



Preparing the Workplace for Coronavirus

RETURN TO WORK COVID-19 UPDATE 23/04/2020

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NHLS

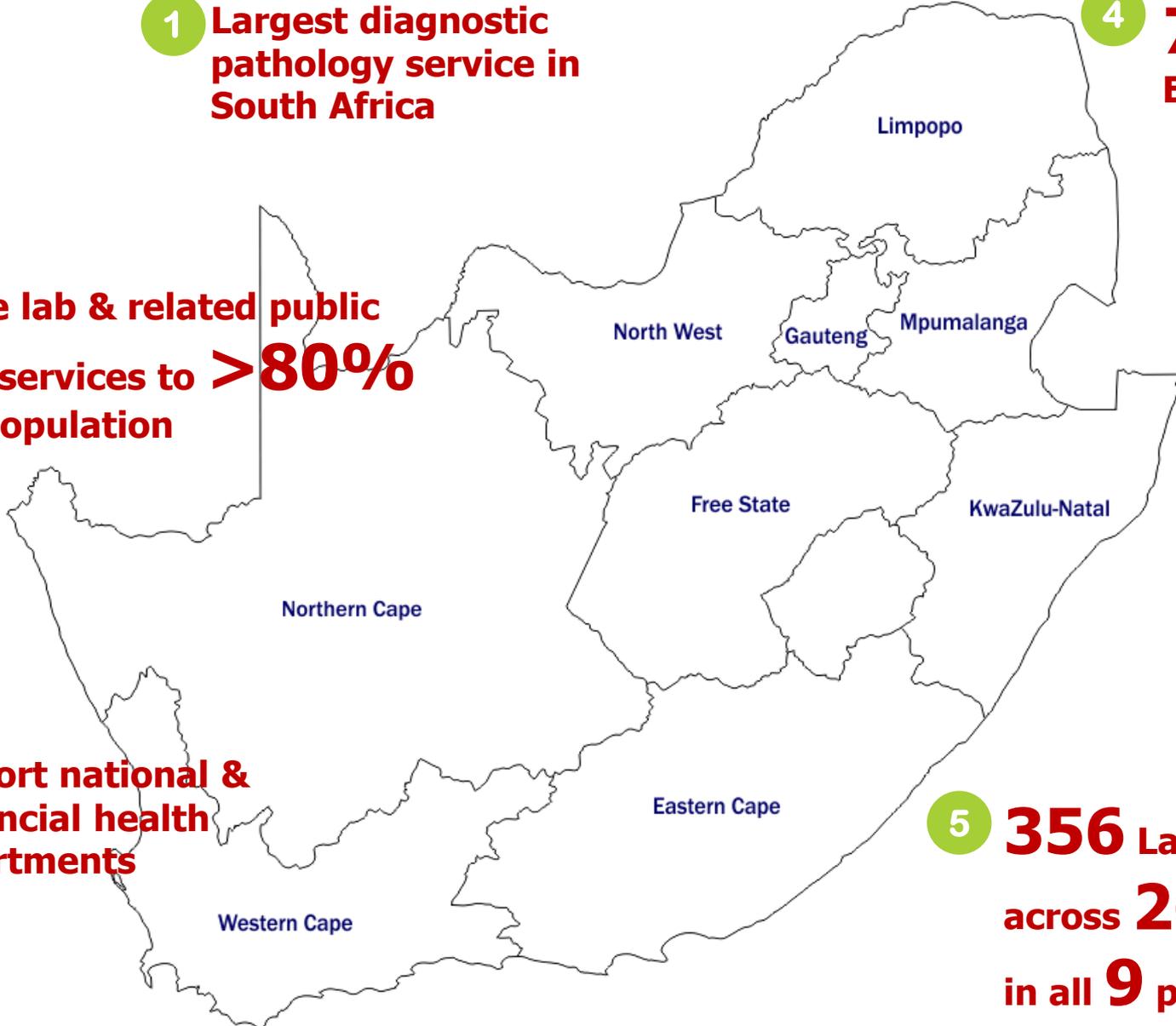
1 Largest diagnostic pathology service in South Africa

