

**MAHARASHTRA STATE COUNCIL FOR OCCUPATIONAL THERAPY
AND PHYSIOTHERAPY, MUMBAI**

“Guidelines for Physiotherapy Practice in COVID crisis”.



Maharashtra Mission Begin Again ...

**MAHARASHTRA STATE COUCNIL FOR OCCUPATIONAL THERAPY AND
PHYSIOTHERAPY, MUMBAI**



MAHARASHTRA STATE COUNCIL
FOR OCCUPATIONAL THERAPY & PHYSIOTHERAPY, MUMBAI
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No.OTPT /office/Notice/2041/2020

Date: 08/06/2020

To,

Physiotherapists

Subject: Guidelines for Physiotherapy practice in COVID.

The country is suffering from COVID 19 pandemic. This has affected every sector. Thousands of the health care workers are the frontline soldiers in this crisis. The Physiotherapy fraternity is always supporting Government & society in any calamity / crisis.

The Physiotherapy professionals are providing services to COVID & NON COVID patients in this crisis. We appreciate your dedicated services to community. Bearing in the mind of this crisis and exposure of Physiotherapists to infection the council has prepared a **Guideline for Physiotherapy Practice in COVID crisis.**

All concerned hereby informed to follow these guidelines in practices to prevent transmission of COVID 19. We appreciate your contribution in breaking COVID chain & services to human kind in this crisis. I wish you bright health.

President
Dr.Sudeep Kale
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“Guidelines for Physiotherapy Practice in COVID crisis”.

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Physiotherapists are the integral part of health care and they are providing services in various departments of hospital. The Physiotherapy services are provided by Government, Municipal corporation hospitals, private clinics and departments of private hospitals. Physiotherapists are coming in direct contact with patient hence they are at risk of getting infection or susceptible to the transmission of infection.

This guideline is aimed to educate Physiotherapists about practice, precautions, documentation in COVID crisis in clinical setup.

A **clinical setup** is defined as **any clinical establishment** where Physiotherapy Services are offered. It includes private clinic/ department of hospital/ department of academic institute/ special care units like pediatric set up etc.

SECTION I: TRAINING ON COVID 19

A) Update knowledge on COVID 19:

- Read current literature available on COVID-19. Follow the instructions & directives given by Government of India & Government of Maharashtra. Take online training from igot & diksha platform. Visit council website www.msotpcouncil.org for details in relation to this.
- Complete training and fill online form at council website.
- Refer WHO resources on COVID 19.

B) Train clinic/ department staff on safety measures, precautions, sanitization & disinfection procedures

SECTION II: ADMINISTRATION & DOCUMENTATION

The Physiotherapists shall maintain following things at their set up.

A) Entry point:

Keep a staff at entry point of clinical setup. Adequate PPE shall be given to staff. The staff shall do following things.

- **Thermal screening:** Use digital infrared thermometer. Record the temperature. If patient is having fever refer the patient to nearest fever clinic.
- **Oxygen saturation:** Use pulse oxymeter for recording oxygen saturation of patient. Refer the patient to nearest medical practitioner if SPO2 value is less than 95%. Sanitize it after every use.
- **Maintain Register of Patient:** The staff shall enter patient's name, address, contact details & other data in the register.
- **Assessment of COVID symptoms:** Physiotherapists shall do active screening by asking questions and by looking at signs of patients for COVID 19. Thoroughly inquire & asses about **fever, cough, breathlessness, fatigue, myalgia, nasal congestion, running nose, sudden loss of smell (without nasal congestion) or taste**, etc.
- Inquire about international &/ domestic travel history, contact history. Enter it in Declaration & Screening Performa (see Annexure I)

- **Exclude patients with COVID 19 symptoms.** Refer them to nearest COVID center
- B) Consent & declaration by patient:** take a written consent & declaration by patient as per Annexure I. Ask patient to sign this paper on daily basis.
- C) Workforce planning management** – Efficiently manage the staff to reduce load on system. Give rotation duties to staff. Promote harmony in department.
- D) Sanitization register:** Maintain the register of sanitization. Enter all the sanitization/sterilization / disinfection procedures carried out in your setup in register on daily basis. Also its advisable to record video of all such procedure and save it in CD/pendrive
- E) PPE register & receipts:** Maintain a register of PPE, mask, gown/scrub/hand gloves/Face shield/ goggles. Maintain receipts of all PPE & sanitizer materials purchased for clinical setup and maintain records in file.
- F) Display posters of safety measures/ Hand washing.** Display posters in your clinical setup about hand wash techniques, precaution measures, mask, social distancing etc. Take photos of that areas & preserve that in file.

