



DEDER GENERAL HOSPITAL

Standard Operating Procedure (SOP) for Triage of Infectious Patients

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1. Purpose

The purpose of this SOP is to outline the standardized procedures for the triage of infectious patients. This ensures **effective and timely management of patients with suspected or confirmed infectious diseases**, **prioritizes** care based on **clinical urgency**, and **minimizes** the risk of **infection transmission within the healthcare facility**.

2. Scope

This SOP applies to all healthcare professionals involved in the triage and management of patients with infectious diseases, including emergency department staff, nurses, physicians, and other relevant personnel, in all healthcare settings such as hospitals, clinics, and emergency care facilities.

3. Definitions

- ✎ **Triage:** The process of determining the **priority of patients'** treatments based on the **severity of their condition**.
- ✎ **Infectious Disease:** A disease caused by microorganisms (bacteria, viruses, fungi, or parasites) that can be transmitted from one person to another.
- ✎ **Isolation Precautions:** Measures to prevent the spread of infectious agents, including isolation of patients and the use of personal protective equipment (PPE).

4. Responsibilities

- ✎ **Healthcare Professionals:** Responsible for conducting patient assessments, **applying triage protocols**, managing infectious patients according to guidelines, and ensuring adherence to infection control practices.
- ✎ **Infection Control/Prevention Officer:** Oversees the implementation of infection control measures, ensures compliance with this SOP, and provides guidance on managing infectious patients.
- ✎ **Management:** Provides the necessary resources, training, and support for effective triage and infection control, ensuring adherence to safety protocols.

5. Procedures

5.1. Initial Assessment

1. Patient Arrival:

- ✎ **Reception:** Greet patients upon arrival and conduct an initial interview to gather information about their symptoms, recent travel history, exposure to infectious diseases, and vaccination status.
- ✎ **Screening:** Use a standardized screening tool to identify patients with symptoms of infectious diseases such as fever, cough, rash, or diarrhea.

2. Clinical Evaluation:

- ✎ **Assessment:** Perform an initial clinical assessment to evaluate the severity of symptoms and the potential for an infectious disease.
- ✎ **History:** Obtain a detailed patient history, including symptom onset, travel history, exposure to known infectious individuals, and vaccination history.

5.2. Triage Classification

1. Classification Levels:

- ✗ **Immediate (Red):** Patients with life-threatening conditions requiring immediate intervention. Examples include suspected sepsis or severe respiratory distress.
- ✗ **Urgent (Yellow):** Patients with significant but not immediately life-threatening conditions. Examples include moderate fever or persistent cough.
- ✗ **Non-Urgent (Green):** Patients with mild symptoms that do not require immediate intervention. Examples include mild cold symptoms or a low-grade fever.
- ✗ **Deceased (Black):** Patients who are deceased upon arrival or whose conditions are deemed non-salvageable.

2. Prioritization:

- ✗ **Immediate Attention:** Ensure that patients classified as Immediate receive prompt evaluation and treatment.
- ✗ **Observation:** For patients classified as Urgent or Non-Urgent, provide appropriate observation and manage based on available resources.

5.3. Infection Control Measures

1. Isolation Precautions:

- ✗ **Standard Precautions:** Apply standard precautions for all patients, including hand hygiene and the use of PPE such as gloves, masks, and gowns.
- ✗ **Transmission-Based Precautions:** Implement additional precautions based on the suspected or confirmed infectious disease, such as contact, droplet, or airborne precautions.

2. Patient Placement:

- ✎ **Isolation Rooms:** Place patients with suspected or confirmed infectious diseases in isolation rooms or designated areas to minimize the risk of transmission.
- ✎ **Signage:** Post appropriate signage outside isolation rooms to alert staff and visitors to the necessary precautions.

5.4. Diagnostic and Management Protocols

1. Testing:

- ✎ **Diagnostic Tests:** Order appropriate diagnostic tests to confirm the presence of an infectious agent, including blood tests, cultures, or imaging studies.
- ✎ **Specimen Collection:** Collect specimens following infection control protocols to prevent contamination and ensure accurate results.

2. Treatment:

- ✎ **Medical Management:** Initiate treatment based on the suspected or confirmed infectious disease, adhering to established clinical guidelines and protocols.
- ✎ **Referral:** Refer patients to specialists or higher levels of care if required based on the severity of their condition.

5.5. Communication and Documentation

1. Patient Communication:

- ✎ **Information:** Provide patients with clear information about their condition, the need for isolation, and any potential risks or treatment plans.
- ✎ **Consent:** Obtain informed consent for any procedures or treatments as required.

2. Documentation:

- ✍ **Record Keeping:** Document all aspects of the triage process, including patient assessment, classification, isolation measures, diagnostic tests, and treatment plans.
- ✍ **Reporting:** Report any incidents or concerns related to infection control or patient management to the Infection Control Officer and facility management.

6. Training and Competency

1. Training Programs:

- ✍ Provide comprehensive training for all healthcare professionals on triage procedures, infection control practices, and management of infectious patients.
- ✍ Include simulations and scenario-based training to enhance practical skills.

2. Competency Assessment:

- Conduct periodic assessments to verify staff competency in triage procedures and infection control practices.

7. Monitoring and Auditing

1. Regular Audits:

- Perform regular audits of the triage process to ensure compliance with this SOP and identify areas for improvement.

2. Feedback and Improvement:

- Use audit findings and feedback to continuously improve triage practices and enhance overall infection control measures.

8. Compliance and Regulations

- ✎ Adhere to **national and local regulations** and guidelines for infection control and triage procedures as issued by health authorities such as the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) and the World Health Organization (WHO).

9. Review of SOP

- ✎ Review and update this SOP every 2 years or as needed to incorporate changes in best practices, regulations, or facility policies.

10. References

1. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) guidelines for infection control and triage.
2. World Health Organization (WHO) recommendations for managing infectious diseases.
3. Local health regulations and standards.