



Date: 28 March 2020

To: All Surf Lifesaving Emergency Callout Squad (ECOS) Members

From: Allan Mundy - National Lifesaving Manager

Subject: COVID-19 Memo #7

Background

This memo provides Emergency Call Out Squad (ECOS) personnel with important information, if they are exposed to an elevated risk to COVID-19, when interacting with persons who are either infected or suspected of being infected with COVID-19. Please also read SLSNZ COVID-19 [Memos #4, #5 and #6](#).

ECOS Activation

ECOS are a recognised part of NZ’s Search and Rescue (SAR) services and are now considered an ‘Essential Emergency Service’, during the NZ Governments COVID-19 Alert Level 4 response. Please refer below to activation procedures:

1. Only ECOS personnel who are currently registered with SLSNZ or SLSNR, are permitted to operate during the COVID-19 Alert Level 4, and only at the request of the NZ Police as a Category 1 response (SLSNZ COVID-19 Memo #5) or Maritime New Zealand as a Cat 2 response. If a Club/ECOS are alerted to a potential incident by someone other than the NZ Police, they **MUST FIRST CALL 111** to report the incident seeking permission to respond from the Police SAR Coordinator.
2. An ‘Attendance Register’ of all the participants in the ECOS response must be taken for the purpose of possible infection tracking. Contact information must be added to the SLSNZ Incident Report Form, then photographed and sent directly to the National Lifesaving Manager at allan.mundy@surflifesaving.org.nz , SLSNZ will ensure the report is entered into PAM as per normal.

Event Date/Time	Club/Squad	Responders Name	Contact Mobile Phone	Email Address

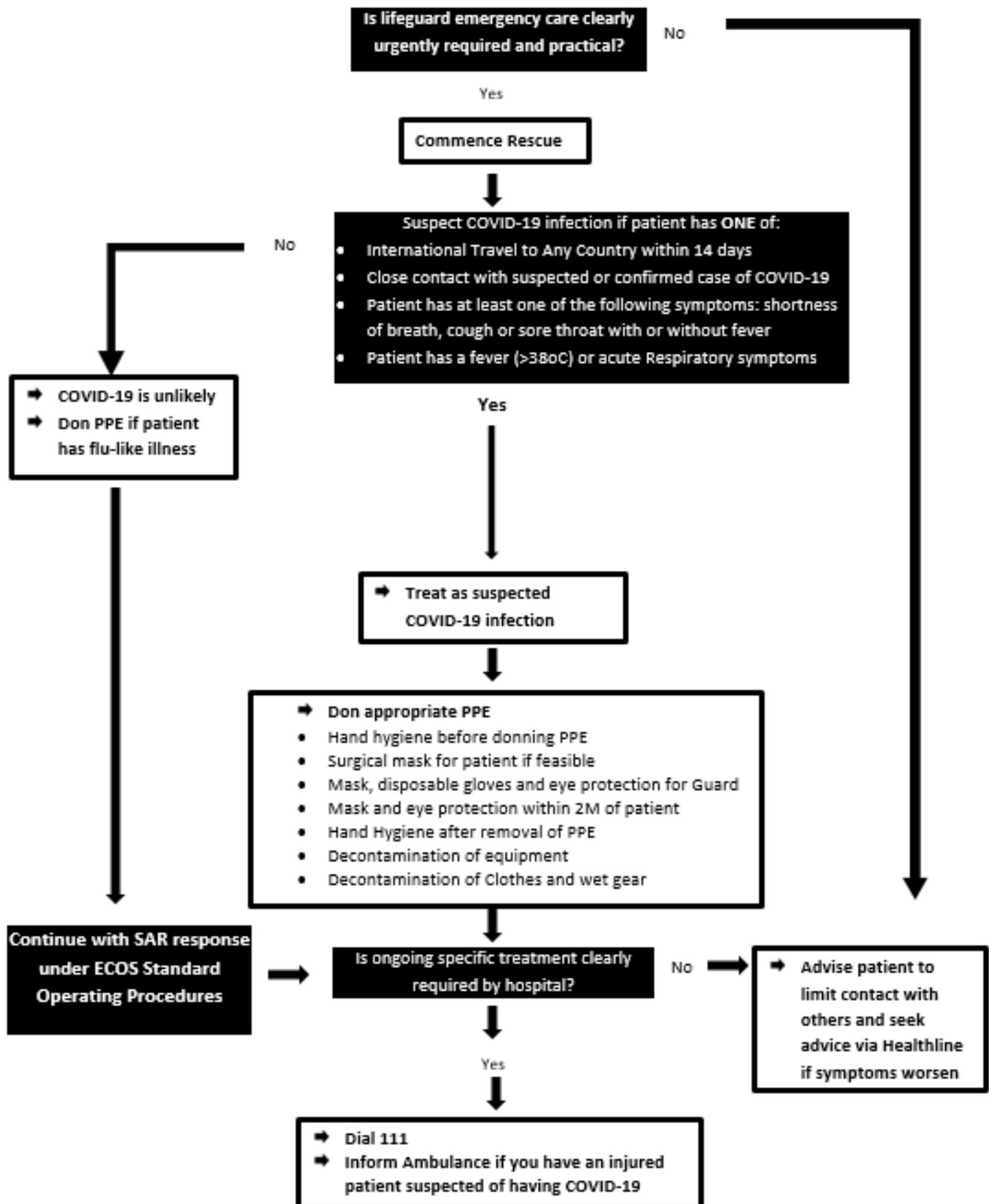
3. It is not practicable for ECOS personnel to don COVID-19 PPE during operation of rescue craft. However, care must be taken to don the required PPE at the earliest opportunity and prior to physical contact with a patient wherever practicable.
4. You must consider if you have an immunocompromised family member at home before you commit to the tasking. If so have someone else deploy.
5. Be prepared for the possibility of Self Isolation should the tasking put you into contact with an infected COVID 19 Patient or a suspected patient.
6. In accordance with current COVID-19 health care practices, ECOS personnel must approach and handle patients as if the patient has COVID-19, until otherwise informed.