SECTION III: INFECTION CONTROLL MEASURES

A) Social distancing

- Maintain a minimum distance of 2 meters between people at clinic / department from entry of patient to exit.
- Keep adequate distance in 2 beds. In small clinical setup if ideal 2 meter distance is not possible then treat one patient at one time and keep other bed empty.
- If multiple stations are present in clinical setup then keep few stations functional and maintain distance.
- Avoid handshake with patients and staff.
- Call patients on appointment basis to minimize the crowding in treatment area and waiting area. Allow maximum 2 patients in treatment area & waiting area.
- If possible ask patients to come alone in clinic or ask the accompanying person to wait outside clinic.

B) Patient instruction & preparation:

- In clinic & waiting area put a poster explaining instructions, safety precautions, hand hygiene, COVID 19 symptoms, social distancing,
- Inform patients to not to bring unnecessary bags/ accessories with them. Keep patients belongings & assistive aids in tray at designated area in setup.
- On arrival hand wash facility shall be provided to all patients at entry point.
- Liquid hand wash/ sanitizers containing at least 70 % alcohol shall be made available at any time.
- Promote Cashless payment facility by using credit/debit card / wallets to minimize contact.
- All patients shall wear triple layer surgical masks/ N 95 Mask.

- All patients shall download “**Aarogy setu app**” in mobile from play store and update data time to time.

C) Physiotherapist’s Personal care

Physiotherapy sessions are usually time consuming and Physiotherapists are in working close contact with patients hence personal protection has to be promoted in clinical set up. Personal protective equipment should be used to minimize risk of infection & transmission. Following things has to be used.

- **Mask:** Triple layer mask (surgical/ cotton) or N95 mask.
- **Hand Gloves**
- **Eye protection:** Protective glasses or face shield/visor covering face to chin. This is advisable specially a task which is performed within 2 meters of patient and in the absence of physical barriers.
- **Full length gown:** It’s advisable to have fluid resistance full length gown / surgical gown / scrub. This is highly advisable if you are performing task which requires physical contact like transferring patients, applying various Physiotherapy techniques.
- **Shoe Cover**
- Remove personal protective equipment in a safe and dispose of those that are not reusable in the trash or in containers or resalable bags reserved for this purpose.

Hand washing

- Physiotherapist shall wash hands often with warm water and soap or with a hydro-alcoholic solution containing **at least 70% alcohol** for at least 20 seconds to limit the risk of transmission in the workplace.
- Follow universal seven step hand wash method.

Hand washing is mandatory for following:

- Before touching your face (eyes, nose, mouth). Avoid touching your eyes, nose and mouth as much as possible.
- After coughing, sneezing or blowing your nose
- Before and after eating;
- After handling frequently touched items (eg cash, material, equipment, a file/ papers)
- Before and after each patient.
- After physical contact with a patient.
- Before wearing personal protective equipment and when removing it.

D) Hygiene measures for electrotherapy equipment’s, Furniture, equipment and frequently used areas

Corona virus can survive on surfaces for few hours hence adequate care has to be taken while treating patient.

- Ventilation in clinical setup has to be maintained properly. Filters of AC needs to be cleaned regularly.

- Remove the non-essential items from waiting & common area eg: magazines, newspapers, files from department/ tables.
- Clean and disinfect furniture items daily. Eg: Tables, chairs, the handle of the cupboards, couches, door handles etc.
- Clean and disinfect the waiting room, treatment rooms, rest rooms at least once during each shift.
- Disinfect surfaces, equipment and material that has been in contact with patients & / staffs.
- Disinfect payment machines.
- Sanitize/ sterilize / disinfect the electrodes, cables surfaces of electrotherapy machines, dumbbells, thera band and all equipment / accessories which is used for treatment after every patient.
- Clean and disinfect reusable equipment (eg eye protection in case UVR, LASER) with a product adapted to the equipment.
- Use appropriate cleaning or disinfecting products. Follow manufacturer's recommendations. Do not mix cleaning products.
- Waterproof gloves has to be used when cleaning and disinfecting surfaces to protect the hands.
- Use plastic sheets. Cover the bed sheets & pillows by plastic sheets. Disinfect surfaces of these sheets after treatment of every patient.
- Use tissue papers, paper napkins/ disposable towels.
- Appropriate washing to be carried out for washable material like towels, bed sheets, hand napkins, aprons with the usual laundry soap / detergent.
- Furniture, table chairs has to be disinfected by **2 % sodium hypochlorite**.
- Disinfect commonly used objects like pen, hammer, and assistive devices.

