



Osservatorio Nazionale

delle Buone Pratiche sulla sicurezza nella Sanità

Scheda per la rappresentazione dell'esperienza

Level: Local Health Authority

Topics:

- Planning and implementing Special Units for Continuity of Care – household management of COVID-19 patients

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Forward

The Local Health Authority Napoli 3 covers an area of about 620 sq km, including 57 municipalities and a resident population of 1.070.000 inhabitants. There are 13 districts and 8 hospital facilities. In the municipality of Boscotrecasa, a COVID hospital was created, with 51 beds, 11 of which are intensive care beds.

Special Units for Continuity of Care

In accordance with the provisions set out by Decree n. 14 of March 9 2020, the organization has been working to implement measures to guarantee household management of COVID-19 patients who do not need hospitalization.

First of all a Special Units for Continuity of Care was set up covering 9 municipalities thanks to the so called Hospital car, that helped the organization identify strengths and weaknesses of the system in place (swot analysis), so as to set up more efficient and safe Special Units.

These Special Units work 7 days a week from 8 am to 8 pm (two shifts with two physicians and possibly one healthcare worker per hospital car per shift) to carry out household monitoring activities to COVID-19 patients and/or testing cohabitants and diagnose recovery (two negative tests 24 hours apart).

Step 1- Planning the Special Units Activities

- Defining number of units to be set up and their geolocation
- Identify the areas where the Special Units might be settled according to
 - Geolocation of the surrounding territory
 - Presence of structural criteria and appropriate equipment
- Hospital cars equipped with:
 - Dedicated cockpit for driver/healthcare worker/civil protection worker
 - Double entry to ensure healthcare workers use a “dirty” pathway and a “clean” pathway
 - Separated space to allow physicians to wear and take off PPE



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- Fridge
- Toilets
- Power source: power unit, 220 v power cell

Hospital cars are also equipped with sanitizers and special waste disposal bins for disposable PPE. Hospital cars are sanitized at every shift change. Sanitization takes place in two steps: the first one is cleaning and disinfection and the second one includes using aerosolized hydrogen peroxide systems (biological risk). The mentioned sanitization will be carried out by dedicated workers, specifically trained and equipped with PPE, who also take care of transporting special waste disposal bins in a dedicated space in the Special Unit headquarter, to be subsequently disposed of by the company in charge of waste disposal.

- Medical staff to be dedicated to the Special Units was hired through a specific call launched in accordance with the provisions of the Decree n.14 of March 9th 2020

Step 2- organizing the procedures necessary for the Special Units setting up

- The Infection disease team of the organization developed a procedure for household management of COVID-19 patients
- Need assessment and purchase of PPE necessary to the healthcare workers of the Special Units. For every single entry of every single worker, the following PPE are envisaged:
 - FFP2 mask
 - Hat
 - Long sleeved disposable gown
 - Recyclable facial shield
 - Gloves (3 pairs)
 - Protective footwear
 - Waterproof protective jumpsuit (2 per each physician per each workshift)
- The Special Units' medical staff were provided:
 - Guidance for reasonable use of the PPE for SARS-COV-2 infections
 - Recommendations for correct swab sampling, sample storage and analysis to identify COVID-19 infections
- Documents for every household access was prepared:
 - Patient's monitoring sheet
 - Informed consent form
 - Privacy consent form
 - Recommendations for correct household management of COVID patients to be provided to patients and/or cohabitant family members in order to avoid contagion
- Documents to be given at the end of the workshift to the Director of the District and to the person in charge of data processing for subsequent activities:
 - Document about loading/unloading of PPE used and sanitizers, with the aim of ensuring the necessary supplies for the activities to be carried out the following day



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- Certification of sanitization/disinfection of the hospital car and/or of the Units' headquarters and/or car used, through defined sanitization/disinfection/waste disposable procedures.
- Minimum medication supply is provided to physicians on duty, to be stored clean space of the hospital car and to be left at positive patient home in sufficient quantities.
- Training courses for medical staff of the special units regarding
 - Implementation of the household therapeutic procedure
 - Correct use of PPE (dressing and undressing of PPE)
 - Field training aimed at moving correctly inside the hospital car and practical dressing/undressing test
- Official communication was sent to the mayors of the involved municipalities, should logistic support be needed and phone call to COVID patients to be monitored. Mayors made available traffic policemen and civil protection staff to go with the Special units' medical staff in disadvantaged area and/or facilitate driveability and hospital car parking.

Step 3- Household psychological support

Psychological support to COVID positive citizens in household isolation and their families is provided 7 days a week from 8 am to 8 pm by calling number 800936630.

The following problems will be dealt with:

- Social problems, thanks to a team of social workers alongside with the social services of the local authorities and the competent social offices
- Psychological problems, thanks to a team of psychologists who will contact directly the citizens requiring support

Step 4 – setting off the Special Unit for Continuity of care and the hospital car

The prevention unit communicates the list of COVID patients with address and phone number.

Before starting their activities, the medical staff of the special unit will be equipped with:

PPE, patient's monitoring sheet, informed consent form, privacy consent form, recommendations for correct household management of COVID patients to be given to the patient and/or cohabitants family members, medication as laid down in the organizational procedure.

Step 5 – monitoring of the activities

A steering committee will monitor the activities carried out by the special units and PPE consumption. Data will be used for planning future activities and made available to the organization epidemiological services and at regional and national level.