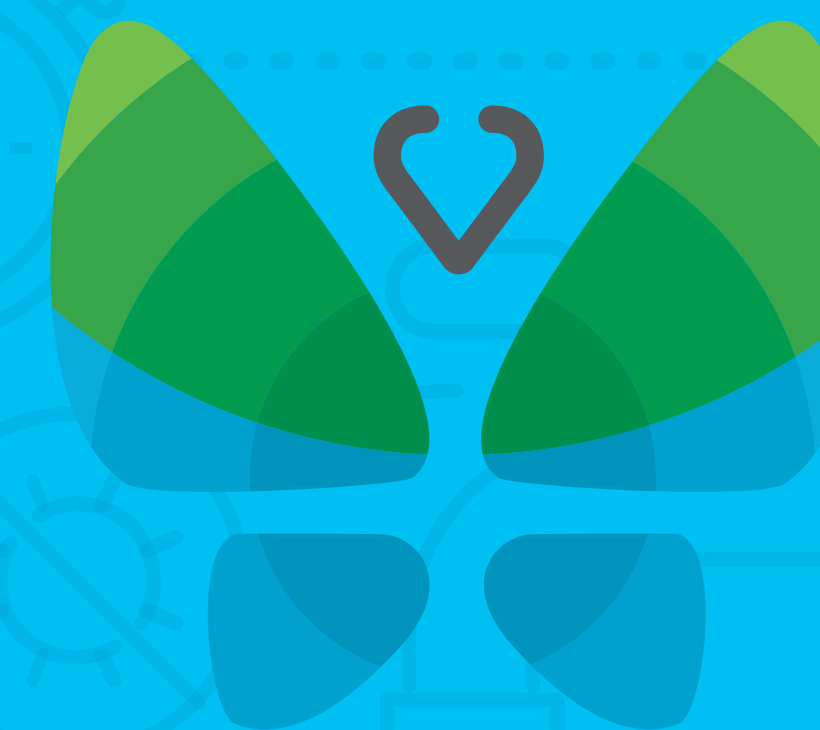


KTF EDUCATION PRESENTS

# COVID-19 RESPONSE AWARENESS MODULES

a Project Airborne initiative



KTF

## COVID-19 AWARENESS MODULES

# CONTENTS

- Page 3: Meet KTF, Introduction & Project Airborne
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# MEET KTF

- KTF (Kokoda Track Foundation) is an Australian international NGO working in Papua New Guinea. Because of our shared history, the legacy of World War II and the support Australia received during the Kokoda campaign, KTF supports communities in PNG to overcome some of the challenges they face today.
- KTF runs programs in the vital areas of education, health, and livelihoods across 16 of PNG's 22 Provinces. These programs aim to train high quality teachers and community health workers, provide these professionals with mentoring and professional development opportunities, build educational and health infrastructure, fund the ongoing maintenance and resourcing of schools and aid posts, and support the positions of teachers and health workers across rural regions. Our livelihoods program aims to generate sustainable income-generating opportunities for women in remote areas via investment in state-of-the-art solar technology and women's sanitary and health products. KTF has also delivered a national leadership program, now in its tenth year, with final year tertiary students from across PNG, finding and fostering the next generation of leaders.
- KTF's projects are rapidly pivoting to adapt and continue during the current global threat posed by COVID-19.



# INTRODUCTION

- We are living, working and existing in a strange new world. COVID-19 has impacted the health, wellbeing and economy of every nation on the planet.
- COVID-19 could be with us for years to come.
- What we do know now is that there are many practical things we can all do to help prevent the spread of COVID-19 and keep ourselves and each other safe.
- KTF is working hard to respond to COVID-19 right across PNG. This manual along with our Vaccine Awareness & Information manual forms a critical part of our response. Project Airborne is KTF's response to COVID-19 and includes supplying health facilities, schools and KTF's colleges with a three month supply of personal protective equipment, water, sanitation and hygiene supplies and community awareness programming.
- In this manual you will find important awareness training guides, each designed and developed for different levels of facilitation. We encourage you to locate the training module and information that is relevant for your learning and encourage you to use these guides to provide ongoing awareness to your families and communities.
- All information within this guide is referenced from the World Health Organisation, Centre for Disease Control, Johns Hopkins University & Medicine, Government Health Agencies in Australia, Papua New Guinea and Canada.



# WHAT IS COVID-19?

- Coronavirus disease (COVID-19) is a new strain of Coronavirus (CoV) that was discovered in December 2019.
- On March 11 2020, COVID-19 was characterised by the WHO as a global pandemic.
- COVID-19 is a respiratory disease and has been found to be highly contagious.
- As of 6th August 2021 there have been over 200 million confirmed cases and over 4.2 million deaths worldwide. 17,774 cases and 192 deaths have been recorded in Papua New Guinea, although numbers are likely far higher due to limitations in the recording of cases.
- Mutations in the virus have led to the emergence of new variants such as Alpha and Delta since the initial outbreak. The latest, known as Delta, is 100% more contagious than the original, allowing it to spread more easily. Studies are showing that it is more likely to lead to hospitalisation and death.
- The Delta variant is the cause for the huge swell in cases worldwide in 2021 and is the reason why Australia is currently in lockdown. Cases have now been recorded in PNG and so it is just a matter of when, not if there will be a major outbreak. The only way to protect yourself, your family, friends and community is through vaccination.



# WHAT WE KNOW

- Anyone can contract COVID-19. The young, the elderly and the in-between. Evidence shows that those with underlying health issues, compromised immune systems and the elderly are most at risk but there are many cases of young, strong people dying.
- COVID-19 is a respiratory illness. It is spread amongst people through droplets that are projected from an infected person into the air, directly to another person or via surfaces such as objects that are often touched by people such (door handles, toilets, food and pots and pans).
- Symptoms of COVID-19 are usually similar to respiratory infections like the flu but may present like malaria. Symptoms include a dry cough, high fever, chills, sore throat and difficulty breathing.
- COVID-19 symptoms can take up to 14 days to show and typically take 14 days to disappear in carriers.
- People infected with COVID-19 can be asymptomatic (which means they do not show any signs of infection).