4 7515 Employees

2 Provide lab & related public health services to >80% of SA population

3 Support national & provincial health departments

5 356 Laboratories across 260 sites, in all 9 provinces





Healthy, Safe and Sustainable Workplaces

PROMOTING DECENT WORK THROUGH CUTTING EDGE RESEARCH SERVICE DELIVERY AND TRAINING



Improve and promote workers' health and safety



Catalyst for a mind set change towards greater prevention



Inform regulation, policy and standards



Public and private sectors of the economy



Formal and informal economies



HOW TO STAY INFORMED:

THIS SITUATION IS RAPIDLY EVOLVING

Please check for updates on the NHLS, NIOH , NICD, and NDOH websites

www.nhls.ac.za | www.nioh.ac.za | www.nicd.ac.za | www.ndoh.gov.za

Latest updated information on the spread of COVID-19

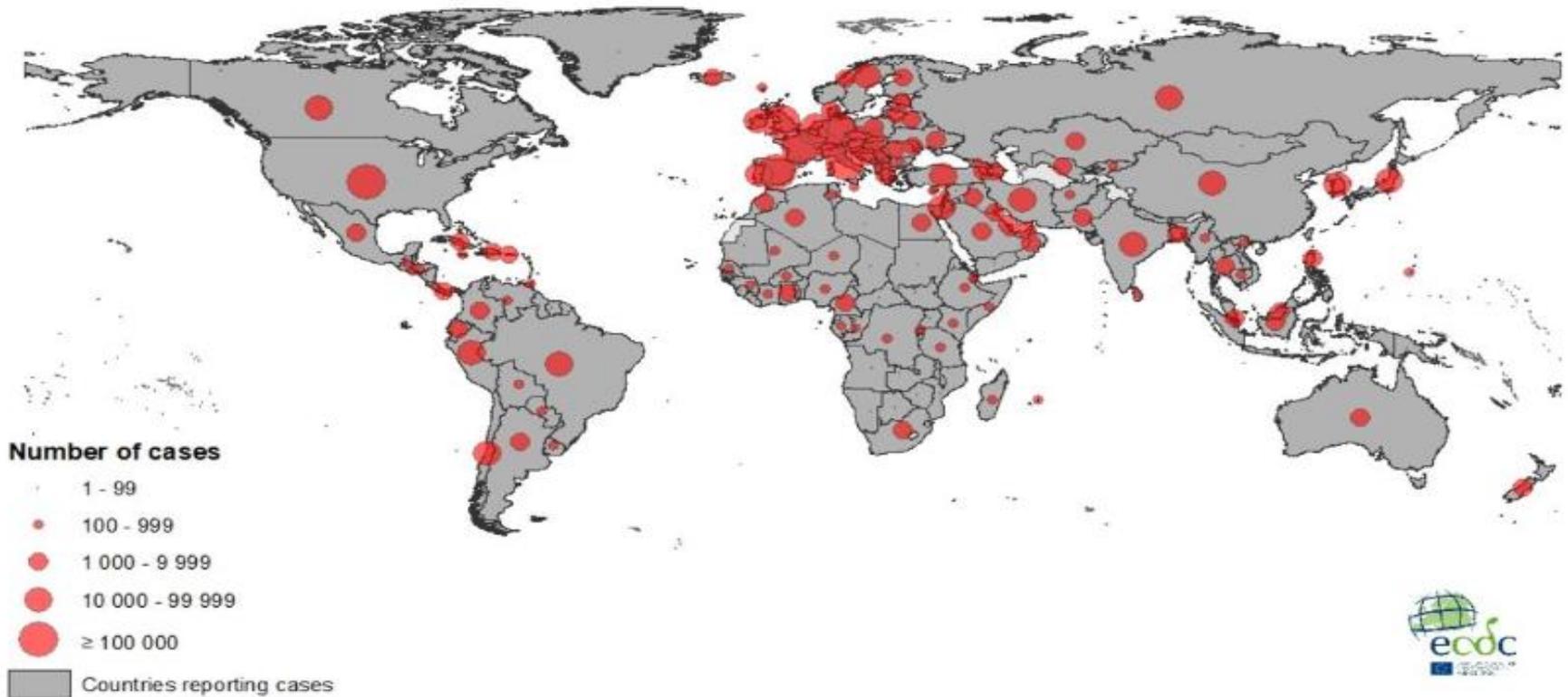
<https://www.who.int/emergencies/diseases/novel-coronavirus-2019/situation-reports>

