

## Guidance with practical solutions to prevent the spread of coronavirus COVID-19 aboard the vessels

The purpose of this guidance is to provide common good practical and appropriate solutions with effective barriers to prevent the spread of coronavirus COVID-19 aboard the vessels. This guidance is unified in cooperation with the Occupational Health Service (OHS).

- Access to common rooms
  - Common rooms such as the dayroom and library are limited to a maximum of 20 people at a time, provided that one can keep at least one meter distance or more between the people. This should be assessed by the vessel management and possibly adjusted according to local conditions. Through the use of meetings and / or spreads on board in the form of e.g. day program, one may clarify and regulate the use of the common rooms in a good manner.
  - One is allowed to use the Gym when in compliance with the risk assessment for this, as guided by the Captain. When at land, the personnel must train in other ways, such as jogging, walking, etc. The Gym, Solarium and Sauna can be used freely after the entire crew has been at sea for 10 days without having been in contact with other personnel during this period of time. At that time the crew is considered for being infectious.
  - In addition to own bridge crew, access to the bridge must be restricted to the Cruise leader and instrument technicians. Access for anyone else as needed shall be cleared with the Captain.
  - The common toilets shall be closed. Everyone should use the toilet in their own cabin.
- Carrying out meals
  - The number of seats in the mess must be regulated to comply with distance requirements. One solution is to remove every second chair and reduce the capacity. Everyone should be observant and aware of keeping distance as stated by the authorities.
  - Everyone should wash their hands with soap and water, or alternatively use hand disinfectant if not possible, before meals. The OHS does not recommend the use of disposable gloves as it can provide false safety. Best infection reduction during meals is achieved by a catering assistant standing for serving / taking food. This reduces the number of hands and which can be unclear. Alternatively to this solution, one may use one's own steel cutlery for serving/taking food, and plastic cutlery to eat with. The catering assistants should ensure that these measures are adhered to during the regular meals. When personnel serve themselves in the evening /at night), it is the individual's particular responsibility to comply with these measures to prevent the spread of virus.
  - Plastic spoons should be placed on a tray or in a box where drinks are supplied for such as coffee, water, milk, juice etc. Water dispensers that do not have automatic operation, should be closed. This is to avoid transmission of infection by touching manual refill buttons. One of the vessels has used a chamber on a juice dispenser instead, for filling water. If manual refill dispensers are to be used, hand disinfectants should be placed beside so hands are disinfected before handling.

- There are several coffee makers distributed in the vessels. Sufficient disposable cups should be placed beside, ready for use. The use of porcelain cups should be restricted to use in the mess.
- Moving around in the vessel
  - The OHS is of the opinion that it is unnecessary to wear gloves when moving around in the vessel. Personnel should rather focus on good hand hygiene and maintain good cleaning practices, as well as intensify cleaning in places that are frequently affected, e.g. every 4 hours. Washing with soapy water is sufficient. When carrying out preventive measures / cleaning, suitable gloves and glasses should be used as protective equipment by those performing these tasks.
- Equipment used by multiple persons. Clarifying the use and handling of this, as well as routines for disinfection
  - Everyone on board should basically use their own computer. In this, one have to coordinate who should use which computers. If more than one person must make use of one specific computer, it is important that the person who has finished using it disinfects all affected surfaces such as keyboard and mouse. Alternatively, one can use plastic wrap, which has to be removed by the individual after use.
  - Equipment touched by several, such as maneuver handles, telephones and alarm panels, must be disinfected regularly. The person finished on duty shall have the task of disinfecting respective equipment which she or him has touched during the watch.
  - Which person on duty who are to handle equipment such as the CTD, should be clarified in advance. Use of announcements on board, and / or use of meetings, may be good measures in this
  - Procedures for routine disinfection aboard the vessel, shall be specified by the officers.
- In general
  - The basis of all the scenarios reviewed here is that hand disinfectant (such as Antibac) is distributed around in the vessels, in the form of dispensers, sprays, wet napkins etc and is easily accessible to all, and continuously replenished as needed. If deemed appropriate, those who wish may be handed their own sprayer to carry in a pocket.
  - When using disposable gloves, first disinfect your hands before touching the gloves, to prevent the spread of infection.
  - In case of shortage of personnel on board, priority must be given to measures preventing infection. For example, cleaning the cabins can be postponed by up to 5 days after the start of the cruise, if necessary. Furthermore, the catering assistants must change to new disposable gloves after cleaning each cabin.
  - Coronavirus also infects through sewers. One can thus become infected if working on the vessel's sewer system. Consequently, it is important to use adequate protective equipment also when carrying out these types of work tasks.
  - When having patients on board in isolation, it is of importance that one, in addition to own work tasks, can help the patient in the best possible way. To prevent yourself from getting infected, you should use an overall protective clothing. It is important that you can take it on and off correctly. Trash bags should be set up for disposal. This video in French with English text, shows how to put on and off an overall protective clothing: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=qsmDRVqAPIk> If the file is too large to watch over VSAT, it is important to remember to view it when you have 4G coverage.

- The vessels must always have protective equipment on board. Previously we have experienced that it has taken up to eight days before we have been able to deliver a patient ashore. Hence, it must be taken into account when planning for procurement and supply of personal protective equipment. It is essential that the vessels avoid running out of protective equipment.

## References

Guidelines IMR Vessels <https://www.hi.no/resources/Retningslinjer-fra-Havforskningsinstituttets-Rederi-Engelsk-versjon-1704.pdf>

Coronavirus COVID-19 Self Assessment [https://www.hi.no/resources/Coronavirus-Self-Assessment\\_version-2-4.pdf/](https://www.hi.no/resources/Coronavirus-Self-Assessment_version-2-4.pdf/)

## External references

Radio Medico and the Norwegian Center for Maritime Medicine:

<https://www.sdir.no/en/news/news-from-the-nma/guidance-for-preventing-the-spread-of-the-corona-virus-on-board-ships/>

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