E) Biomedical waste management:

- The PPE, gloves, masks, plastic sheets and other items has to be discarded as per the directives from authorities. Segregate these items separately and follow color coding for baskets to throw the items.
- It's advisable to register for service of local biomedical waste collection agency approved by Maharashtra Pollution Control Board.

SECTION IV: RECOMONDATIONS FOR SPECIAL SERVICES/ SETUPS

A) HOME VISIT RECOMENDATIONS

- Confirm the patient / family member are not suffering / suffered from Covid 19 in last 30 days.
- Confirm the patient / family member was not quarantined in last 15 days.
- No home visit in containment zone.
- Neuro patients, post-surgical patients, geriatric or patients who are in urgent need of home physiotherapy services shall only be treated.
- Use appropriate precautions. Use PPE mask, face shield, hand gloves etc.
- Scrub/full length gowns are advisable if physical contact is expected during treatment / transfer.

- Patients should remain in a well-ventilated room.
- The patient should wear a triple layer mask / N 95 mask.
- Caregivers are also advised to wear triple layer mask / N 95 mask.
- Avoid direct contact with bodily fluids.
- Surfaces in the patient's room or areas where the patient will receive treatment shall be cleaned and disinfected 15 min before your visit. Instruct family accordingly.
- It is recommended to use regular household cleaning products first and then a household disinfectant afterwards.
- All gloves and masks used during home care isolation should be disposed. Carry separate carry bags to dispose the PPE/ mask/ gloves etc.
- Prefer payment by non-cash method like wallets.
- Inform the patient that issues related to residential society has to be addressed by patient adequately before Physiotherapist's visit.
- Do initial screening & take declaration from patient as per Annexure I. See to it that the patient will sign on it every day.
- Disinfect your instruments/ accessories used in treatment after every session.

B) ACUTE CARE SETUP: COVID CARE

Maharashtra Act II of 2004, section 2(i) defines Chest Physiotherapy as **lifesaving treatment modality in ICU**. Chest Physiotherapy is included in management of COVID patients to reduce mortality. Early recovery, reduce mortality, reduce oxygen requirements & early weaning from ventilator are few of the results of chest physiotherapy in COVID patients. Dedicated COVID centers, Jumbo COVID centers have deployed Physiotherapists in acute care of COVID 19 patients. Hence without any fear and reservations Physiotherapists should offer services to community and help government authorities to fight this crisis.

Recommendations:

- The mild & moderate patients with normal saturation, patients with dry cough are not indicated for chest physiotherapy.
- Patients with severe infection which are hospitalized in COVID ward / ICU and suffering from cough with secretion, desaturation, lung infiltrates, pneumonia, Pneumonia with hypoxia, refractory hypoxemia, ARDS, sepsis, septic shock can be treated with chest Physiotherapy.
- Safety of treating Physiotherapists is first priority. Donning & doffing of PPE has to be done as per prescribed guidelines.
- Ensure adequate supply of PPE.
- Get complete training on PPE, safety measures & administration protocols in dedicated Covid ICU.
- In the mild and moderate stages of disease, normal oxygen supportive measures (facemask oxygen) may be advantageous.
- Patients with severe pneumonia often need oxygenation support. Nebulization is not recommended.
- Prone positioning shall be given in patients with ARDS.

- Extracorporeal membrane oxygenation may be indicated in patients with refractory hypoxia.
- The main goal in respiratory physiotherapy is to mobilize secretions, improve ventilation and reduce the work of breathing.
- Positioning, autogenic drainage, deep breathing exercises, active cycle of breathing technique, mobilisation and manual techniques (e.g. percussion, vibrations, assisted cough) to aid sputum expectoration shall be used in ICU
- Closed suctioning is recommended.
- Adequate care shall be taken during techniques like sputum induction, open suctioning, nebulisers, high flow oxygen, NIV as it generates aerosols and can lead to transmission of the infection. Face shield / visor has to be used.

Staff inclusion in COVID duty:

Do not include following Physiotherapist in COVID ICU:

- Physiotherapist over 55 years of age.
- Pregnant.
- Physiotherapist with chronic respiratory illness/ immunosuppression
- Physiotherapist having heart disease, lung disease or diabetes
- Physiotherapist having immune deficiencies, such as neutropenia, disseminated malignancy and conditions or treatments that produce immunodeficiency.