Patient Handling

1. Regularly wash your hands with soap and water and dry them thoroughly, particularly before donning and after doffing PPE. Do not rely on alcohol hand sanitiser alone. Hand sanitisers must contain at least 60 percent alcohol.
2. Avoid contact/handling patients without first donning the required PPE. PPE should include single-use disposable gloves (nitrile recommended), eye protection or face shield, single-use gown or coverall, and a single-use surgical face mask. Where oxygen or other aerosol-generating procedures are provided use an N95 in dry conditions, or R95 or P95 in wet conditions. Standard first aid 'face shields' do **not** provide adequate protection when used alone. Refer to the detailed PPE descriptions below. ECOS personnel should be clean shaven of facial hair, to enable the mask to fit flush/flat against the face, as this significantly increases the effectiveness of the face mask.
3. Only once PPE is correctly donned and the face mask 'fit' tested should a detailed/physical patient assessment commence.
4. Where practicable, pause at least two metres from the patient, even if the situation is life threatening and seek a brief response to the following questions. *COVID-19 infectious patients will likely provide one or more positive responses to the following:*
 - do you have, or recently had a fever? (≥ 38 degrees)
 - signs of shortness of breath?
 - recent international travel?
 - contact with any person suspected or known to have COVID-19 within the last 14 days.
5. All patients should be treated as potential COVID-19 infectious patients. Care must be taken to limit exposure to any fluids from the mouth or lungs of the patient, particularly if CPR is required. One or more of the following steps may be considered necessary.
 - fit a mask over the face of the patient while doing chest compressions only, and/or
 - using an AED alone, and/or
 - waiting for trained ambulance personnel to attend.
6. If oxygen is used, ensure that all ECOS personnel are correctly fitted with either an N95, P95 or R95 mask, not a surgical mask, as surgical masks do not provide the necessary protection in this aerosol-generating procedure. Aerosol generating procedures are those that produce droplets that are small enough to be widely dispersed. They pose a higher infection risk for ECOS and health professionals. Aerosol generating procedures (including using nebulisers, non-invasive ventilation, manual ventilation, high flow nasal oxygen, cardiopulmonary resuscitation) should ideally be done in a hospital setting if COVID-19 infection is suspected.
7. For more information on the protection of ECOs members please refer to the Ministry of Health's COVID-19 [Resources for Health Care Workers](#).

Flow chart for patient management decisions



ECOS Decontamination

Care must be taken throughout any COVID-19 emergency response to isolate any ECOS and personal equipment and assets that may have come in direct contact with patients and/or associated fluids, also please be aware that several items may be single use.