# VACCINE ROLLOUT IN PNG

- The National Department of Health and the World Health Organisation (WHO) have approved and endorsed the AstraZeneca and Johnson & Johnson COVID-19 vaccines for use in Papua New Guinea.
- The Governments of PNG and Australia are working together to ensure the timely delivery of more vaccines.
- Vaccines will first be made available to health workers as they are frontline in fighting this virus and we need to protect PNG's health workers to ensure they are able to continue working during the pandemic.
- Please be patient while the vaccine rollout takes place. The PNG Government will partner with Provincial Health Authorities and NGOs like KTF, to ensure vaccines get to communities across PNG.
- It is important that everyone who is able to receives the vaccine - this will allow us to return towards more normal activities.



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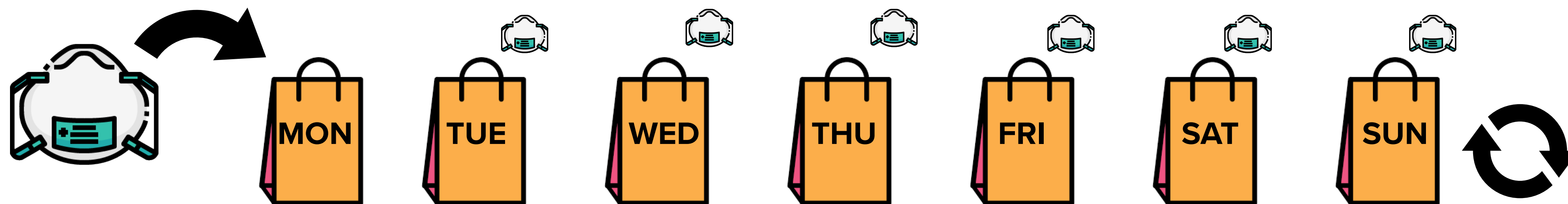
# COMMUNITY HEALTH WORKER AWARENESS MODULE





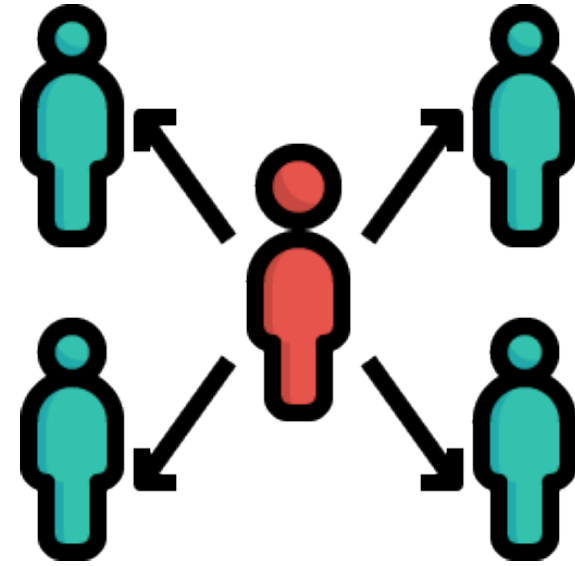
# PROTECTING YOURSELF

- Community Health Workers are the backbone of the health system across Papua New Guinea. With a possible growth and spread of COVID-19 it's important that first and foremost, CHW's are protected. An ill or infected CHW is of course no help to the community and as such, they have a duty to self care before providing health care to others. Health workers will be the first to receive the COVID-19 vaccine.
- There are a number of ways you're able to protect yourself whilst working on the front line of a health response in your community. You must ensure you have prepared a safe working environment by implementing increased cleaning and disinfecting processes, social distancing measures and using personal protective equipment. Listed below are activities you could implement in your health facilities:
- Clean all surfaces of your health facility with chlorine disinfectant everyday. Focus on areas of high patient and staff movement and don't forget to include any waiting area in your cleaning.
- Wear a new disposable mask everyday! Even better is to wear a mask after every patient, however, we understand that supplies of masks are often hard to access. Whilst we do not recommend health workers wearing fabric masks whilst they are on duty, if you decide to make or purchase a fabric based mask please consider the following information.
  - fabric should be a high percentage cotton material
  - the mask should have three layers of material
  - an insertable filter is recommended and depending on the material of the filter should be replaced each day
  - these fabric masks should be washed at the end of each day and be allowed to dry thoroughly before the next use.
  - further advice is to use a rotational seven day mask use procedure where at the end of Monday, you wash and dry your mask and store it safely. Then on Tuesday, use another mask and repeat the process throughout the week. By the time you come back around to Monday, there's a much higher chance that any possible trace of disease has been eliminated.
- If a patient has COVID-19 symptoms, please change your mask and gloves after the consultation.

