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சுகாதார மற்றும் சுதேச வைத்திய சேவைகள் அமைச்சு
Ministry of Health & Indigenous Medical Services

DDG, NHSL/National Hospital, Kandy
All Provincial Health Secretaries
All Provincial Directors of Health Services
All Regional Directors of Health Services
All Directors of TH, PGH, DGH
All Medical Superintendents of Base Hospitals
All Heads of Health Care Institutions

Guideline for the management of patients with Non-Communicable Diseases in hospitals during the outbreak of COVID 19 infection

This guideline is prepared to ensure the provision of treatment facilities in government hospitals for the patients already diagnosed with Non-Communicable Diseases (NCDs) under the prevailing situation of COVID 19 outbreak in the country.

The main objective of this guideline is to provide continuum of care for the patients suffering from chronic NCDs, while minimizing the unnecessary exposure for COVID-19 as they may be at a higher risk of acquiring the disease and developing associated complications. This guideline covers the services provided for NCD patients at clinics, in ward, emergency care, people under self/institutional quarantine and suspected or diagnosed patients with COVID 19.

1. Continuous supply of drugs for patients with NCDs

Discontinuation of medicines of patients with NCDs will lead to complications which will be an additional burden for the health system. Therefore,

- Routine medical clinics should be conducted taking all precautions to minimize the exposure. When it is not possible to conduct the routine clinics, make arrangements to issue medicine through OPD on other week days.
- Majority can be issued medication without a consultation and those who really need to be seen by doctors can be seen at the clinic separately.
- Issue medicine for two (2) months from a separate dispensary counter whenever possible.
- Medicine can be issued to any person present with the clinic book or medical records.
- Routine investigations can be delayed.
- Hospital administration can make internal arrangements for patients to communicate with the treating physicians when necessary (Giving phone number of a Medical officer or hotline)

Please adhere to the following precautionary measures when conducting clinics

- Limit number of patients in a session
- Maintain the gap in seating arrangements, maintain at least a one-meter gap between persons
- Provide hand washing facilities and hand sanitizers to patients and staff and encourage using them
- Health education on hand washing, avoiding touching surfaces, face, eyes, mouth, nose etc....and cough/sneeze etiquettes to the waiting patients/representatives regularly using all appropriate means
- An enclosed bin should be provided to discard used tissues etc

2. Admissions and Inward patient management

- Admission criteria and the inward management of the NCD patients should be decided by the relevant Medical institutions with the advice of the Consultant Physicians and other managing consultants.
- Always try to avoid unnecessary admissions to wards.
- First contact healthcare provider should inquire about the travel history and the contact history with patients suspected COVID 19 and take necessary precautions.
- Encourage postponement/rescheduling of routine and elective procedures in order to preserve resources and to reduce the risk of exposure of patients to COVID-19.

3. Emergency care

- Emergency care for the NCD patients should be provided as usual.
- Symptoms of COVID-19 can be masked by Acute Coronary Syndrome. Therefore, encourage medical management of acute coronary syndromes (ACS).
- Avoid cardiac catheterization in COVID-19 suspected and positive patients.
- Manage all COVID-19 suspected or positive patients with Cardio Vascular Disease (CVD) at infection control units rather than routine cardiology unit to avoid the risk of infection.

4. Continuation of treatment to patients with NCDs under quarantine for COVID 19 infection

- Medical Officer of Health must ensure provision of NCD drugs to patient with NCDs under self-quarantine, in collaboration with the nearest hospital to the clients' residence.
- Internal arrangements must be made to ensure the supply of drugs to patients with NCDs under institutional quarantine.

5. Ensure the provision of drugs for suspected and diagnosed patients receiving inward care for COVID 19 infection

- The management of NCD of the suspected or diagnosed patients of COVID 19 infection should be under direct supervision of the treating Consultant and necessary arrangements should be made to ensure the availability of the NCD medicines at the hospitals

6. All the screening services provided at healthy life style centres should be stopped until further notice

7. Safety precautions

- Update the staff involved in clinic and ward management of patients regarding the safety precautions and the changes with the updated evidences

- Encourage appropriate use of Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) for health staff who are involved with patient management
- Display messages and use other communication methods to educate the people on the importance of taking medicines for NCDs during this outbreak, maintaining healthy behaviours, and good nutrition and hydration.

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