer (Dr. Michael Grant): For tracheostomy questions please go the AO Foundation web site and go to the COVID information Hub, there is a statement from AO CMF that addresses this questions
- How long can we use a single mask? (Dr. Kuberakani Thinakara Rajan, UAE)
  - Answer (Dr. Michael Grant): N95 mask is good for several days

### Performing (or not) surgery:

- When it is safe to start elective spine surgery? (Dr. Aliasghar Kamali, Iran)
  - Answer: I think the elective element needs qualifying but whilst prevalence remains high only high value patients should be considered. There needs to be structure to return. Isolated patient + test + short inpatient stay
- A recent Lancet study showed 10x higher mortality rate of COVID patients if they had recent surgery (I believe COVID dx was post-surgery)...though this is a small study, how do we account for such a remarkable increase in mortality when we consider addressing non-emergent but urgent procedures in the short term (next 3 months)? (Dr. Michael Decker, USA)
  - Answer: the paper suggests perhaps lower immunity, but perhaps self selecting group – operated on in a time of increasing concern at a time when thresholds were increasing – yet still warranted surgery. Perhaps some confounders that might be missed
- Any strategy for handling lawyers who are initiating demands for the care or non-care of patients, for example elective surgery risk or deferred urgency of contagion? (Dr. Fabio Alfonso Suarez Romero, Colombia)
  - Answer: Multi-clinician decision making with qualified and detailed note taking. Patient engagement to enable informed choice and explain changes in risk:benefit during crisis

### Working arrangements during the pandemic

- Regarding following the out-patient clinic cases, how do you do that? We started to contact patient by phone calls as arranged by the patient affairs, but it's difficult to find them in the allocated time. Those who have worries, usually respond. (Dr. Khaled M. Ashour, Saudi Arabia)
  - Answer: We have had fairly good success with telephone clinics
- Regarding the outpatient clinics, you know all that these have stopped, sometimes communication with patients is necessary, we communicate with them via phone calls arranged by the patient affairs. Any other thoughts regarding this issue? (Dr. Khalid Ashour, Saudi Arabia)
  - Answer: create objective measurement scores and flag concerning features to enable more frequent contact + education regarding subjective deterioration (eg tandem walking test, fine motor deterioration tests)
- How are duties being assigned of doctors and other healthcare staff? (Dr. Varun Agarwal, India)
  - Answer: We were planning to help with ICU proning but as such have not been required
- Curious how many of you have been asked to redeploy to ICUs or other clinical settings? (Dr. Jordan Steinberg, USA)
  - Answer: initially but stood down

### Virology & Epidemiology

- For false negatives on pcr-based test, isn't this likely due more to sampling error from site rather than an "incubation period?" (Dr. Jordan Steinberg, USA)
  - Answer (Dr. Michael Grant): Data says both as incubation period is long, up to 14 days

### Re-opening

- I think re-opening strategy would be using outpatient service in the first couple of months rather than cases that are more in need for surgery. since these former are better controlled for contact than in-patients. I wonder if you would agree? (Dr. Mutaz Alnaser, Jordan)
  - Answer (Dr. Michael Grant): That is going to be our strategy