

COVID-19 Safety in Hospitals



Transmission of SARS-CoV-2 in healthcare settings has been a worldwide problem, with hospitals identified as high-risk workplaces. The Australian Society of Anaesthetists wants to ensure that our hospitals are providing the highest safety protections for patients and frontline healthcare workers (HCWs).

In addition to the Hierarchy of Hazard controls described in the Federal Department of Health document 'Be COVIDSafe' ¹, we seek that:

- Priority vaccination also be extended to the members of the household in which healthcare workers live. Protecting the families and households of healthcare workers will support their wellbeing as well as minimise the spread of COVID-19 back into the community.
- Use of reusable respirators be strongly considered. These may provide a greater level of individual protection from acquiring COVID. They are also better on an economic and environmental aspect and will ensure HCW protection when supply of single use PPE is limited.
- Use of HEPA filters be strongly considered, particularly in common areas such as tea rooms and shared office spaces and where patients with COVID-19 are cohorted.
- Rapid antigen testing of asymptomatic HCWs working in COVID-19 wards or who are regularly exposed to patients with suspected or confirmed COVID-19.

We encourage members to liaise with their employer or workplace about providing a safe workplace. If you need help advocating for safety measures at work, notify your local Health and Safety Representative, the relevant SafeWork authority or contact the ASA on asa@asa.org.au

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| NSW: | SafeWork NSW | 13 10 50 | speakup.safework.nsw.gov.au |
| VIC | Worksafe VIC | 1800 136 089 | www.worksafe.vic.gov.au |
| SA | Safework SA | 1300 365 255 | safework.sa.gov.au |
| WA: | Worksafe WA | 1300 307 877 | commerce.wa.gov.au/worksafe |
| TAS | TAS Worksafe | 1300 366 322 | worksafe.tas.gov.au |
| NT: | NT Worksafe | 1800 019 115 | worksafe.nt.gov.au |
| QLD | Worksafe QLD | 1300 362 128 | worksafe.qld.gov.au |
| ACT | Worksafe ACT | 13 22 81 | worksafe.act.gov.au |

Disclaimer: The ASA has developed this resource (current 26.08.2021) based on current evidence. Please check the ASA website for updated versions.

¹ <https://www.health.gov.au/resources/publications/minimising-the-risk-of-infectious-respiratory-disease-transmission-in-the-context-of-covid-19-the-hierarchy-of-controls>