Advice and guidance

<https://www.who.int/emergencies/diseases/novel-coronavirus-2019>
https://www.ilo.org/beijing/information-resources/public-information/WCMS_736744/lang--en/index.htm

Global infections : 2 528 527 Deaths: 183 424 as of 22 April 2020

Geographic distribution of COVID-19 cases world wide



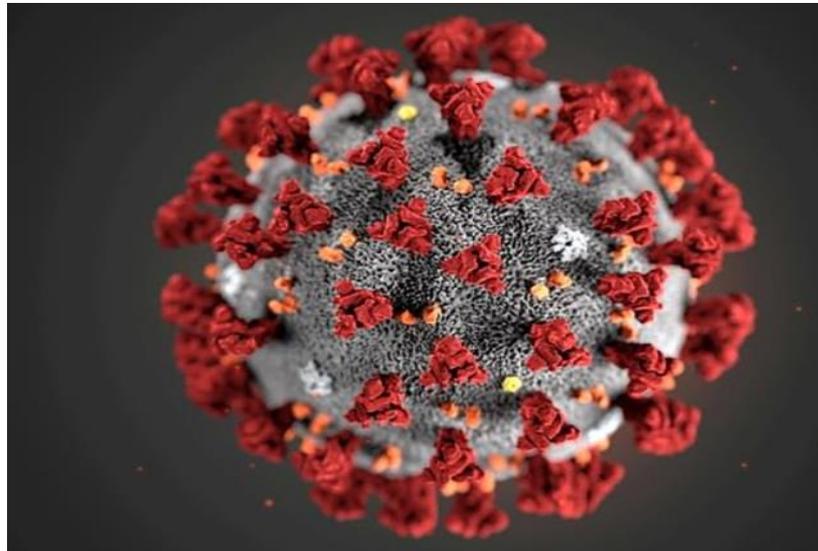
Date of production: 20/04/2020

SA Infections: 3635

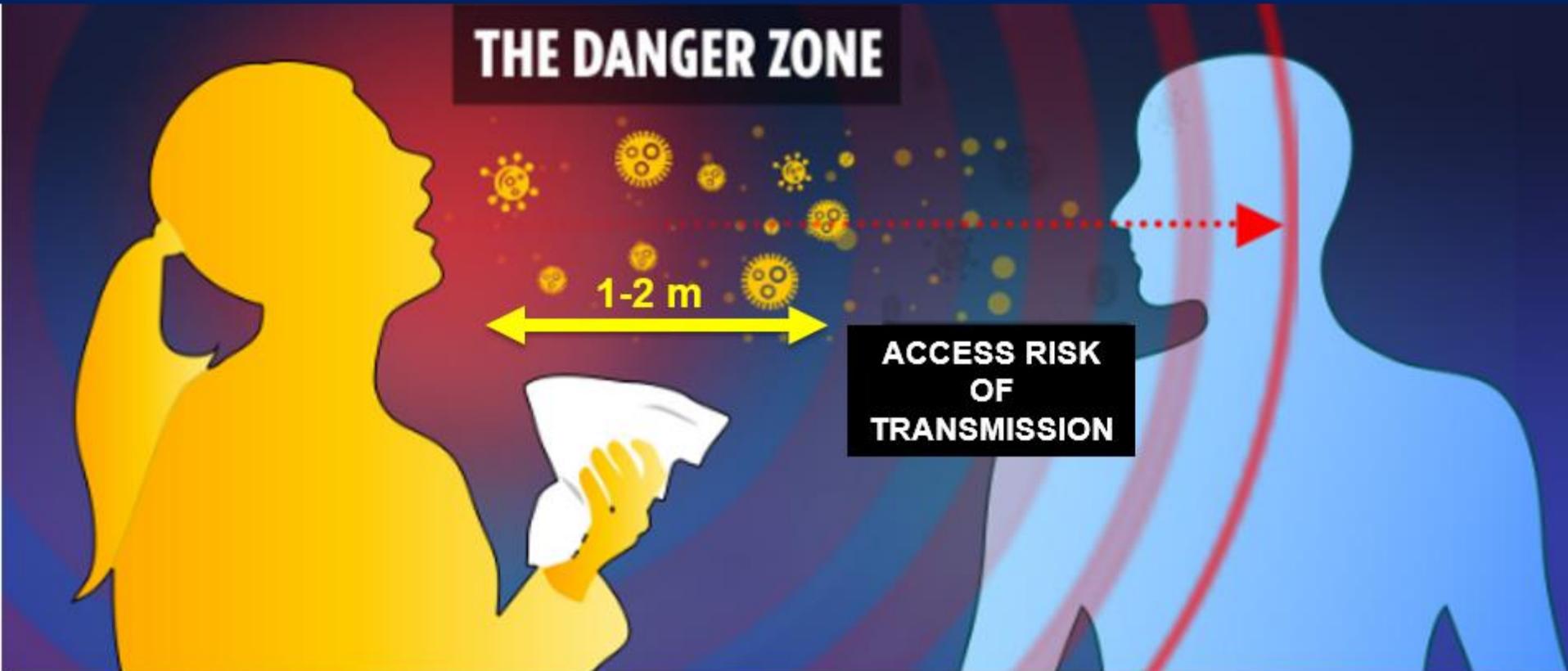
Deaths: 65

South African COVID-19 issues

- Lock down March 20
- Lock down ? Upliftment after 30 April 2020
- Travel and **community** acquired spread
- **Occupational cases** (currently health workers)



TRANSMISSION



Direct contact: **Touching an ill persons or a contaminated surface**

Droplet transmission: **inhaling droplets**

- **Coughing & sneezing generates droplets of different sizes**
- **Larger droplets fall to the ground within a 1-2m radius of the person within a few seconds**

Update on persistence of COVID-19

- COVID-19 virus has a fragile outer membrane - it is less stable in the environment and can be killed by simple disinfectants
- Survival time in the environment depends on
 - pH
 - Inoculum size
 - Dryness
 - Temperature
 - **Exposure to disinfectants**
 - Type of surface
- **Common disinfectants such as 70% ethanol and bleach can kill the virus**

