SAGES Position Statement on endoscopy and PPE requirements during COVID-19 Pandemic

COVID-19 pandemic is rapidly spreading and affecting all spheres of previous standard medical practices, including endoscopy. There is also a rapid rate of new information and ever-changing/evolving guidelines.

Most of major Societies’ have released position statements or recommendations including:
- BSG/JAC/ACPGBI/AUGIS/PSGBI/UKI-EUS/BSGAR
- Joint Gastroenterology Society Message (AASLD/ACG/AGA/ASGE)
- ESGE/ESGENA

All recommendations will be based on international norms, standards and also to protect all HCW and patients.

A significant proportion of Health care providers (HCP) have become infected with COVID-19. The spread of COVID-19 can occur from asymptomatic carriers, HCP or patients. The main route of virus transmission is via aerosolized droplets. All endoscopic procedures should be considered aerosol-generating procedures (although risk stratification does vary with upper endoscopy greater than lower endoscopy).

Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) is only part of the strategy to prevent injection. General Infection Control Prevention (IPC) measures, including hand hygiene and social distancing, must not be neglected.

Pre-Procedure

- All staff involved in endoscopy must be appropriately trained and informed on IPC strategy
  - Practice Donning and Doffing process
  - Doffing sequence essential
  - This needs to be done on an continual basis and needs to be critique to improve any overt deficiencies

- Clearly identify area for endoscopy
  - Clear flow in and out
  - Identify holding area before endoscopy
  - Recovery area after endoscopy

- Appropriate environmental cleaning before and after the procedure
- In endoscopy area minimize staff and equipment

- Risk stratification of endoscopy
  - Only emergency or urgent endoscopy should be performed
  - All routine, non-urgent and elective endoscopy should be deferred (accurate recording of all cases for catch up purposes post restriction of services)
**PPE REQUIREMENTS**

**Intra-Procedure**
All members of endoscopy team to wear FULL PPE for all endoscopy procedures

- Hair Net
- Eye protection- Goggles/ Face shield or equivalent
- N95 mask
- Waterproof gown or equivalent

- Double disposable gloves
- Shoe covering or equivalent

**Post-Procedure**
- Safely place endoscope for reprocessing
- Safely remove PPE- Clear doffing procedure

---

**Poster for donning and doffing of PPE**

---

**WASH HANDS OR USE AN ALCOHOL-BASED HAND SANITISER AFTER REMOVING GLOVES AND AFTER REMOVING ALL PPE**

**SEQUENCE FOR PUTTING ON PERSONAL PROTECTIVE EQUIPMENT (DONNING)**

- Wash your hands before putting on the PPE. PPE should be put on in the order that minimises contamination. The apron, mask, goggles and gloves must be put on in that order. See guidance on each below.

**SEQUENCE FOR TAKING OFF PERSONAL PROTECTIVE EQUIPMENT (DOFFING)**

- Wash your hands before taking off the PPE. PPE should be removed in the order that minimises contamination. The gloves, apron, goggles/visor, and mask must be removed in that order. *Wash your hands after taking off the PPE. Discard PPE in infectious waste container. See guidance below.*

---

**Note.** When it is practically difficult to remove the apron/gown before the visor/goggles, then the visor/goggles may be removed before the apron/gown.