



May 14, 2020

COVID-19 ADVISORY NO. 015

SUBJECT: Reiteration on the Adoption of the Revised Interim Guidelines on Expanded Testing for COVID-19

With the increasing number of COVID-19 confirmed and suspected cases in the region, the DOH – Eastern Visayas Center for Health Development (DOH – EV CHD) enjoins all local government units (LGUs) and/or health facilities to adopt and comply with Department Memorandum No. 2020-0180 entitled “Revised Interim Guidelines on Expanded Testing for COVID-19”.

As issues on indiscriminate swabbing are now being raised, the office would like to highlight important points of this Memorandum:

1. COVID-19 Expanded Testing is defined as testing all individuals who are at-risk of contracting COVID-19 infection. This includes the following groups:
 - a. Suspect cases
 - b. Individuals with relevant history of travel and exposure (or contact), whether symptomatic or asymptomatic
 - c. Health care workers with possible exposure, whether symptomatic or asymptomatic

***Indiscriminate testing beyond close contacts of a confirmed COVID-19 case is NOT RECOMMENDED.**

However, for those LGUs, institutions, and offices who are conducting rapid antibody-based tests to individuals not mentioned above but gained reactive results, the office strongly recommend that these individuals be quarantined or isolated for fourteen (14) days. If they develop symptoms, they should be tested using real-time polymerase chain reaction (RT-PCR) test.

2. The following reflects the sub-groups of at-risk individuals arranged in order of greatest to lowest need for testing:
 - a. Subgroup A: Patients of healthcare workers with **severe / critical** symptoms, relevant history of travel / contact
 - b. Subgroup B: Patients or healthcare workers with **mild** symptoms, relevant history of travel / contact, and considered **vulnerable**



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- c. Subgroup C: Patients or healthcare workers with mild symptoms, relevant history of travel / contact
- d. Subgroup D: Patients or healthcare workers with no symptoms but relevant history of travel / contact

***Due to global shortage of testing kits and limitation in local capacity for testing, there is a need to rationalize available tests and prioritize subgroups A and B. However, in view of the expansion of testing capacity and to ensure healthcare workforce safety, subgroup C will be tested and health workers prioritized.**

With the government now focused on expanding testing and the local government now also in a position to do their own test, the DOH – EV CHD would like to reiterate and remind LGUs and health facilities to follow DOH published guidelines on case management and expanded testing.

Please be guided accordingly.


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