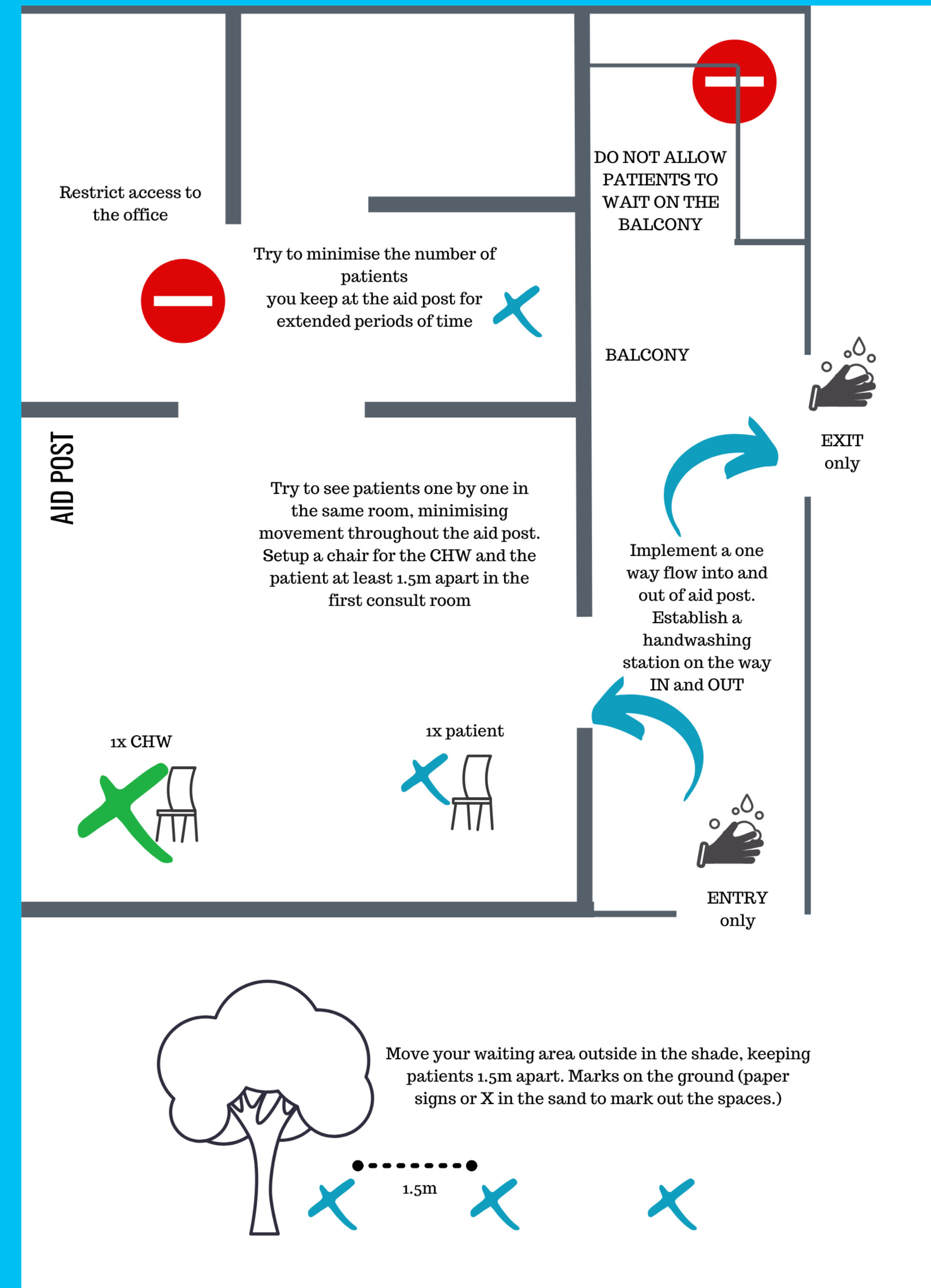


- Prepare a hand-washing station outside the health facility and instruct all patients to wash their hands with soap for 20 seconds before entering the health facility. Instruct them to wash their hands again upon exiting the health facility. Tips for hand washing include
  - where possible, use warm water
  - where possible, minimise the need to touch taps with bare hands (ie use KTF Tippy Taps)
  - encourage people to use their own soap
  - wash thoroughly for 20 seconds
- Wherever possible, check the temperature of every patient (and staff) before they enter the health facility. Any patient who has a high temperature should not be allowed entry to the health centre but investigated/treated outside. The patient should then be advised to return home and self isolate for a period of 14 days. More information on self isolation is provided in this module. If you have access to COVID-19 testing facilities in your region, please make an immediate referral for the patient with symptoms.
- Be aware of vulnerable patients in your community including those with a disability, older people, people with existing conditions such as heart disease, HIV and TB. Ensure they are receiving regular medical checks - this may require home visits.
- Minimise touching your face with your hands during the day.
- Empty all bins and dispose of rubbish at the end of each day. Ensure you are using disposable gloves when doing this.
- Continue with patrols to ensure all communities have access to health services.
- Restrict the number of people who can be in the health facility at anyone time. Restrict visitors joining patients inside the health facility unless the patients are children or a person with a disability that requires a carer beside them.
- Map out a movement plan for your health facility. When doing so, consider a minimal amount of movement of patients inside the centre and create a waiting area outside in the fresh air (move bench seating to under a tree). Ensure waiting patients are sitting at least 1.5 metres apart. An example of a movement plan is outlined on the following page.
- We strongly advise all health workers, nurses, village health volunteers, village birth attendants and any other medically trained people to run awareness sessions within their communities and beyond. COVID-19 can be controlled if people take precautionary measures - measures that they will only learn about if they hear about it. A Community Awareness module is contained within this document. We encourage you to use it as a facilitation guide when delivering COVID-19 awareness in your community.

