Proper Transport of Patients With COVID-19 From Hospital to Hospital

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COVID-19 Resources

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Proper Transport of Patients With COVID-19 From Hospital to Hospital

COVID-19 Resources

- Communication, communication, communication
- Why is transport necessary?
- Where are you transporting to?
- How long will transport last?
- Planning at origin
- Planning at destination

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The Basic Questions

- Why is transport necessary?
  - Higher level of care, emergency medical procedures, testing (eg, CT, MRI)
- Where are you transporting to?
  - Within the same town
  - Out of town
- How long will it last?
  - Air versus ground
  - Least amount of exposure throughout the hospital

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Planning at Origin

- Healthcare personnel at the receiving hospital should be notified.
- Nonintubated patients should wear a face mask to contain secretions and should be covered with a clean sheet.
- Intubated patients should have a HEPA filter inserted between the bag-valve-mask breathing device and the patient.

U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. Healthcare Infection Prevention and Control: FAQs for COVID-19. Updated April 1, 2020. https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/infection-control/infection-prevention-control-faq.html. Accessed April 2, 2020.

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HEPA Filters

- Filters can be placed on ventilators just prior to the exhalation valve.
  - This prevents unfiltered expired gases from entering the room.
- For manual resuscitation devices, a filter can be placed on the expiratory port, prior to the PEEP valve.
  - This ensures that the expiratory gases are filtered before entering the room.

Photographs courtesy of Jacob Parmentier.

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Preparing for Transport

- Transporters should wear recommended PPE (gloves, gown, face mask) and eye protection (goggles or disposable face shield that covers the front and sides of the face).
- After patient transfer to the transport modality (and before exiting the room), transporters should remove their gown, gloves, and eye protection and perform hand hygiene.
- Patient wearing face mask: no recommendation for PPE but face mask use by the transporter (recommended).
- Additional PPE if there is an anticipated need to provide medical assistance during transport (eg, helping the patient replace a dislodged face mask).

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Planning at Destination

- Receiving personnel (eg, nurses) and the transport team should perform hand hygiene and wear all recommended PPE.
- If still wearing original respirator or face mask, the transporters should take care to avoid self-contamination when donning and doffing the remainder of the recommended PPE.

U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. Healthcare Infection Prevention and Control: FAQs for COVID-19. Updated April 1, 2020. https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/infection-control/infection-prevention-control-faq.html. Accessed April 2, 2020.

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Summary

- The ICU team contacts the destination and receiving team before transport with a receiving plan.
- The transport plan should be documented.
- Intubated patients should have a HEPA filter inserted between the bag-valve-mask breathing device and the patient.
- Patients who are not ventilated should wear a surgical mask.
- Equipment cleaning and other tasks should be performed per usual infection control protocols.

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