

Protection and Control Recommendations for nursing homes and elderly care centers from the Ministry of Family, Labor and Social Services of Turkish Republic

Decisions taken on 13 March 2020 ;

1- The basic principles of infection prevention and control rules, recommended to be applied in nursing homes and elderly care centers to reduce the risk are listed below:

- 1.1- Windows in rooms and other closed areas should be open during daily routine cleaning and these areas should be ventilated for at least 1 hour after cleaning.
- 1.2- Water and detergent is sufficient for routine cleaning.
- 1.3- Gloves should be worn while cleaning the room.
- 1.4 Attention should be given while cleaning the surfaces touched with hands frequently such as: door handles, batteries, handrails, frequently touched buttons, telephone handset, toilet and sink. To clean these areas, after cleaning with water and detergent, 1: 100 diluted bleach (Sodium hypochlorite Cas No: 7681-52-9) or chlorine tablet (according to the product description) should be used.
- 1.5- Glasses and plates available for collective use should be washed with water and detergent after each use and should be stored in a clean environment until use.
- 1.6- Materials such as sheets and towels should be washed in the washing machine with normal detergent at 60-90°C.
- 1.7- There is no scientific evidence that the use of certain special products, which are claimed to be more effective for microorganisms (bacteria, viruses, fungi, etc.), provide extra protection.

2- Training of the employees of Nursing Homes and Elderly Care Centers should be performed and topics listed below should be emphasized :

- 2.1- Hand cleaning is the most critical step. Hands should be washed with soap and water for at least 20 seconds, and alcohol-based hand antiseptics should be used in the absence of soap and water. There is no need to use soap with antiseptic or antibacterial ingredients everyday soap is enough.
- 2.2- Employees with any signs of respiratory infection (fever, cough, respiratory distress, etc.) should not be working until their complaints disappear.

3- In the case of complaints compatible with possible COVID-19 infection (cough or respiratory distress accompanying fever) among residents of nursing homes and elderly care centers;

3.1- Since residents of nursing homes and elderly care centers are high risk group for COVID-19 and their high risk for potentially life threatening comorbidities, symptoms and signs of a possible infection and their vitals (fever, blood pressure, pulse rate, respiratory rate, consciousness and oxygen saturation, etc.) should be followed closely

3.2- The patient who develops symptoms should be isolated immediately by the employees and the patient should wear a mask as soon as possible and should be transferred sent to a health care center (with their own transport vehicles or the vehicles of the Provincial / District Health Directorate). Nursing homes and elderly care centers' vehicles should be cleaned in accordance with the procedures and principles of ambulance cleaning specified in the COVID-19 guide

3.3- Those who share the same room with the patient should be provided to wear a surgical (medical) mask. If they do not accompany to the possible case, they should be isolated in their rooms.

3.4- Once COVID-19 diagnosis is confirmed the room of the patient should be ventilated for 24 hours and kept empty. Then it can be used for other residents after cleaning.

3.5- Attention should be given while cleaning the surfaces touched with hands frequently such as: door handles, batteries, handrails, frequently touched buttons, telephone handset, toilet and sink. To clean these areas, after cleaning with water and detergent, 1: 100 diluted bleach (Sodium hypochlorite Cas No: 7681-52-9) or chlorine tablet (according to the product description) should be used.

3.6- After these procedures, a new person can be placed to the room.

3.7- Provincial / District Health Directorate Communicable Diseases Unit should be informed about the patient as soon as possible.

3.8- Contagious diseases unit manages the case according to the case management scheme. Unit detects patient's contacts and initiates the necessary follow-up procedures (close contacts, contacts) according to the contact characteristics.

4- Employees of Nursing Homes and Elderly Care Centers should be trained with special emphasize to the following issues:

4.1- Hand cleaning is the most critical step. Hands should be washed with soap and water for at least 20 seconds, and alcohol-based hand antiseptics should be used in the absence of soap and water. There is no need to use soap with antiseptic or antibacterial ingredients everyday soap is enough.

4.2- The person suffering from any viral respiratory infection should cover his nose and mouth with a disposable tissue paper during coughing or sneezing, should use the inner aspect of elbow if there is no paper tissue, if possible, not

to enter crowded places, if necessary, to close the mouth and nose, if possible surgery It is recommended to use a (medical) mask.

4.3- Anyone who comes into contact with the personal belongings of the guests should wash their hands immediately right after the contact or to clean hands with an alcohol-based hand antiseptic.