# SOCIAL DISTANCING IN YOUR HEALTH FACILITY



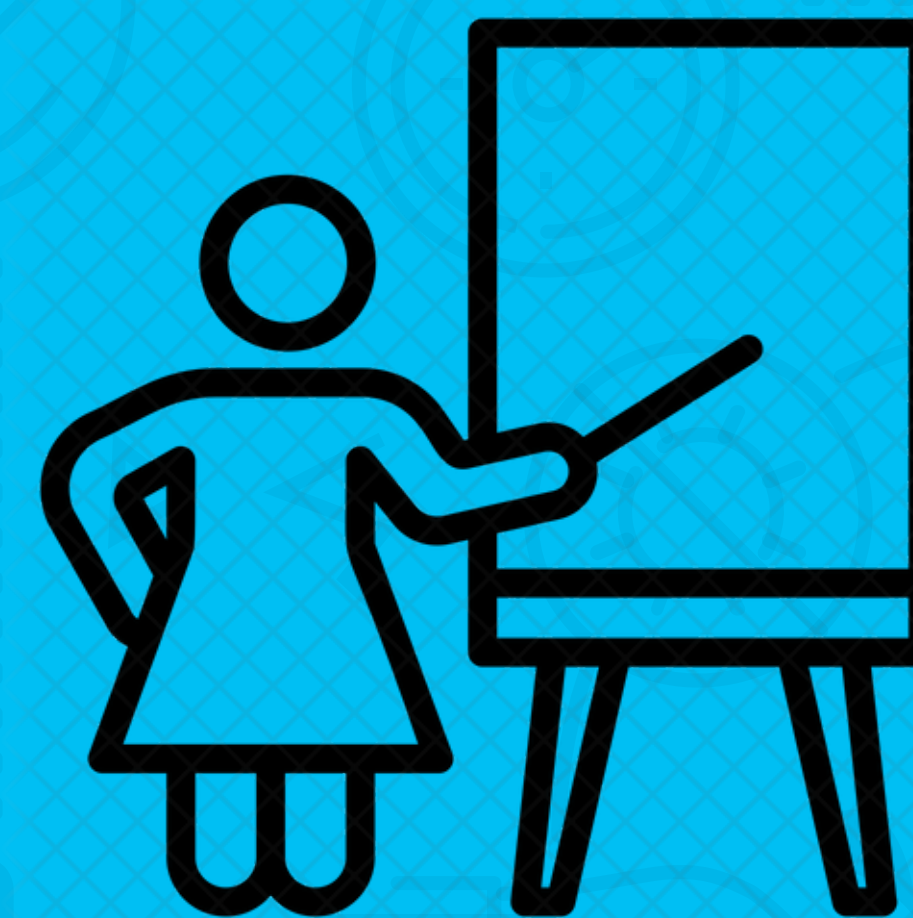
- Social distancing means keeping space between people. The WHO recommend that 1.5 metres (or two arm lengths) should be kept between people at all times. This of course is difficult for CHWs treating patients which is why personal protective equipment and high levels of hygiene practices are encouraged.
- What can easily be controlled by CHWs is restricting the number of people allowed in the health facility at any one time. This is for the protection of health workers and patients.
- This map shows an example of a standard rural aid post in PNG and how patient movement could be adjusted to allow good social distancing practice.





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# TEACHER AWARENESS MODULE

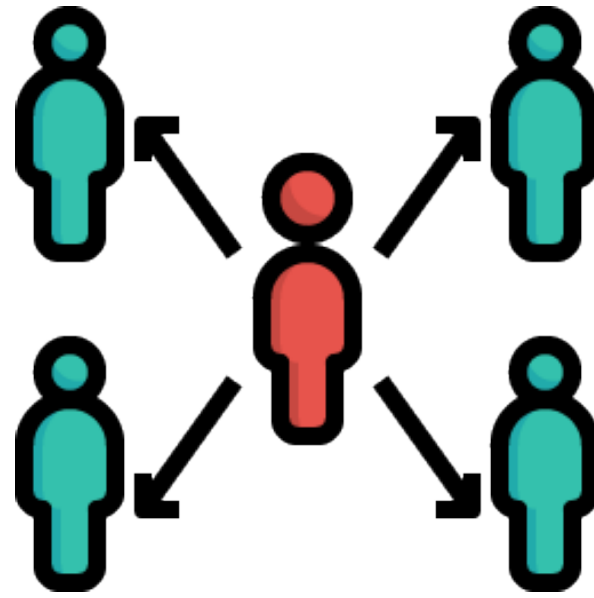


# PROTECTING YOURSELF & YOUR STUDENTS

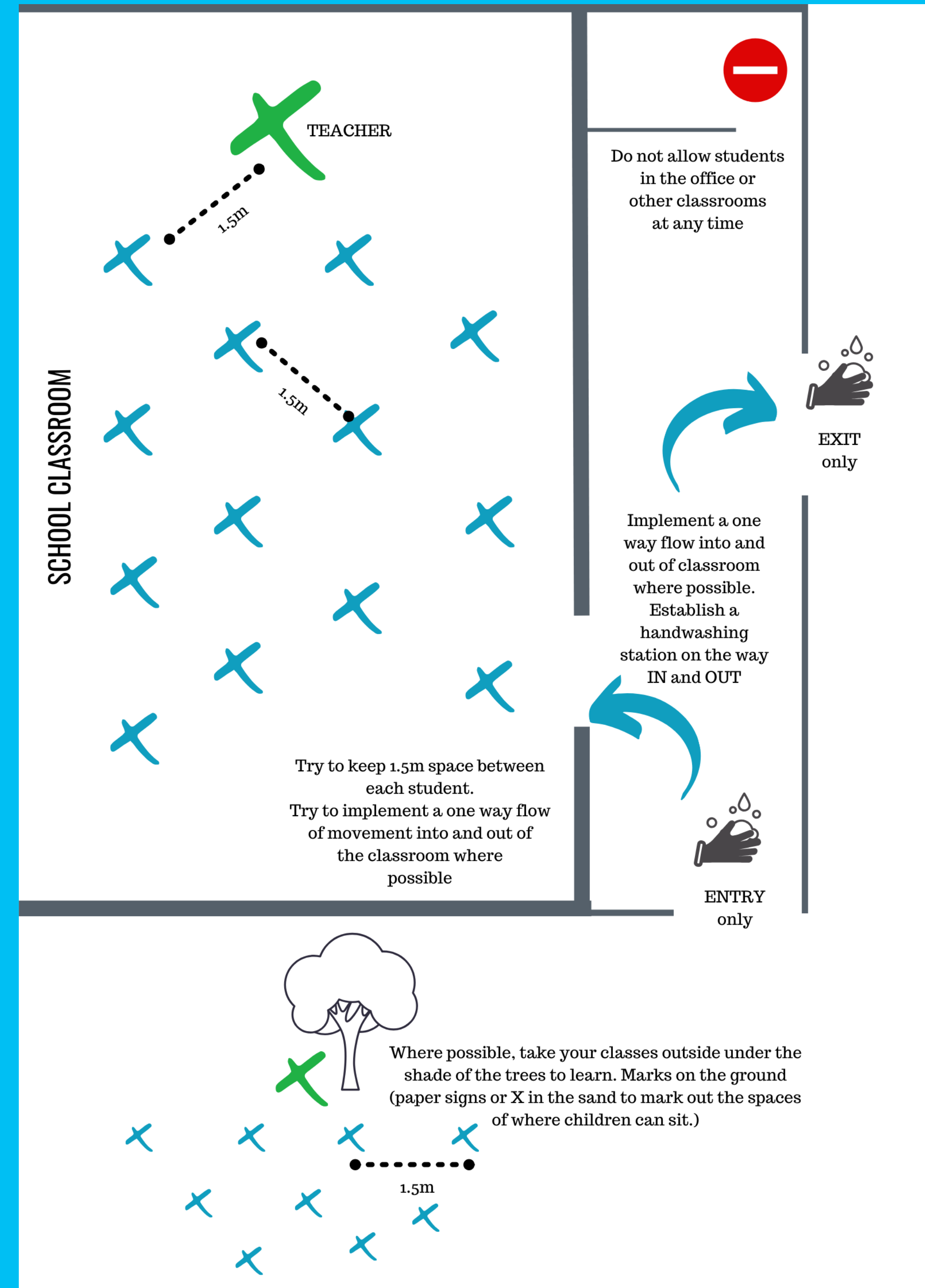
- Education is one of the most important factors in development and progress. It is essential that schools remain open as much as possible to continue children's learning. It is important to put in place measures to protect yourself and your students.
- There are a number of ways you're able to protect yourself whilst working in your school. You must ensure you have prepared a safe working environment by implementing increased cleaning and disinfecting processes, social distancing measures and using personal protective equipment. Listed below are activities you could implement in your school:
- Daily disinfection of all school surfaces using chlorine disinfectant. This includes all classroom surfaces, sports equipment and teaching aids.
- Sick teachers and students should not attend school. Ensure that absenteeism is **NOT** penalised, it is essential for the protection of the whole community that staff and students feeling ill remain home for a period of 14 days. Explain to the community that keeping sick children away from school will benefit other children and the community at large.
- Enforce regular hand washing for all teachers and students using soap or hand sanitiser. Prepare hand-washing stations outside each classroom and outside toilets. Encourage teachers and students to wash their hands on the way in and the way out of the classroom.  
Tips for hand washing include
  - where possible, use warm water
  - where possible, minimise the need to touch taps with bare hands (ie use KTF Tippy Taps)
  - encourage people to use their own soap
  - wash thoroughly for 20 seconds