C) PEDIATRIC PHYSIOTHERAPY CARE:

- Pediatric population is vulnerable population hence special care has to be taken along with routine care as mentioned earlier in these guidelines.
- As per government directives this population shall not come out of home without any reason. Hence when they are visiting your setup you should provide services with precautions.
- Before allowing any case, kindly confirm that the kid is not having / suspected/ exposed to COVID 19.
- If there is any travel history of any family member/ quarantine in last 30 days then without medical reports & COVID test do not give appointment.
- Every week fumigate the setup/ disinfect by fogging.
- Use adequate PPE to treat the patients.
- Allow selective cases in your setup. Advisable to categorize the cases as most essential, moderate & less essential.
- Preferences has to be given to high priority cases requiring Physiotherapy services.
- Allow only one parent/ care giver at center. Wearing mask shall be mandatory to all.
- Sanitization / disinfection of mattresses, wedges, physio balls & accessories used in treatment shall be done after every patient.
- Sanitization / disinfection of toys has to be given high priority attention.
- Additional attention has to be taken for kids having saliva drooling problems.

- Parent is instructed to maintain social distancing whenever it's possible during session.
- Treat one patient at a time & do not allow other patient even in waiting during that session. Call patients on appointment basis.
- Give 15 minutes break after every session to disinfect treatment area.
- Call the patients on alternate days / after 2/3 days or as may be possible for follow up.
- Do first detail session and give home exercise programme.
- Monitor the progression by using technology like video call/ whatsapp call etc.
- Home visits can also be provided to children on confirmation that the kid and family is not positive/suspected / quarantined for COVID.
- Do not allow any children from containment area to your set up / for home visit.
- The physiotherapist shall take decision to open their pediatric setup & provide services after detail analysis of the local conditions. Do not violate local authorities directives. Take decision on your sound knowledge & experience.

D) GERIATRIC PHYSIOTHERAPY CARE:

- Geriatric population is also vulnerable population hence special care has to be taken along with routine care as mentioned earlier in these guidelines if visiting setup.
- Adequate PPE has to be used.
- Video consultation/ home visits/ home exercise programme shall be preferred to treat elderly patient.

E) MANUAL THERAPY.

- Manual therapy interventions needs patient contact. Hence it's advisable to avoid it as much as possible.
- In case it's not possible to avoid then take additional care.
- Avoid manual therapy interventions to head, neck face region. Cervical, TM joint manipulations has to be avoided.
- Use complete PPE for manual therapy session.
- Sanitize the treatment area with sanitizer having 70% alcohol.
- Sanitization / disinfection of manual table, stabilizing belts & accessories used in treatment shall be done after every patient.

F) TELE REHABILITATION / TELE-CONSULTATION

- To reduce transmission or in the case where a clinic is forced to close, you may consider implementing digital strategies to continue the delivery of your service.
- Unfortunately there are currently no established or recognized global standards or agreement for delivering physiotherapy care digitally.
- However, the overall emerging evidence appears to indicate that digital technologies are providing new opportunities for the physiotherapy profession to deliver high-quality and acceptable care to users of their service in ways that can have benefits for all.
- To implement telemedicine a variety of approaches can be used such as the use of general communication tools such as email, chat/messaging and video conferencing

and/or physiotherapy specific platforms such as online exercise prescription tools/ video call by whatsapp /skype etc.

- All Physiotherapists are hereby advisable to take consent on email before the session and record the session.

SECTION V: GENERAL ADVICE:

1. Do **not start clinic or do home visits in containment** area.
2. **Stay positive & calm** - We have to live with Corona for next few months. Proper safety precaution will minimize the chances of infection. We are going through largest medical crisis. Physiotherapists are integral part of Indian health care. The society is looking at you. Hence stay calm, positive and give your best contribution to society. Its need of time, its need of our nation.
3. **Nutrition & supplements:** Increase protein intake, eat healthy immunity booster food and fruits having vitamin C,B, zinc. Vitamin D, B, C, zinc supplements can be started after consultation with registered medical practitioner. Do not take any other medication without consultation of registered medical practitioner.
4. Exercise daily & maintain healthy life style.
5. **Sleep** – have adequate sleep. Maintain normal sleeping pattern during this period.
6. Involve yourself in your favorite hobbies
7. If you develop any Covid symptoms report nearest dedicated COVID center immediately.

