



Covid-19 Response in Prisons

Description

Hong Kong Correctional Services - Preventive Measures Against COVID-19 in Correctional Facilities (as at 18.3.2020).

Point of Contact

Wan Fung PANG

Officer (Research)

Hong Kong Correctional Services

pang_wf@csd.gov.hk

(852) 25825056

Additional Covid-19 resources are available at: <http://bit.ly/2U0oKLG>

If you would like to send us information about Covid-19, please fill in this form: <http://bit.ly/2WnqiRH>

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Communicating hygiene awareness to prisoners

- All persons in custody (PICs) are required to put on surgical mask while attending court, medical appointment and visit;
- Advise to seek medical advice promptly if feel unwell and surgical mask be provided to PIC upon request;
- PICs working at Kitchen, Laundry, Hospital and Reception Office, etc. should put on surgical mask;
- Health education pamphlets are distributed to all PICs and posters with messages of “keeping personal and environmental hygiene” are posted at prominent locations.

Maintaining hygienic environments in facilities

- Visit Room should be cleaned and disinfected frequently;
- Sanitizing mat be arranged at Main Entrance, which should be disinfected with diluted bleach water in every two hours and with a label fixed on it to indicate it is a sanitizing mat;
- Increase intensive cleaning with diluted bleach water and fogging with disinfectants to sterilize day and night accommodation of PIC as well as staff areas;
- Hand washing detergent be available at all toilets;
- Filling U-shape water traps with water at least once a week.
- Air purifier with HEPA filter should be strategically located at some high risk areas, e.g. Hospital, Reception Office, etc.

Vigorous screening of visitors or restrictions

- All visitors are required to wear surgical mask and undergo body temperature check;
- If fever is detected, the concerned visitor would not be allowed to visit and be advised to seek medical consultation;
- Alcohol-based hand rub is available to facilitate hand hygiene;
- Disinfectants (Cotton balls soaked with 1:99 diluted bleach water or alcohol swab) be provided to visitor and PIC to sterilize the intercom before and after each visitation;
- Suspension of in-centre rehabilitation activities rendering by NGOs

Regular screening and training of staff

- Body temperature checking and alcohol-based hand rub is conducted at Main gate for all staff members or visitors;
- All staff members are advised to wear surgical mask during their course of duty as well as their travelling journeys between workplaces and residences;

- Increase staff awareness on keeping personal and environmental hygiene during staff briefing sessions;
- Appropriate and sufficient Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) be provided for staff to discharge escort duties;
- Minimizing social gathering among staff members and providing more personal space between individuals at staff canteen as far as practicable.
- Heads of Institution are timely updated with messages issued by the Centre for Health Protection (CHP), particularly to update the place with active community transmission of COVID-19;
- Monitoring staff sickness and keeping alert to any unusual / clustering illness among staff

Reporting and treatment on identification of positive cases

- Monitoring sickness of PIC and keep alert to any PIC suffering fever and influenza symptoms
- The Department has been maintaining close liaison with the CHP and will notify them all suspected cases as required .

Screening of newly arriving prisoners

- Reporting of travel history and contact history;
- Health check be conducted by hospital staff and Medical Officer;
- For those who have visited a place with active community transmission of COVID-19; or had close contact with a confirmed case of COVID-19 would be quarantined for medical surveillance;
- For other newly admitted PIC, they would be separated in designated locations for at least 14 days before they are allowed to be mixed with others or to be transferred to other institutions;

Other measure

On top of the above reinforcement measures, the Department has developed a “3-tier Medical Response System” in 2011 which depicts the general arrangements for the containment of infectious diseases outbreak in penal settings. The system was formulated with reference to the infectious disease control systems of the Hospital Authority and other foreign countries. The Department will utilize its resources to control and prevent the spread of diseases among staff and PICs. Control measures include separation of patients, trace and separate all close contacts of patients for medical checks, reduce in-centre movement of PICs, suspension of transfer of PICs between institutions, enhance institutional hygiene, etc.