

## A guide to Masks

Masks should be worn by **ALL** staff in the hospital.

Masks serve two purposes – 1) to prevent a staff member inadvertently transmitting the virus asymptotically to a patient or colleague and 2) to prevent acquisition of infected droplets from a patient (or colleague) who may have COVID-19.

### 1. When do I wear a mask?

- At all times except those listed in point 6

### 2. What mask do I wear?

- As a minimum staff will wear a fluid resistant surgical mask
- If aerosol generating procedures are performed an FFP3 mask should be worn
- Certain other conditions, such as pulmonary TB, require an FFP3 mask to be worn

### 3. Where do I wear a mask?

- Everywhere

### 4. When do I change my mask?

- At the end of a 'session'
  - A session is defined as “a period of time where a health and social care worker is undertaking duties in a specific **clinical care setting** or **exposure environment**”. For example, a session might comprise a ward round where you do not leave the clinical setting **to enter a non-clinical setting**, e.g taking observations of several patients in several bays of a ward. A session ends when the health and social care worker leaves the clinical care setting or exposure environment”.
- If it gets soiled, damp or uncomfortable
- If masks are touched or adjusted, hand hygiene should be performed immediately.
- Before entering a clean or non-clinical setting from a dirty or clinical setting
  - Clean or non-clinical areas might include offices (including ward offices), tea rooms, communal corridors, lifts etc...

### 5. How do I wear a surgical mask?

- A mask should always be covering the nose and mouth, if you feel the need to remove it to your neck it should be removed entirely and replaced.
- Masks should never dangle around the neck

### 6. When can I not wear a mask?

- If you work in an office or room and can social distance at 2 metres or no other persons are present, you will need to perform regular hand hygiene and frequently clean surfaces and equipment– you can then work without a mask
- If you can conduct video consultations in an office or room and can social distance at 2 metres or no other persons are present, you can work without a mask
- You will need to remove your mask to eat and drink, ensure you carry out hand hygiene every time you remove your mask.

### 7. Can I wear a reusable face covering instead?

- When at work you must wear a fluid resistant surgical mask as a minimum (or FFP3 if appropriate)
- You can wear a cloth reusable face covering on your way to and from work and outside of the trust

## 8. How do I dispose of my mask?

- In Clinical areas with COVID19 positive patients: As now, dispose of the face mask in Infectious (Orange bags.)
- In Clinical areas with non-COVID19 patients: Face masks should be disposed of in the Offensive waste (Yellow and black or “Tiger” bags.)
- Public entrances and exits: Face masks should be disposed of in the Offensive waste (Yellow & black or “Tiger” bags). Additional bins will be provided.
- Non-COVID19 staff areas and other communal areas (e.g. Admin): Face masks can be disposed of in the domestic waste stream (Black bags.)

## 9. Can I reuse my fluid resistant surgical mask if I am in a non-clinical area?

- Surgical masks with elastic ear hooks, can be reused if they are not soiled, damp or uncomfortable
- Hand hygiene should be performed before removing the mask
- Face mask should be carefully folded so the outer surface is held inward and against itself to reduce likely contact with the outer surface during storage.
- The folded mask can be stored between uses in a clean sealable bag.
- Hand hygiene should be performed after removing the mask.

## 10. Can I reuse my FFP3 mask?

- Single use FFP3 masks cannot be physically reused as they deform once being donned and do not go back to the original condition.