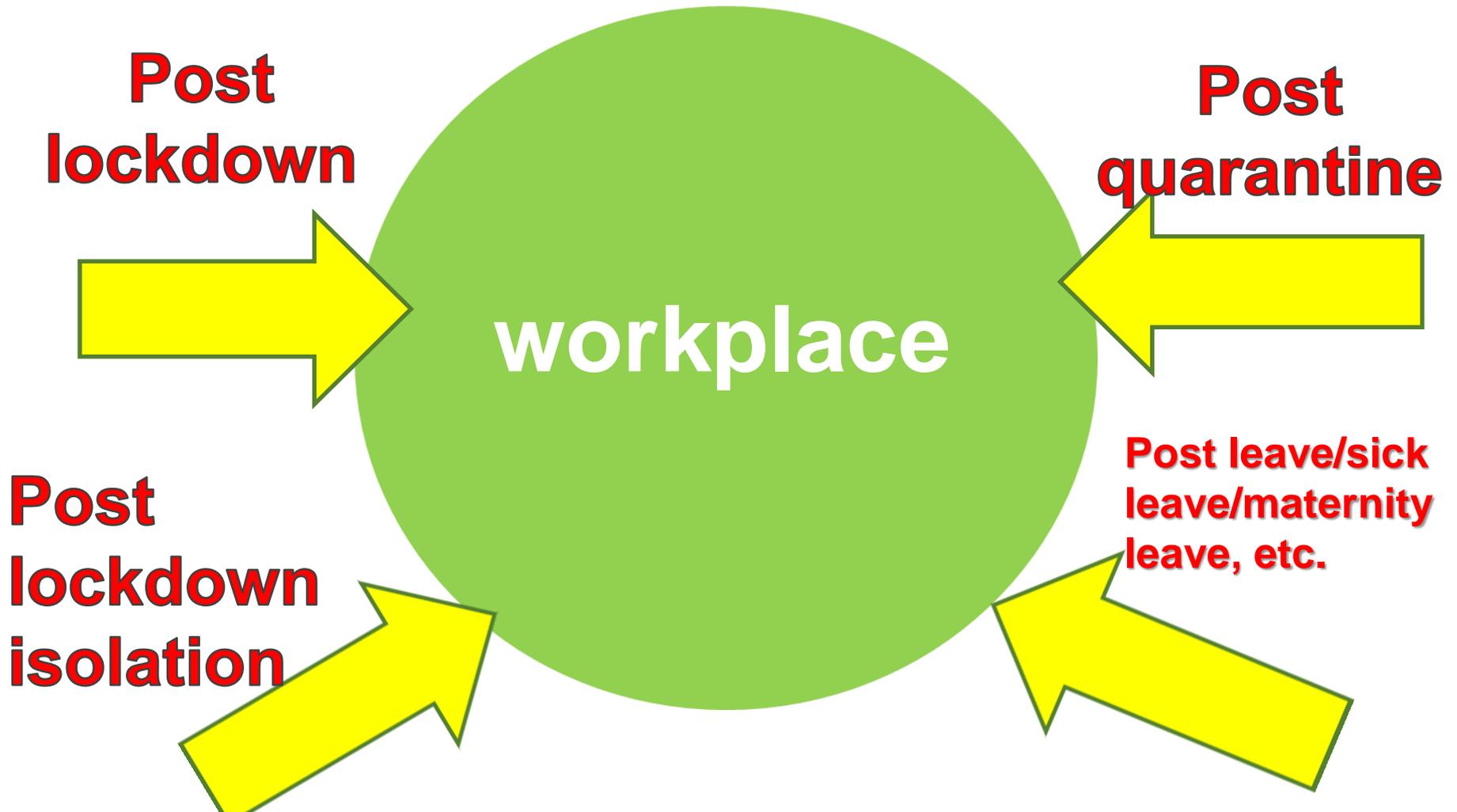


Workplace preparedness

- Anticipated number of staff
- Opening up services (employee-public shared spaces)
- Risk assessment (potential ↑risk of transmission)
 - operations
 - activities
 - shared spaces (among employees & employees/public)



RETURN TO WORK



The Workplace Changes made so far- considerations

- Engineering controls (reviewed or improved ventilation, natural, mechanical)
- Admin controls
- Substitution
- PPE

Admin

Social distancing

More office space- working offsite

Workplace facilities

Access control- staff, visitors, dedicated
streamlined/controlled access

Non- medical management preparations

- Debriefing- new changes
- Psychosocial support
- New work organisation
- Access control
- Spatial arrangements (engineering & admin controls)
- Cleaning disinfection- review

Training & Awareness

- Sensitise skeleton staff
- Communicate staff @home
- Key operational ppl (HR/access control personnel)
- Procedures to be followed
- Procedure review
- Confidentiality vs Public health outbreak
- Health Promotion

Prevention practices



Practice good hand and respiratory hygiene.



Avoid close contact with people who are coughing.



Stay at home if you are ill.



Wipe down all surfaces with disinfectant.

Mitigation of risk in the workplace considerations

Primary prevention

- Minimise risks of transmission in the workplace. HRA including controls (Engineering, Administrative and PPE)
- Business continuity and pandemic preparedness - Policies
- Education and Training /Health Promotion (risk communication)



Minimise risks of transmission in the workplace

- Screening and identification of potentially affected employees, limit contact and movement
- Social distancing



- Promote regular and thorough handwashing by employees, contractors and customers
- Respiratory hygiene
- Avoid touching your face, especially while working.
- Encourage / insist that symptomatic persons stay away / self isolate

Workplace practices to review

- Mass gathering (water/coffee stations, common areas)
- Waiting areas-clinic, medicals etc.
- Meetings (forums, etc.)
- Specific procedures: spirometry (consider method & assess risk), breathalysers (safety risk), etc.
- Access control methods (biometrics, signing-in with common material)
- Public spaces... workers

Medical management

- ✓ Workplace cleaning & disinfection protocols
- ✓ Medical fitness issues and RTW
- ✓ Mental health issues
- ✓ Impairment assessment/Compensation
- ✓ Work restrictions

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

- NHLS Management
- NIOH Outbreak Response Team
- NICD

Questions

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NIOH 24hr- hotline

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