

## **MORE THAN 100 DAYS OF COVID - 19 MANAGEMENT, MEDICAL DIVISION, BARC**

**Dear CHSS Beneficiaries,**

As you are all aware, in December, 2019, a cluster of cases of “pneumonia of unknown origin” was reported in Wuhan, China. This cluster was associated with corona virus which was named **Corona Virus Disease 2019 (COVID - 19)** by WHO and on 11 March, WHO declared COVID - 19 as a pandemic.

BARC Hospital was geared up to face the pandemic situation even before the first case of COVID -19 was confirmed in Maharashtra.

BARC Hospital and its network of dispensaries are providing medical services to more than 1 lakh beneficiaries. One of the biggest challenges during the pandemic has been to run both COVID - 19 and non-COVID medical services for beneficiaries, at dispensaries and at BARC hospital.

Throughout the period of pandemic BARC Hospital and all the dispensaries have been functioning regularly.

Thus, anticipating flow of suspected COVID and COVID 19 positive patients among CHSS beneficiaries, various facilities /systems were put in place expeditiously to appropriately deal with the situation.

A: We would like to highlight the arrangements put in place at BARC Hospital since the outbreak of pandemic

- Thermal scanning, Triage and Help desk for patients at hospital were implemented
- A dedicated Fever OPD which is fully equipped with medical staff and adequate number of PPE and necessary emergency medical infrastructure has been deployed.
- A dedicated Fever ward has been created which can house around 30 suspected COVID - 19 patients at a time.
- 24x 7 availability of doctors, nurses and support staff in the fever wards was ensured. Suspected COVID - 19 and corona positive patients are treated here and then shifted to COVID - 19 designated medical facility. This is done under strict BMC guidelines which are updated from time to time.
- Provision of swab collection has been made in FEVER OPD through recognized/ authorised laboratory. While doing so, prevailing guidelines issued by local authorities are being adhered to. Provision for reimbursement through existing CHSS procedures has been made for those who cannot attend hospital for swab testing.

- Provision of blood sample collection at FEVER OPD for suspected COVID cases so as to protect the other non COVID - 19 cases has been made.
- Dedicated X ray machine for suspected and COVID - 19 patients in fever OPD has been deployed.
- Empanelment of new hospitals exclusively for COVID - 19 admissions has been done.

In addition to various hospitals which are regularly empanelled under CHSS, patients who are admitted in non-panel hospitals will be reimbursed.

- Strict disinfection policies are followed to avoid transmission of infection.
- A dedicated telephone Help line ,“**Karo Na worry**” has been made operational
- Mobile phones, WiFi for frequent patient monitoring in fever ward and patient communication have been made implemented.
- Necessary arrangements are made with BMC for special COVID - 19 waste disposal

**B:** In view of the pandemic situation we had to make changes in general functioning of the Medical Division taking into account the prevalent guidelines and also the requirement of our beneficiaries.

- Medical, paramedical and all the support staff in BARC hospital and dispensaries are provided with appropriate personal protection material and medical equipment for carrying out their duties.
- Telephonic consultation arrangement from dispensaries and hospital is made available as per prevailing medical advisory and taking into account the risk of infection to the beneficiaries. Large number of patients have already availed this facility and taken medical advice.
- Provision is made for dispensing three months quota of medicines or longer in chronic illness cases. Those who cannot attend the dispensaries or hospital, purchase of medicines from nearby pharmacy with reimbursement has been permitted.
- Provision has been made in Hospital Information System for referring the patient to panel hospital directly from dispensary
- As per recommendation of Indian Academy of Paediatrics and WHO, immunisation activities were completed in all the children as per schedule.
- Non-emergency management were required to be rescheduled as per medical guidelines for patients’ safety. All emergency and essential medical conditions are being treated.

Medical care is offered to all those who are attending hospital and dispensaries under strict medical advisory.

- Essential operative procedures, Ante-natal checkups, deliveries and caesarian sections etc. are going on as usual.
- Neonatal and emergency pediatrics care is continuing.
- Hospital kitchen continues to function as usual and has been providing services to both COVID - 19 and non-COVID - 19 patients. Due to the pandemic our hospital staff is also provided with food during their duty hours whenever required.

**C.** We have also been educating our beneficiaries on various aspects of the pandemic so that they can be safe and stay healthy. Some of the initiatives in this direction are as follows.

- Educational audio and videos for patients have been provided on COVID - 19 awareness. These are made on common topics “Corona awareness”, “Stay home -Stay safe”, “Dental care during corona, Blood donation, prepared by medical staff BARC Hospital and have been circulated.
- Team of social workers have reached out and continue to do so for beneficiaries in Anushaktinagar township with help of security, visiting the high index case areas and educating the people. Such gatherings are addressed via megaphones.
- Establishment of SOP for contact tracing in case of exposure which includes office contact tracing and house contact tracing was issued. Health Worker Risk Assessment Committee for evaluation of exposure has been functional since the outbreak of pandemic and have been providing valuable advice on appropriate measures to be taken
- Quarantine guidelines for disease containment have been issued.
- Administrative activities like claims, procurements, settlements of bills, AMCs, MOUs with various hospitals continue.
- Various provisions are made for COVID data collection in the system

**D.** Preparing our medical staff for handling the “Novel” Corona virus situation is extremely important. It is also important to ensure that they are provided with various other facilities so that they can attend to their duties.

- Educational lectures for all the staff and in-house training was provided through audio-visual mode. Medical staff comprising of doctors and paramedical staff was also sent for training to higher centres in Mumbai. Special video clips were made to train staff in using PPEs, safe distancing, hand washing and other important preventive practices. Imparting training to medical staff continues.

- Boarding and lodging for staff or essential fever ward duties and other non COVID - 19 duty have been made on the campus
- Availability of Health care professionals due to unprecedented lock down for the duty was a big challenge. Adequate numbers of vehicles were arranged for transport of staff from various parts of Mumbai. On an average around 80 staff members per day are picked up and dropped from various areas of Mumbai. Essential service passes were provided for smooth travel for staff.
- Task force members from medical division, Hospital infection control committee and Health worker welfare Committee is in continuous dialogue with staff, addressing their concerns, measures to create positive attitude during this pandemic time, alleviating their fears, are being addressed on a continuous basis by BARC hospital.
- In spite of great risk to our staff and family members, all services are provided and optimal patient care has been ensured throughout this period.

**E.** Various government authorities like ICMR, BMC have been communicating guidelines for management of COVID - 19 on a regular basis. It is imperative that while we manage the pandemic, we also adhere strictly to the guidelines and directives issued by various authorities. BARC Hospital has been working in close co-ordination with them to ensure safety of our beneficiaries.

As you all are aware, this is a pandemic that we are experiencing for the first time and our aim has been to provide best services to all CHSS beneficiaries. While we are there to take care in case one is affected by the virus, we also would like you to take necessary precautions to prevent infections. BARC has launched 'CORONA CORNER' on its website and has been sharing various guidelines and SOP for your benefit from time to time. Additional control room was also made functional 24 x 7 to address your general queries. These initiatives by BARC have helped in better communication between the CHSS beneficiary and the medical fraternity. We request you to utilize these facilities. Before we sign off, once again we would like to assure you of all possible medical help during this pandemic. While we would always wish that you would not need our services and keep good health always, we would like to give you the confidence that the entire team of Medical Division, BARC is with you.

Stay safe and take good care of yourself and your family.

On behalf of entire Team of Medical Division, BARC.

Dr. Anjali R Kulkarni  
Head, Medical Division. BARC

