Dear ENT UK member,

Following on from yesterday’s exciting news that Public Health England (PHE) has accepted the need for Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) to be used in all ENT-related procedures during the COVID-19 pandemic, we have been informed that the Federation of Surgical Specialty Associations (FSSA) will be reporting Trusts who do not provide adequate PPE to the Care Quality Commission (CQC). We will be creating a space on our website where members can report any infractions which we will pass on to the FSSA. Look out for more details in our upcoming mini round ups.

Share your views with us - PPE for the Covid-19 Pandemic Survey

Earlier this week we invited you to share your views with us on the availability of PPE around the country. It is important that we have as large a response as possible, to get the clearest picture we can of what ENT health professionals are experiencing ‘on the ground’, in order to work towards improving the situation.

The deadline to complete the survey is midnight on Sunday 29 March. We would be grateful if you could take a few minutes to complete this very important survey if you have not already had the chance.

PPE for nasal endoscope decontamination

We have received a number of enquiries about adequate PPE for nasal endoscope decontamination. ENT UK’s position on this is that endoscopy is generally done with the assistance of a nurse or HCA. It is important that assisting personnel should also be fully protected during the procedure and PPE should mirror those of the ENT specialist performing the endoscopy.

At completion of endoscopy, the assistant will continue with endoscope decontamination as per Trust policy. Full PPE will be worn throughout the decontamination process.

Some colleagues will be performing upper airway endoscopy as a single operator without an assistant. If this is the case, then the ENT specialist should place the used endoscope into the standard transport tray. The tray should be handed to the nurse / HCA who normally decontaminates the endoscope at the examination room doorway.

The nurse / HCA should be wearing PPE that includes a bare minimum of double gloves, a plastic apron or ideally a gown, eye protection and a surgical face mask.

The endoscope tray should either be packaged for transfer to the Decontamination Unit as per Trust policy. Alternatively, the endoscope should be taken to a Dirty Utility room for chlorine dioxide (Tristel) decontamination. After washing the endoscope with soap and water, the outer gloves should be removed and the rest of the Tristel cleansing procedure should then follow in the recommended order. The Tristel decontamination process is active against COVID-19 and there should be no reason for Trusts to disallow this method if it is already in place.

COVID-19 research

COVID-19 research studies are currently being fast tracked through our national Clinical Research Network (CRN). If you are working on a COVID-19 study and would like to be involved, please send the details to us at entuk@entuk.org.
Important information about National Selection

We would like to bring you up to date regarding the progress being made to select our new cohort of ST3s commencing this year. You will be aware that developments with the COVID-19 virus have obviously forced a complete cancellation of the previously planned National Selection process in Hull.

Read the full statement here. [Link to PDF]

New guidance today

- BAPO statement on SARS Cov2 and Paediatric Otolaryngology Provision

Existing guidance and resources

- Guidance PPE for patients with emergency oropharyngeal and nasopharyngeal conditions whose COVID Status is unknown
- Guidance for undertaking otological procedures during COVID-19 pandemic
- COVID-19 Epistaxis Management
- FFP3 respirator usage: current ENT UK recommendations
- Advice for patients with new onset anosmia during COVID-19 pandemic
- Initial guidance for head and neck cancer management during Covid-19
- BAETS statement on COVID-19 and Thyroid Cancer Services - PDF
- Remote triaging of urgent suspected head and neck cancer referrals during Covid-19 pandemic
- Nasal endoscopy and laryngoscopy examination of ENT patients
- COVID-19 Tracheostomy Guidance
- Aerosol-generating procedures in ENT
- Loss of sense of smell as marker of COVID-19 infection
- ENTUK Guidelines for changes in ENT during COVID-19 Pandemic
- NTSP considerations for tracheostomy in the Covid-19 outbreak
- Tracheostomy guidance during the COVID-19 Pandemic
- Initial guidance for head and neck cancer management during Covid-19 Pandemic
- Guidance for ENT during the COVID-19 pandemic
- ENT UK response to COVID 19 and BACO 2020

You can find all of these documents and more on our dedicated COVID-19 webpage, which is regularly updated with valuable guidance and resources for members, so please continue to check there for the latest documents and most up-to-date information.

Kind regards,

Professor Nirmal Kumar

President, ENT UK