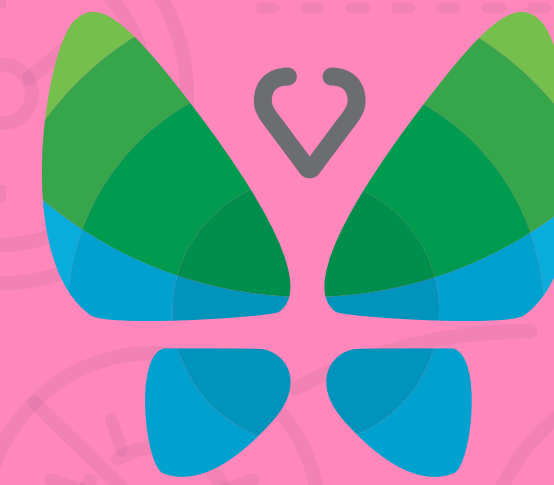
- Implement social distancing in the classroom or teach outside. If possible, stagger the start and finish times of different classes to reduce the number of students present on site at any one time and minimise entire school populations arriving and leaving at the same time. Try to space children within your classroom so that a 1.5 meter space (or two arm lengths) can be placed between each student. There is a diagram demonstrating social distancing on the following page.
- Stagger lunch breaks for students so that not all students and staff are on breaks at the same time. For example:  
Grade 3 & 4: Lunch break 11.30am-12noon  
Grade 5 & 6: Lunch break 12noon-12.30pm  
Grade 7 & 8: Lunch break 12.30pm-1.00pm
- Cancel assemblies, sports tournaments, parent meetings and other events that bring large numbers of people to the school. Whilst this can be a difficult decision to make, it is ultimately for the safety of students, teachers and the broader community.
- The PNG National Department of Education (NDoE) has announced via circular that all children returning to school must have a face mask. Please refer to the area within this document regarding face mask usage.
- NDoE has also mandated that schools must supply hand sanitiser. Whilst sanitiser is an effective way to kill germs on people's hands, health experts advise that soap and thorough hand-washing processes are more effective than hand sanitiser.
- We recommend spending time with the School's Board of Management and the community to explain these new requirements and way of operating.
- And remember, COVID-19 can infect ANYONE - regardless of age, gender, disability status, economic status, or ethnicity. For this reason, people who contract COVID-19 should not be subject to discrimination. It is important that schools and the wider community continue to demonstrate inclusiveness, compassion and support for people who are sick.
- KTF encourages all teachers to use the community awareness module within this document as a facilitation guide to carry out community awareness on COVID-19. COVID-19 can be controlled if people take precautionary measures - measures that they will only learn about if they hear about it.

