

Personal protective equipment use in aged residential care settings

Using appropriate personal protective equipment (PPE) and performing hand hygiene at the right times are crucial to preventing the introduction and spread of COVID-19. This document provides links to posters and videos related to putting on and removing PPE and hand hygiene. More information on COVID-19 is available at the bottom of this document.

Assess inventory

A stocktake of the current PPE available in the facility should be completed.

- Face masks:
 - Medical/surgical masks.
 - P2/N95 respirator masks (if respiratory protection programme is implemented in the ARC facility).
- Fluid resistant gowns.
- Plastic aprons.
- Gloves.
- Eye protection (face shield or goggles).

If your facility is short in any of the above PPE, you should order supplies through your regular distributor. If your distributor does not have any PPE available, you should reach out to your principal contact at your local district health board (DHB).

Appropriate use

Conserving PPE is crucial during the COVID-19 pandemic. Use PPE when necessary but do not over-use it.

This [poster](#) from the Ministry of Health provides guidance on the specific type of PPE that should be used for a list of tasks commonly performed in an aged residential care (ARC) facility.

Strategies to preserve or optimise PPE to prolong the supply if an ARC facility is experiencing temporary shortage:

- Clean reusable eye protection (goggles or face shield) between use.
- Surgical masks may remain on until it feels damp or up to four hours. Do not touch your face/eyes whilst you are wearing your mask. Remove and dispose of safely as demonstrated in the poster and video below. Remember to wash hands after removal and between each interaction with people you are caring for.

Putting on and removing PPE

- [Poster](#) showing how to correctly put on and remove PPE.
- [Video](#) showing how to remove PPE correctly.

If possible, use the buddy system when removing your PPE. Having a co-worker read out the steps while you remove your PPE will ensure it is done correctly.

Hand hygiene information

The following hand hygiene posters can be printed and displayed in any ARC facility.

- Public facing posters:
 - [general hand hygiene reminder poster 1](#) (available in multiple languages)
 - [general hand hygiene reminder poster 2](#) (available in multiple languages)
 - How to [hand wash poster](#)
 - How to use [hand sanitiser poster](#)
- The [5 moments for hand hygiene poster](#).

General reminders

- Don't touch your mask or eye protection while wearing PPE as there is risk for contamination.
- Don't touch your face (mouth, nose and eyes) unless you've performed correct hand hygiene.

Information on COVID-19

What is coronavirus disease (COVID-19) and how is it spread?

COVID-19 is a new viral disease that has resulted in a global pandemic. The virus can be spread from person to person from infected people through coughing, sneezing or by germs on hands.

What are the symptoms and who is at risk?

Most patients have fever, cough and shortness of breath. Patients with more severe disease have had evidence of pneumonia (chest infection). This is changing quickly, and readers are referred to the Ministry of Health's website listed below. The elderly and people with underlying illnesses (such as diabetes, lung disease, kidney disease or suppressed immunity) are at risk of severe illness or death if they get COVID-19.

More information

For the latest advice, information and resources go to:

[Ministry of Health COVID-19 webpage](#)

[PPE guidance \(Ministry of Health\)](#)

[Unite against COVID-19 website](#)

For specific questions about a resident or staff member's health related to COVID-19, call Healthline on 0800 358 5453. It operates 24 hours a day, seven days a week.