Annexure I (page 01)

Declaration & Screening form For Covid -19 Infection

Name:Age.....
 Gender:Occupation:
 Address:
 Mobile No:.....email:.....

Covid – 19 Symptoms Screening		YES	NO
1	Do you have any of symptoms of Fever, Cough, Sneezing, Sore throat, fatigue, and myalgia?		
2	Do you have Difficulty in breathing?		
3	Do you experience loss of taste & smell?		
4	Have you travelled outside the country in past 30 days?		
5	If Yes, Mention the Countries		
	Have you travelled inside India to other places in past 15 days?		
6	If Yes, Mention the places		
	Have you affected by Covid -19 & undergone treatment/quarantine in last 15 days?		
7	Has your neighbor or any family member suffered from COVID-2019 & undergone treatment/quarantine in last 15 days?		
8	Have you exposed to a confirmed Covid -19 case OR to Suspicious patient in the last two weeks?		
9	Have you visited a health care facility in the past two weeks?		
10	Are you residing in containment area?		

Declaration

I hereby declare that I am not suffering from any of the COVID 19 symptom & have not suffered/ quarantined for COVID 19. I further declare that I have no history of travel inside &/ outside India and have no COVID 19 contact history. I hereby give permission to Physiotherapist to provide Physiotherapy treatment to me.

Signature of the Patient:-

I have done this initial screening & inquired about COVID 19 symptoms, contact history of this patient in detail.

Staff sign:-

Date:-

अनुसूची १ (पान. क्र. १)
कोविड १९ लक्षण तपासणी व घोषणा पत्र

नाव: वय:

लिंग: व्यवसाय:

पत्ता:

मोबाईल क्र.: ईमेल :

कोविड १९ लक्षण तपासणी		होय	नाही
१	आपणास ताप ,खोकला ,घसादुखी ,थकवा ,स्नायुदुखी यापैकी कोणतेही लक्षण आहेत का ?		
२	आपणास श्वास घेण्यास त्रास होत आहे का?		
३	आपणास वास न येणे किंवा जिभेची चव जाणे या पैकी काही होत आहे का?		
४	मागील ३० दिवसांमध्ये आपण देशाबाहेर प्रवास केला आहे का?		
	केला असल्यास ,देशांची नावे लिहा		
५	मागील १५ दिवसांमध्ये आपण देशांतर्गत प्रवास केला आहे का??		
	केला असल्यास ,त्या जागांची नावे लिहा		
६	मागील १५ दिवसांच्या आत आपणास कोविड १९ चे संक्रमण झालेले आहे का ? किंवा त्यासाठी आपण कोणते उपचार घेतले आहेत का ? किंवा आपणास विलगीकरण कक्षात ठेवण्यात आले होते का ?		
७	मागील १५ दिवसांच्या आत आपले शेजारी किंवा परिवारातील कोणत्याही सदस्यास कोविड १९ चे संक्रमण झालेले आहे का ? किंवा त्यासाठी त्यांना उपचार देण्यात आले आहेत का किंवा त्यांना विलगीकरण कक्षात ठेवण्यात आले होते का??		
८	आपण मागील दोन आठवड्यात कोविड १९ संक्रमित रुग्णाच्या किंवा संशयित रुग्णाच्या संपर्कात आलेले आहात का?		
९	आपण मागील दोन आठवड्यात कोणत्याही आरोग्य केंद्रास भेट दिलेली आहे का?		
१०	आपण कंटेनमेंट झोन मध्ये राहत आहात का??		

घोषणापत्र

मी याद्वारे घोषित करतो /करते कि माझ्यामध्ये कोविड १९ संक्रमणाच्या कोणत्याही लक्षण आढळून आलेली नाहीत किंवा कोविड १९ चे संक्रमण झालेले नाही किंवा त्यासाठी माझे विलगीकरण करण्यात आलेले नाही .मी घोषित करतो /करते कि मी देशांतर्गत व देशाबाहेर कोणताही प्रवास केलेला नाही व मी कोणत्याही कोविड १९ रुग्णाच्या संपर्कात आलेलो / आलेली नाही .याद्वारे मी फ्रिजिओथेरपीस्ट यांना माझ्यावर फ्रिजिओथेरपी उपचार करण्याची परवानगी देत आहे ..

रुग्णाची स्वाक्षरी :-

मी या रुग्णाची कोविड १९ च्या लक्षणांची ,संपर्काची व संक्रमणाची प्राथमिक चौकशी केली आहे .

कर्मचाऱ्याची स्वाक्षरी :- दिनांक :-