# SOCIAL DISTANCING IN YOUR CLASSROOM



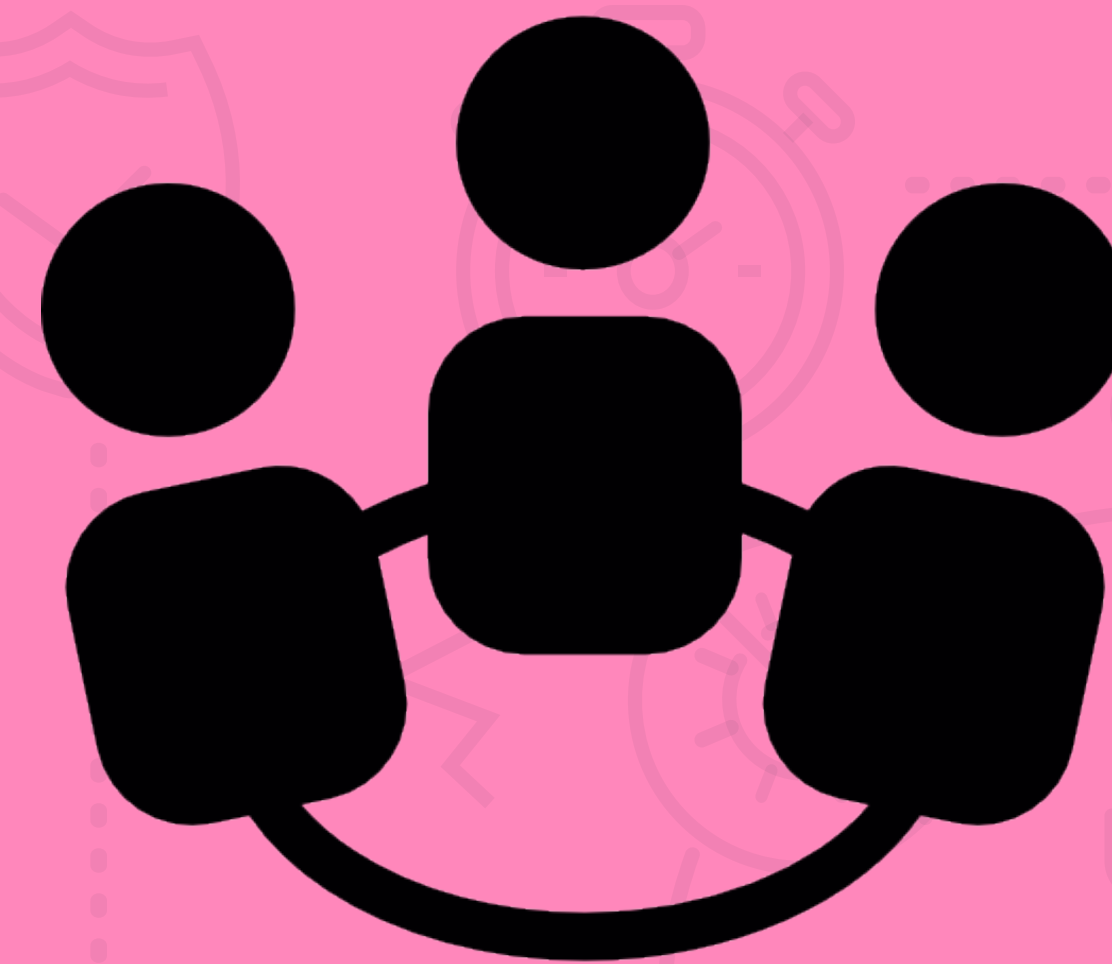
- Social distancing means preserving space between people. The WHO recommend that 1.5 metres (or two arm lengths) should be kept between people at all times.
- What can easily be controlled by teachers is the layout of their classroom.
- This map shows an example of a standard rural classroom in PNG and how student movement could be adjusted to allow good social distancing practice.





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# COMMUNITY AWARENESS MODULE: FACILITATOR'S INFORMATION





# SETTING THE SCENE

- It's important to ensure you are adhering to the appropriate social distancing measures when delivering COVID-19 awareness in your community. One of the strongest defences we have against COVID-19 spreading is keeping distance between people who are not members of the same family unit (family unit refers to the group of people living under one roof).
- Ensure that 1.5 meters (or two arm lengths) of space is preserved between each household and that awareness is carried out in a large open space.
- Your awareness session should cover off the following topics:
  1. What is COVID-19
  2. How to prevent COVID-19 spread
  3. Changes to gatherings, aid post and schools
  4. Keeping our most vulnerable safe
- Remind people that the vaccine is coming - listen for advice and updates from health workers
- Before you begin, consider the useful tips on the following pages prior to facilitating an awareness session in your community.

# USEFUL STRATEGIES WHEN EDUCATING PEOPLE ON COVID-19

## Shift tactics for effective risk communication



**Tell people what to do**



**Ask people what they know and think first – then address them with information**



**Use one-way messages & channels to communicate**



**Have a two-way conversation with communities**

**Write messages at the start of the outbreak and don't update them**



**Regularly adapt and update information based on community feedback**

**ENGAGE, ENGAGE, ENGAGE**

# CONSIDER THE FOLLOWING POINTS

During an epidemic/pandemic:

There are often gaps in information and conflicting information.

Not all information is understandable or useful to everybody

Rumours spread fast and contradict real health information

There are often cultural barriers that prevent people to use information for behaviour change

Community participation is crucial in a pandemic

How to be effective?

