Memorandum

To: Primary School Nurse Health Readiness Program Statewide Team
Copies to: n/a
From: Sagen Wilks, Acting Clinical Nurse Consultant
Contact no.: 3387 5391
Fax no.: n/a
Subject: Infection Prevention During COVID-19 Pandemic

This memorandum is to update the Primary School Nurse Health Readiness Program State-wide Protocols and Guidelines in relation to the 2020 COVID-19 Pandemic.

Do not attend work if you are unwell or are under a Public Health Directive (e.g. awaiting COVID-19 Test results, under quarantine orders) more information regarding public health alerts can be found here:


Prior to vision screening:

- Follow your local HHS advice, e.g. regarding travel arrangements.
- If you have received a negative COVID-19 test result, you can only return to work once you are symptom free for 24 hours.
- Communicate with your school prior to screening regarding
  - any extra precautions that the school is undertaking, e.g. temperature checking/COVID-19 screening
  - any biosecurity restrictions to movement, e.g. Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities.
- Inform your school that you will not be screening any children that are displaying respiratory symptoms if they present.

During screening:

- It is not necessary to use COVID-19 screening tools regarding travel and risk factors for COVID-19 on each child, as children should not be at school if they are unwell or under a Public Health Directive. Please communicate with individual schools regarding their processes for this.
- Follow school advice regarding how many people can be in a room, if students are physical distancing etc.

- If a parent has indicated that they would like to be present for screening, follow school advice regarding their admission (e.g. some schools are not allowing parents on school grounds). Ensure parent is not unwell and maintain social distancing.

- Additional equipment (such as diversionary tools) that are shared by children are not to be provided by PSNHRP, e.g. colouring pens, soft toys, books. Liaise with the school to arrange diversionary activities for children to complete while awaiting screening.

- Utilise stickers instead of stamps if possible.

- If a child is exhibiting respiratory symptoms:
  
  NOTE: COVID-19 (Coronavirus) clinical criteria includes: fever (≥37.5°C) or history of fever (e.g. night sweats, chills) OR acute respiratory infection (e.g. cough, shortness of breath, sore throat, loss of smell and/or taste) (as per CHQHHS Infection Control Guidelines for the Management of Coronavirus CHQ-PROC-63002).

  - do not screen the child
  - immediately notify the school staff member that is assisting you with screening
  - discuss with the school regarding activation of management plan (e.g. isolate the child, parent to collect child from school)
  - call parent/legal guardian to inform them that vision screening was not conducted due to the presence of respiratory symptoms
  - advise the parent to consult with 13 HEALTH or their GP regarding symptoms and COVID-19 testing
  - document findings of assessment, conversation with school and parent, and actions taken.

Hygiene protocols for vision screening:

- Place a clean, folded tissue between the child’s eye and the rigid eye patch, ensuring that the tissue prevents the patch from coming into contact with the child’s skin. Stand to the side of the child while placing the patch to avoid face-to-face contact as much as possible.

- Wipe eye patch with 70% isopropyl alcohol impregnated wipes after screening each child. Allow to dry completely before using on the next child. If not dry prior to use, the remaining isopropyl alcohol can cause eye irritation. Utilise at least two rigid eye patches – one eye patch can be wiped clean and drying while the next child is being screened with the second eye patch.

- Clean laminated card in between each child with 70% isopropyl alcohol impregnated wipes. Allow to dry completely before using on the next child. Utilise at least two laminated cards – one card can be wiped clean and drying while the next child is being screened with the second laminated card.

- The Spot Vision Screener (photoscreener) is not handled by children, and therefore does not need to be wiped between each child. If screening with two Registered Nurses, the photoscreener should be wiped down with 70% isopropyl impregnated wipes before handing over to the second RN.

- It is preferred to screen children sitting in hard plastic chairs that can be cleaned, rather than soft material chairs.
• Surfaces such as desks and chairs are to be wiped down with 70% isopropyl alcohol impregnated wipes or detergent wipes such as Clinell at the beginning and end of each day. Individual schools might have additional cleaning precautions – whilst on school grounds these should be adhered to.

• Shared equipment (such as clax trolleys, tape measures, bags) are to be wiped down with 70% isopropyl alcohol impregnated wipes or detergent wipes such as Clinell at the beginning and end of each day.

• RN’s should avoid sharing equipment, such as pens as much as practicable.

• High-touch areas of fleet cars (such as steering wheels, door handles, gear stick, radio buttons) are to be wiped down with 70% isopropyl alcohol impregnated wipes at the beginning and end of each day.

• Hand Hygiene must be practised after each contact with children or surfaces (an approved 70% Alcohol Based Hand Rub or soap and warm water).

• All staff are to maintain Bare Below the Elbows – rings to be a single band with no stones, no watches or devices (such as pedometers) worn on the wrists, no sleaves below the elbow.

Personal protective equipment (PPE):

• Asymptomatic children in a school environment would be considered a ‘low-risk’ patient.


• Handwashing, respiratory and equipment hygiene are key infection prevention measures.

• Follow HHS specific advice regarding transmission-based precautions or the use of PPE
  
  o masks and gowns are not required in this situation as vision screening is not an Aerosol Generating Procedure (AGP), gloves are not required as there is no exposure to blood and body fluid substance/spills.

Sagen Wilks  
**Acting Clinical Nurse Consultant, Primary School Nurse Health Readiness Program**  
27/07/2020