



Guidance on mask use in public hospitals in lockdown areas

This guideline applies from 6pm on the 31 January 2021 until 6pm on the 5 February 2021 unless advised otherwise by the Government of Western Australia.

Background

From 6pm, Sunday, 31 January 2021 until 6pm Friday, 5 February 2021, the Perth metropolitan area and the Peel and South West regions entered a 5-day lockdown. Workers in the affected areas are required to wear a mask at all times when outside of their place of residence, including at workplaces, as described in the [Face Covering Directions](#).

Guidance on mask use in public hospitals in Metropolitan Perth, Peel and South West regions

Guidance on the use of Personal Protective Equipment (PPE), including masks, described in the Coronavirus Disease – 2019 (COVID-19) Infection Prevention and Control in Western Australian Healthcare Facilities [guideline](#) and the Identification and Use of Personal Protective Equipment in the Clinical Setting During the Coronavirus (COVID-19) Pandemic Policy – [MP 0133/20](#) remain current.

There continues to be a good supply of PPE available within the WA health system. Your organisation will provide you a mask if you need one while at work. To conform with the Face Covering Directions:

Clinical staff

- Healthcare workers (HCWs) whose activities involves contact with patients or with the blood or body fluids of patients in a healthcare or laboratory setting can wear their personal mask until they attend their area of work where they must change to wearing a surgical mask.
- A Level 2 Surgical mask is suitable for this application as described in the Coronavirus Disease - 2019 (COVID-19) Infection Prevention and Control in Western Australian Healthcare Facilities guideline (p20).
- When there is a risk of airborne transmission e.g. during Aerosol Generating Procedures (AGPs) for confirmed, probable or suspected COVID-19 patients, a P2 or N95 respirator is to be worn.
- Masks must be replaced no less frequently than four hourly, or:
 - when damaged, wet or soiled
 - after meal breaks
 - following any AGP
 - as per management of patients under transmission-based precautions, where appropriate.

- Hand hygiene must be performed before and after removing masks.
- Surgical masks must be disposed of into general waste immediately after removing.

Non-clinical staff

- HCWs whose activities does not involve contact with patients or with the blood or body fluids of patients in a healthcare or laboratory setting may continue to wear their own personal masks should they wish, however if they are entering a clinical area, they must wear a surgical mask supplied by the hospital.
- Replace the mask when it becomes damaged, wet or soiled. If using a reusable fabric face masks place it in a sealed bag until it can be washed (keeping separate from clean masks). Reusable personal masks must be cleaned appropriately.

Patients

- Patients do not require a mask whilst in their room (inclusive of shared rooms), unless their clinical condition requires them to wear specific PPE.
- Masks should be worn for internal and external transfers where tolerated
- Masks should be used in ED waiting rooms/areas where non-admitted patients are visiting
- Patients attending appointments are permitted to wear their own personal masks.

Authority

Department of Health Western Australia

These guidelines are based on the current available knowledge of the transmission of coronaviruses and may change as more evidence becomes available specifically regarding COVID-19.

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