Ask first

Listen

Build trust

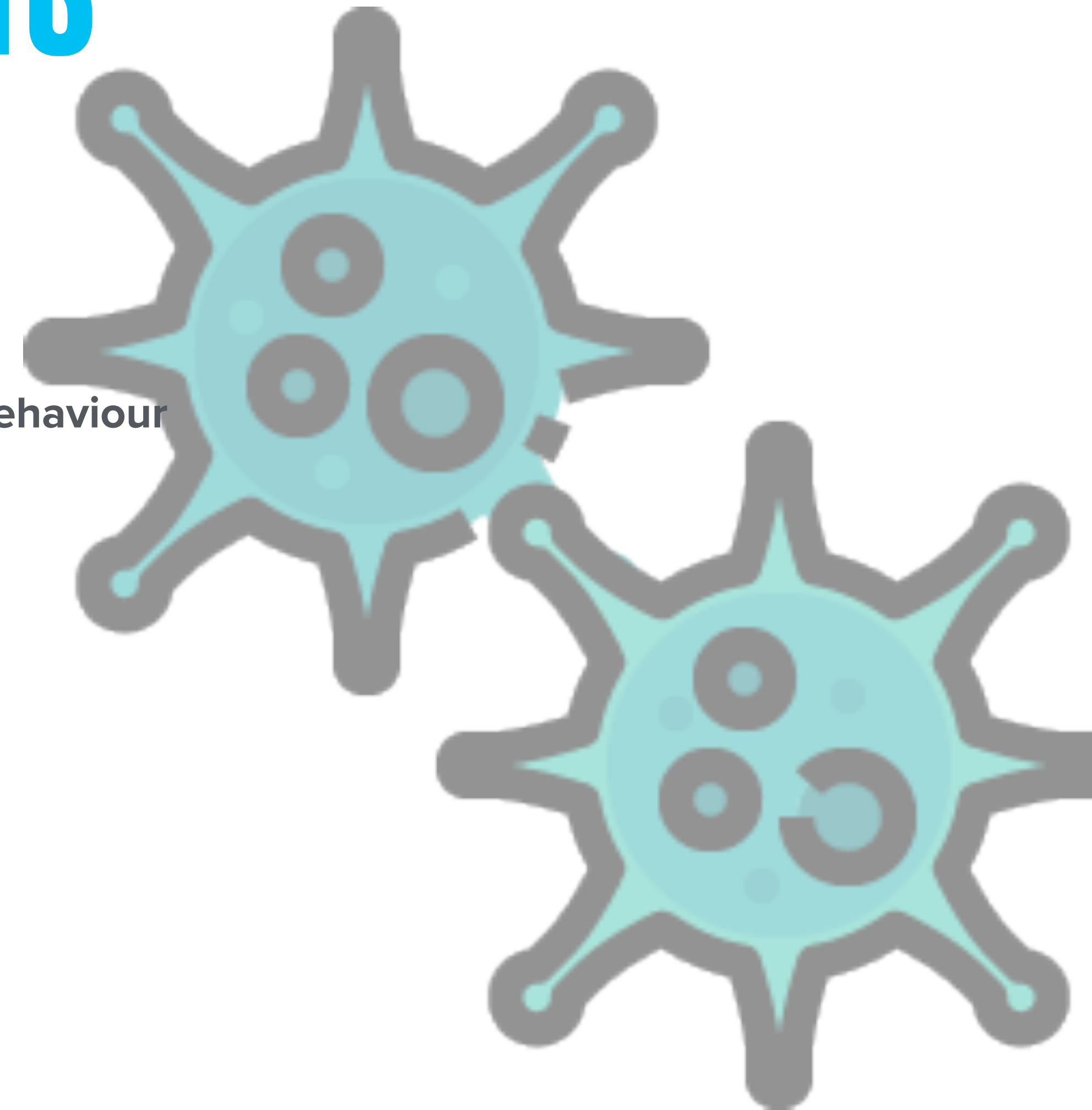
Ensure communities understand

Adapt approaches

Include everybody (diversity)

Get different people to talk and engage them in all phases (not only leaders!)

Remember to use demonstrations as much as possible when presenting





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# COMMUNITY AWARENESS MODULE



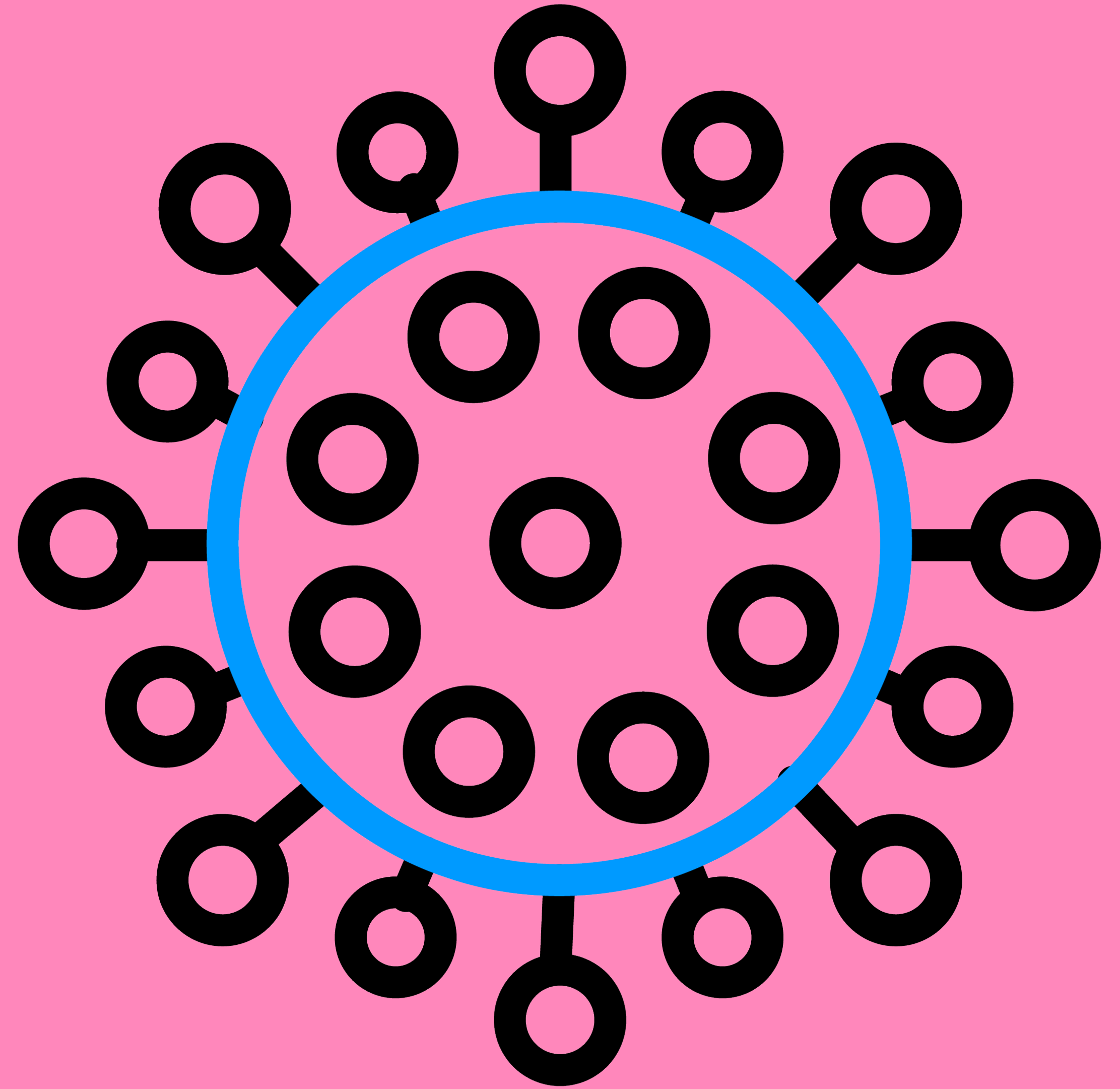
# WHAT IS COVID-19?

