

COVID-19 SUMMARY GUIDANCE #4

Community pharmacy procedures

Public area

1. Access to products for self-selection by customers should be restricted to avoid multiple people touching these products. They should be accessed only by pharmacy personnel.

At the counter

1. Whenever possible, allocate one employee per station or location at the counter and avoid swaps.
2. Keep only essential objects at the counter.
3. Wipe and disinfect the counter after each customer/patient.
4. Have an alcohol-based solution at hand to disinfect hands after attending to each patient/customer.
5. Where possible, encourage patients to order their medicines through the pharmacy's webpage and delivered to their home or workplace.

Social distancing

1. Limit the number of patients/customers entering the pharmacy at any one time.
2. Keep a distance of at least 1 metre (preferably more) when attending to a patient.
3. If necessary, a tray may be used to collect prescriptions, hand over medicines and process any payment in order keep this distance.
4. Advise patients to keep a distance of at least 1 metre between them while waiting, and use marking tape on the floor to indicate where they should stand.

Visiting a pharmacy

1. Advise patients/customers to avoid long stays in the pharmacy.
2. Advise patients/customers to avoid visiting the pharmacy if they are elderly or have co-morbidities. Whenever possible, such patients should ask a family member, a friend or a neighbour to go to the pharmacy instead of them.

Recommendations for pharmaceutical services and activities in the pharmacy

1. When performing point-of-care tests (e.g., measurement of blood pressure, cholesterol, glycaemia, pregnancy tests), , administering vaccines or injectables , or providing any other services that require direct contact with a patient, additional protective measures, such as the use of a mask and gloves, should be taken.
2. These services may need to be restricted or interrupted if they could pose a risk to the health of the team (e.g., if the patient has symptoms of respiratory infection).

Recommendations for the pharmacy team

1. To ensure continuity of pharmacy activities, whenever possible divide the team into shifts (for example, morning and afternoon), with a brief closure of the pharmacy between them to disinfect the entire pharmacy, ensuring that the members of each shift do not have contact with each other at shift changes.
2. Employees with conditions that compromise their immune system should use masks and preferably perform back office tasks. Hand hygiene measures should be reinforced.
3. Employees should change coats more often.
4. Wearing accessories, such as bracelets, watches and rings, should be avoided.
5. Whenever it is necessary to put on a mask, hygiene and disinfection of the hands should be performed before and after.

For details and supporting references, consult the complete guidelines at

www.fip.org/coronavirus

This document is based on the available evidence and recommendations of reputable organisations at the time of publishing. It will be updated as new knowledge becomes available. 26 March 2020.