Ministry Sponsored Patient/Resident/Participant Transportation Guidance

Updated July 23, 2021

What's Changed: Removed option for the driver to wear a cloth mask. Driver must wear a procedural mask. Consolidated shuttle bus guide into this updated guide and revised the title to reflect this consolidation. Replaces PACE Transportation Guidance.

Definitions:
- PUI: Person Under Investigation: Individual who is suspected to have COVID-19 based on symptoms or be pending testing.
- Confirmed COVID-19: COVID-19 test result is positive, and the person is under isolation precautions for their active infection.
- Participant: Individual enrolled in Programs of All-Inclusive Care for the Elderly (PACE) program within one of our National Health Ministries
- Transportation: Provision of transportation services using ministry owned or operated vehicles, e.g., shuttle buses

Key Points:
- It is the responsibility of the Transportation Manager/Ministry Leader or Designee to notify a driver of any PUI or Person with Confirmed COVID-19 prior to scheduling transportation of that Person.
- It is important that transportation services and work practices in this Guide are communicated, in advance, to all involved colleagues, with an emphasis on the safety reasons behind the work practices and the possible impact of these practices and procedures that may result in delays in transporting patients/residents and participants.
- Refer to the senior-living-and-resident-social-outings.pdf guide for details related to social outings transportation details specific to this setting.

Transportation of People who are not identified as PUI or confirmed with COVID-19:
- Transportation drivers will oversee and maintain physical distancing within the transportation vehicle.
- Vehicle capacity will need to be adjusted to allow for a minimum of 6 feet between passengers.
  - Drivers will monitor the number of passengers boarding the transportation vehicle until capacity is reached. No other passenger will be allowed to board after that time.
  - Passengers standing while the vehicle is moving is not permitted.
  - Drivers should maintain contact with Control Operations or other transport drivers and inform them when delays are becoming unacceptable or unanticipated.
    - A plan should be in place to address delays by dispatching additional transport or re-route the transport to alleviate the wait times.
- Drivers and Aides will wear a procedural mask at all times during pick-up and when Patients/Residents/Participants are in the transport vehicle.
- Eye protection (goggles or face shield) will be worn while assisting passengers on or off the van. Eye protection will be removed while driving the vehicle.
Disposable gloves will be available to the drivers and aides to prevent need for direct contact with blood/body fluids and for cleaning and disinfection of surfaces that are visibly soiled.

A personal-size or portable container of alcohol-based hand sanitizer should also be available to drivers and other colleagues that provide vehicle transportation for hand hygiene.

Patients/Residents/Participants are to be screened for symptoms prior to boarding the transport and will be screened for temperature upon arrival at the center.

Passengers are to wear either a cloth face covering or disposable mask when entering the transport vehicle and throughout their time in the vehicle.

Patients/Residents/Participants who are not identified as PUI or confirmed COVID-19 must never ride in shared rides with others who are PUIs or those with acute, confirmed COVID-19.

Transportation drivers must disinfect high-touch surfaces in the vehicle, e.g., handles, tops of seating, overhead handrails, etc., at least once per day and whenever visibly soiled.

Each bus will have disinfectant wipes that contain an EPA-registered, hospital-grade disinfectant from the EPA’s “List N”, disinfectants effective against COVID-19, and used in accordance with manufacturers’ instructions to kill germs on surfaces.

Transport of Persons who are identified as PUI or Confirmed COVID-19

Always adhere to state and/or local guidelines. Persons who are PUIs should never ride with other PUIs or Confirmed COVID-19. Persons who are confirmed COVID-19 should never ride with PUIs but may ride with others with confirmed COVID-19, if necessary. Situations may include:

- Transporting a PUI to a COVID-19 testing center
- Transporting a PUI/Confirmed COVID positive patient to Dialysis

PPE Guidance

- The PUI/Confirmed Person will wear a procedural mask, if they can tolerate it.
- While assisting Person on or off the vehicle or providing direct care - Drivers and Aides will wear full PPE: procedural mask, a pair of gloves, gown, re-usable face shield/goggles.
  - PPE kits will be provided for drivers to carry on the vans.
  - Each van will be equipped with a bin for disposal of used gloves, soiled masks and/or disposable gowns.
  - Each van will be equipped with disinfecting supplies and storage for re-usable PPE: disinfecting spray/cloths (or disposable wipes).

- After Passenger(s) are onboard:
  - Driver will return to the driver’s seat and
    - perform hand hygiene
    - remove gloves and discard
    - perform hand hygiene again
    - remove face shield/goggles and disinfect it per the procedures in the PPE Guidebook
    - perform hand hygiene once more after removing face shield/goggles
    - The procedural mask and gown should NOT be removed during transportation. (*The front/outer part of the mask and gown should not be touched at any time*)
  - The Aide will remain in their PPE for the duration of the drive.
    - Perform hand hygiene over gloves and avoid touching the face

- If reusable gowns are available, these can be utilized by transportation teams and returned to the Center for laundering.
If there is a shortage of gowns, Drivers may wear mask, gloves and eye protection only and gowns should be prioritized for any situations where there is high likelihood of direct contact, such as a need to transfer to and from a wheelchair.

- During transportation, vehicle ventilation should be on non-circulated mode to maximize air changes that reduce potentially infectious particles in the vehicle. Open the outside air vents in the driver area.
- When the transport arrives at the center, the driver dons PPE prior to assisting the passenger off of the transport vehicle.
- After transportation, and for the duration of transferring the passenger into the facility and cleaning the vehicle, leave the vehicle doors open (weather permitting).
- Clean and disinfect the vehicle after final drop-off of the passenger and before picking up the next passenger in accordance with standard operating procedures.
  - All high-touch surfaces, including those in the driver's cab, are to be thoroughly cleaned and disinfected using the EPA-registered disinfectant in accordance with the product label. (appropriate product will be provided)
  - Maintain a cleaning log
- See the PPE Guidebook for instructions on disinfecting PPE.