

CLINICAL UPDATE

22nd January 2021

A new version of the 'COVID 19: Guidance for Ambulance Trusts' has been published by Public Health England and the Trust has released the internal document onto EAST24 in line with the new PHE guidance.

Where can I find it?

The latest guidance can be found on the Trust intranet by accessing the COVID-19 homepage on EAST24 and selecting the 'Up-to-date guidance and documents' tab. The document is named '**Guidance for Ambulance Trusts**'.

What are the key changes?

The key updates within the latest guidance are as follows:

- The introduction of COVID-19 risk pathways (High, Medium & Low). This is for staff awareness as patients will be triaged into the appropriate care pathway by the receiving facility.
- Clarification of changes to patient cohorting aligned to new COVID-19 risk pathways.
- No changes to PPE levels for direct patient care or when performing AGPs,
 - Level 2 PPE for direct patient contact when no AGP is performed (ensuring eye protection is always utilised when there is a risk of splash, and/or with a suspected/confirmed COVID patient).
 - Level 3 PPE when undertaking AGP
- No changes to procedures within the AGP list but includes a statement of clarification that oral/ pharyngeal suction and insertion of basic airway adjuncts are not deemed as AGPs.
 - There may be instances whereby oral suctioning is required, without conducting AGPs, for example on an unconscious patient. If only oral suctioning is performed it is not considered an AGP and you will not be considered as being exposed to airborne risk. However, this will not affect the majority of situations whereby suctioning will form part of a wider set of procedures including manual ventilation, for example, and therefore the precautions taken will be level 3 PPE.
- Reinforcing the requirement for patients to wear a surgical mask, providing it does not compromise their clinical care, such as when receiving oxygen therapy.
- No changes to decontamination requirements.

- The identification of new variants of concern (VOC-202012/01 and VOC-202012/02) across parts of the UK has been considered in this revision.
- Inclusion of recommended good practice precautions in the event of delay hospital handovers