Upon completion of the emergency response, any potential infected equipment and or assets must be thoroughly decontaminated using one of the following methods. Coronaviruses are easily inactivated by simple cleaning outlined below:

1. Use any regular laundry detergent at the manufacturers recommended operating temperature, to wash down all potentially infected equipment and assets. ECOS members should remain in their rescue equipment e.g. wetsuits, wherever practicable until their rescue equipment can be washed down while worn, as it is removed from ECOS personnel.
2. Hard surfaces can be decontaminated using 4tsp of bleach in one litre of water, in a spray bottle or similar disinfectant products.
3. Radios or waterproof covers decontaminated by sets being wiped down using a disinfectant wipe or cloth with disinfectant in prior to going back on charge.
4. All Lifeguard clothing including wet suits must be washed in soapy water (clothing detergent) following a deployment.

ECOS Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) in Detail

Please first refer to the PERSONAL PROTECTIVE EQUIPMENT in Section 11.4 of POM B and the supplemental information below. Appropriate training of the following PPE is a requirement for all ECOS personnel.

Face Masks

Type/s – due to unavailability of surgical and N95 (dry conditions) the use of P95 and R95 (wet condition) masks is recommended.

Access/Supply – Bunnings Warehouse Trade.

Use of mask:

- seek suitable training e.g. 3M training
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=kdqcKHSIrrM>
- keep face clean of facial hair
- wash hands
- fit correctly
- fit test – *refer to video tutorial*
- remove and dispose of single use items correctly.

Disposal – with gloves on, carefully unfasten the ties/elastic from behind the head, take off face mask and unfasten the removable filters and dispose in sealed rubbish container along with other disposable PPE.

Gloves

Type – 'nitrile disposable gloves'. ESKO HIGH FIVE Super Strength heavy duty industrial black nitrile disposable gloves are a good brand.

Access/Supply – Bunnings Warehouse Trade.

Use - training video at https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=bP_HOUbWOF8

Wash hands before use wherever practicable. Hand soap and cool water is perfectly adequate. It is highly recommended to use double gloves as it allows you to remove the outer set where necessary and continue working safely.

Disposal – carefully grasp the first glove at the wrist and peel down the hand without completely removing the first glove. Using the fingertips inside the first partially removed glove, grasp the second glove at the wrist and peel down the hand until the second hand is free from the glove. Use the second hand to continue to fold the second glove over the first glove and dispose in sealed rubbish container along with other disposable PPE.

Eye wear

Type – protective wrap around safety eyeglasses in dry environments. May use divers mask in wet environments where practicable.

Access/Supply – Bunnings Warehouse Trade.

Use – fit as necessary/appropriate

Decontamination – douse in or spray using 4tsp of bleach in one litre of water.

Coveralls/Gown

Type – White Disposable Coverall. White Disposable Coverall is a good brand.

Access/Supply – Bunnings Warehouse Trade.

Use – fit as necessary/appropriate

Disposal – with gloves on, carefully unfasten the coverall and dispose in sealed rubbish container along with other disposable PPE.

Personal Protection Equipment Supply Chain

The equipment above can be supplied to your squad via Bunnings Warehouse Trade directly. If there is no trade store close your Regional Lifesaving Manager will source for you. If you don't already have this equipment or cannot source it, please use the following process:

1. Your ECOS Coordinator will be emailed an account number and pick up point from a Bunnings representative. You receive the equipment from their nearest Bunnings Warehouse Trade outlet along with a pick up time and address. Note not all Bunnings are operating Trade outlets during the level 4 lockdown.
2. The equipment will need to be organised into response kits by your coordinator into a black rubbish bag for each responder. Each Bag containing 1 R 95 respirator Mask, 1 pair of Coveralls, 1 pair of Protective Glasses, 2 sets of gloves and 4 surgical masks. Store the bagged equipment on the IRB or in your ECOS room.

If you become unwell

If you become unwell with fever or respiratory symptoms following exposure to a patient with suspected COVID-19:

- discontinue your involvement with your ECOS
- limit unnecessary contact with other people
- contact Healthline 0800 358 5453
- inform your Regional Lifesaving Manager ASAP.

For all queries relating to this Memo, please contact Allan Mundy - National Lifesaving Manager
allan.mundy@surflifesaving.co.nz



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