

INFECTIOUS DISEASE AND INFECTION PREVENTION AND CONTROL COVID- 19 COMMITTEE

Bulletin #32 – COVID-19 – ID-IPC Personal Protective Equipment – Apr 28 2020

Reusable Visor

The Committee reviewed options to enhance the current PPE to protect the healthcare worker's neck area when providing care to critically ill COVID-19 patients. Due to the risk of self-contamination when removing head/neck covers, it was recommended that a reusable visor can be worn when the point of care risk assessment indicates there is a high risk of an aerosol generating medical procedure. The visor is worn over the N95 respirator to provide greater coverage to the neck area.

Safety Glasses labelled as protective eye wear

Safety Glasses labelled as protective eye wear are not a substitute for goggles and are not recommended as PPE for droplet/contact precautions. Goggles offer greater protection as they have side and top shields. Safety glasses should be removed from PPE carts and replaced with goggles.

Sealed Goggles

Following a literature review, it was determined that the use of sealed goggles under a face shield or visor do not provide an enhancement to the current PPE required by the healthcare worker when providing care to a critically ill COVID-19 patient. Based on this information, the ID/IPC COVID-19 Committee does not support the purchase of sealed goggles.

Powered Air Purifying Respirators (PAPRs)

Following a literature review and the findings of the Alberta Health Services PPE Taskforce Guidance: Chemical / Biological / Radiological / Nuclear Program Breathe Easy Powered Air Purifying Respirator (April 11, 2020), the ID/IPC COVID-19 Committee does not recommend the use of PAPRs as PPE for the COVID-19 response.

The reasons include:

1. Inappropriate protection for the clinical presentation of COVID-19, which requires Droplet/Contact Precautions and an N95 respirator for AGMPs.
2. Difficulty maintaining appropriate infection prevention and control standards with more than a single use.
3. Lack of functionality for routine clinical interactions.
4. Significant training required for competent use.
5. Significant logistical issues related to limited access and supply.
6. Significant cost for practical application.

These COVID-19 PPE recommendations have been reviewed and approved by The Regional Emergency Operations Centre.