Wuhan novel coronavirus (WN-CoV) guidance for Primary Care

Management of patients presenting to primary care

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Introduction

Wuhan novel coronavirus (WN-CoV) is a new and emerging infectious disease threat. There is still much uncertainty around its clinical presentation but the spectrum of disease may range from mild-to-moderate illness to pneumonia or severe acute respiratory infection. Because of this, patients with WN-CoV could present to primary care either via telephone or in person.

Based upon current knowledge WN-CoV can be spread from person to person. Therefore as soon as potential case is identified the patient must be isolated until they can be transferred to secondary care for assessment with appropriate PPE precautions.

Identification of patients in primary care requiring further assessment for possible WN-CoV is based upon clinical features of respiratory symptoms and travel history or contact with a confirmed case. WN-CoV infection it is most likely to occur in travellers that have recently returned from area with known transmission. Therefore, an accurate travel history is a key part of identifying potential risk. Please note that this is an evolving situation and the most up to date risk areas should be accessed at [Wuhan novel coronavirus risk areas].

See further information on WN-CoV check the [HPS WN-CoV page].

Main points / key principles

The key principles in managing patients with symptoms and epidemiology compatible with WN-CoV in primary care are:

1. Identify potential cases as soon as possible
2. Prevent potential transmission of infection to other patients and staff
3. Avoid all direct physical contact i.e.
   a. Avoid physical examination, and exposure to respiratory secretions
   b. Isolate the patient
4. Obtain specialist advice from the local secondary care infection specialist (ID physician / Consultant Microbiologist or Virologist) to determine if the patient is at risk of WN-CoV infection
5. Inform the local health protection team (see Appendix 1 for contact numbers)
Actions in primary care

The following actions should be undertaken for all patients who have both respiratory symptoms AND either a travel history to a risk area or contact with a known Wuhan CoV case in the 14 days prior to onset of symptoms. Up to date risk areas can be found at [Wuhan novel coronavirus risk areas](#).

Clinical and travel history should be obtained and triage completed by telephone wherever possible. Contact with the patient should be avoided, this includes avoidance of face to face consultation and examination. However some potential cases may not be apparent until they present at the surgery.

Management

The approach to managing the patient will depend at what point the clinical and travel history are identified.

1. **Patient presenting during telephone consultation**
   
   a. Request for the patient to remain at home
   
   b. Seek further specialist advice from local your secondary care infection specialist (ID physician / Consultant Microbiologist or Virologist)
   
   c. Inform the local health protection team

2. **Patient identified at GP surgery**
   
   a. Isolate the patient
      
      i. Identified at reception place immediately in a room away from other patients and staff
      
      ii. Identified during a consultation withdraw from the room
   
   b. Let the patient know all further contact will be over the phone
   
   c. Close the door to the room
   
   d. Wash your hands thoroughly with soap and water.
   
   e. If required identify suitable toilet facilities that only the patient will use
   
   f. Belongings and waste should remain in the room.
   
   g. Do not re-enter the room. Advise others not to enter the room.
   
   h. Seek further specialist advice, from local secondary care infection specialist (ID physician / Consultant Microbiologist or Virologist)
   
   i. Inform the local health protection team

If entry to the room or contact with the patient is unavoidable wear PPE in line with standard guidance i.e. gloves, apron and fluid resistant surgical mask (FRSM), as described in the [National Infection Prevention and Control Manual](#) and keep exposure to the minimum.
Guidance for putting on and removing PPE can be found in Appendix 6 of the National Infection Prevention and Control Manual at **Best practice - putting on and removing PPE.**

3. **Patient transfers**

If the patient presents or becomes critically ill and requires an urgent ambulance transfer to a hospital, inform the ambulance call handler of the concerns about WN-CoV infection and inform the local health protection team.

If the patient is not critically ill then they must be discussed with the local secondary care infection specialist at the receiving hospital prior to transfer so that they are aware that WN-CoV is being considered. The method of transport will be agreed after discussion with the local secondary care infection specialist (ID physician / Consultant Microbiologist or Virologist) and local health protection team. Patients with suspected WN-CoV must not use public transport or taxis to get to hospital.

Following a patient transfer from primary care the room should be closed and not be put back into use until further advice is provided by the local health protection team.

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**Contact at HPS**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Jim McMenamin</th>
<th>Gill Hawkins</th>
<th>Janine Thoulas</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Consultant in PH Medicine</td>
<td>Consultant in PH Medicine</td>
<td>Consultant in PH Medicine</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>0141 300 1422</td>
<td></td>
<td><a href="mailto:nss.hpscoronavirus@nhs.net">nss.hpscoronavirus@nhs.net</a></td>
</tr>
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**Further information**

Further Information can be found on the [HPS WN-CoV website pages](https://www.hps.nhs.uk/wn-cov).
Appendices

Appendix 1 – Contacts in the local Health Protection teams in the Health Boards

<table>
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<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Office Hours Telephone Number</th>
<th>Out of Hours Telephone Number</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>HPS</td>
<td>0141 300 1100</td>
<td>0141 211 3600</td>
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<tr>
<td>Ayrshire and Arran</td>
<td>01292 885858</td>
<td>01563 521 133</td>
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<tr>
<td>Borders</td>
<td>01896 825 560</td>
<td>01896 826 000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dumfries and Galloway</td>
<td>01387 272 724</td>
<td>01387 246 246</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fife</td>
<td>01592 226435 / 447</td>
<td>01383 623623</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Forth Valley</td>
<td>01786 457 283</td>
<td>01324 566 000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Grampian</td>
<td>01224 558 520</td>
<td>0345 456 6000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Greater Glasgow &amp; Clyde</td>
<td>0141 201 4917</td>
<td>0141 211 3600</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Highland</td>
<td>01463 704 886</td>
<td>01463 704 000</td>
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<td>Lanarkshire</td>
<td>01698 858232/858228</td>
<td>01236 748 748</td>
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<td>0131 465 5420/5422</td>
<td>0131 536 1000</td>
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<td>Orkney</td>
<td>01856 888034</td>
<td>01856 888 000</td>
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<tr>
<td>Shetland</td>
<td>01595 743 340</td>
<td>01595 743 000</td>
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<tr>
<td>Tayside</td>
<td>01382 596 976/987</td>
<td>01382 660 111</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Western Isles</td>
<td>01851 708 033</td>
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Version History

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<td>22/01/20</td>
<td>1st Draft revised with LR/GH/JT comments.</td>
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<tr>
<td>V0.2</td>
<td>23/01/20</td>
<td>2nd draft udpated with links to external documents and LR/GH/JT comments.</td>
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