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- On March 11 2020, COVID-19 was characterised by the WHO as a global pandemic.
- COVID-19 is a respiratory disease and has been found to be highly contagious.
- As of 6th August 2021 there have been over 200 million confirmed cases and over 4.2 million deaths worldwide. 17,774 cases and 192 deaths have been recorded in Papua New Guinea, although numbers are likely far higher due to limitations in the recording of cases.
- Mutations in the virus have led to the emergence of new variants such as Alpha and Delta since the initial outbreak. The latest, known as Delta, is 100% more contagious than the original, allowing it to spread more easily. Studies are showing that it is more likely to lead to hospitalisation and death.
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## HOW DO WE PREVENT COVID-19?

- There are a number of ways we're able to prevent COVID-19, keeping each other safe. We will discuss each of these measures:
- Good hygiene
- Washing hands
- Cleaning
- Masks
- Social distancing & self isolation

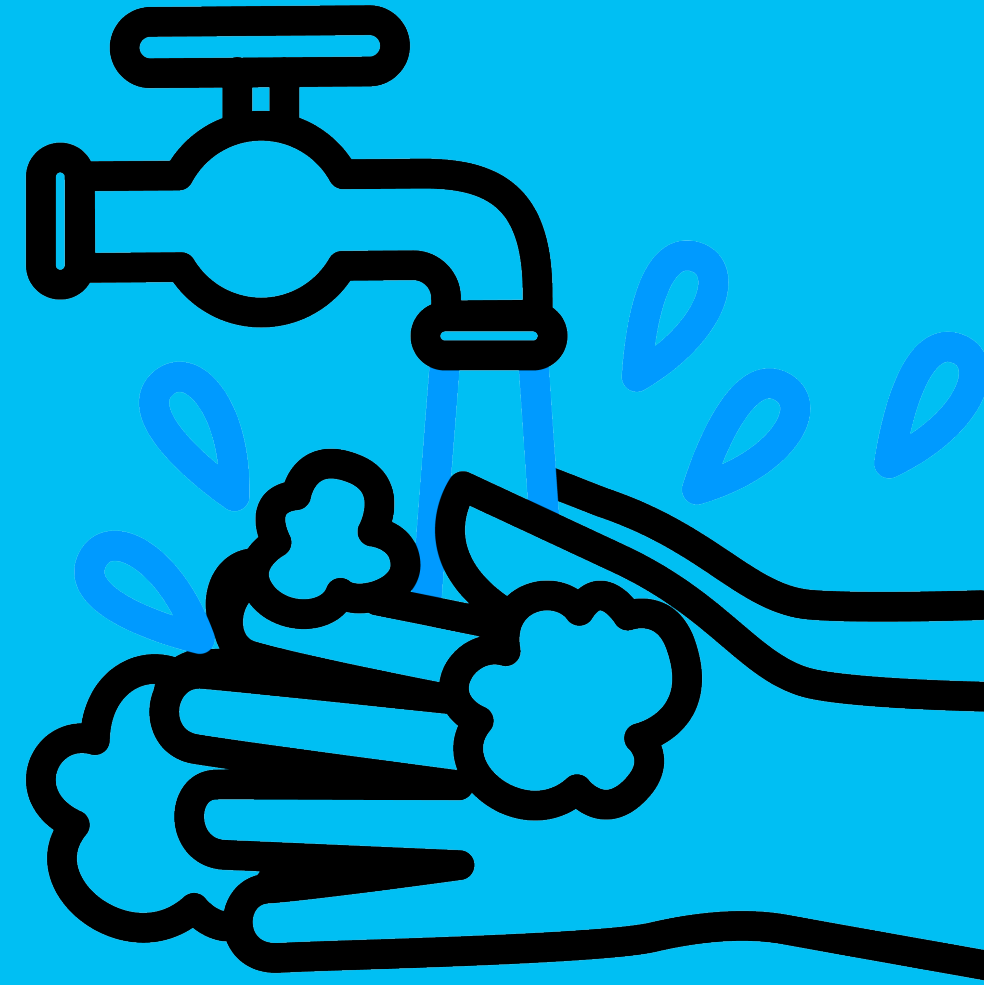


# WHAT WE KNOW

- **Anyone can contract COVID-19. The young, the elderly and the in-between. Evidence shows that those with underlying health issues, compromised immune systems and the elderly are most at risk.**
- **COVID-19 is a respiratory illness. It is spread amongst people through droplets in the air that are projected from an infected person directly to another person or via a surface such as objects often touched by people (door handles, toilets, food and pots and pans).**
- **Symptoms of COVID-19 are similar to a cold and flu or even malaria. Symptoms include a dry cough, high fever, chills, sore throat and difficulty breathing.**
- **COVID-19 symptoms can take up to 14 days to show and typically take 14 days to disappear in carriers.**
- **People infected with COVID-19 can be asymptomatic (which means they may not show any signs of infection).**

# GOOD PERSONAL HYGIENE

- Proper hygiene can help reduce the risk of infection or spreading infection to others:
- Wash your hands often with soap and water for at least 20 seconds, especially after using the toilet and when preparing food.
- When coughing or sneezing, cough or sneeze into a tissue or the bend of your arm, not your hand. Dispose of any tissues you have used as soon as possible in a lined waste basket and wash your hands afterwards.
- Avoid touching your eyes, nose, or mouth with unwashed hands.



**Wash your hands regularly**



**Don't cough or sneeze into the open air. Cover your cough and sneeze by coughing or sneezing into your arm or a tissue. Avoid coughing and sneezing into your hands**



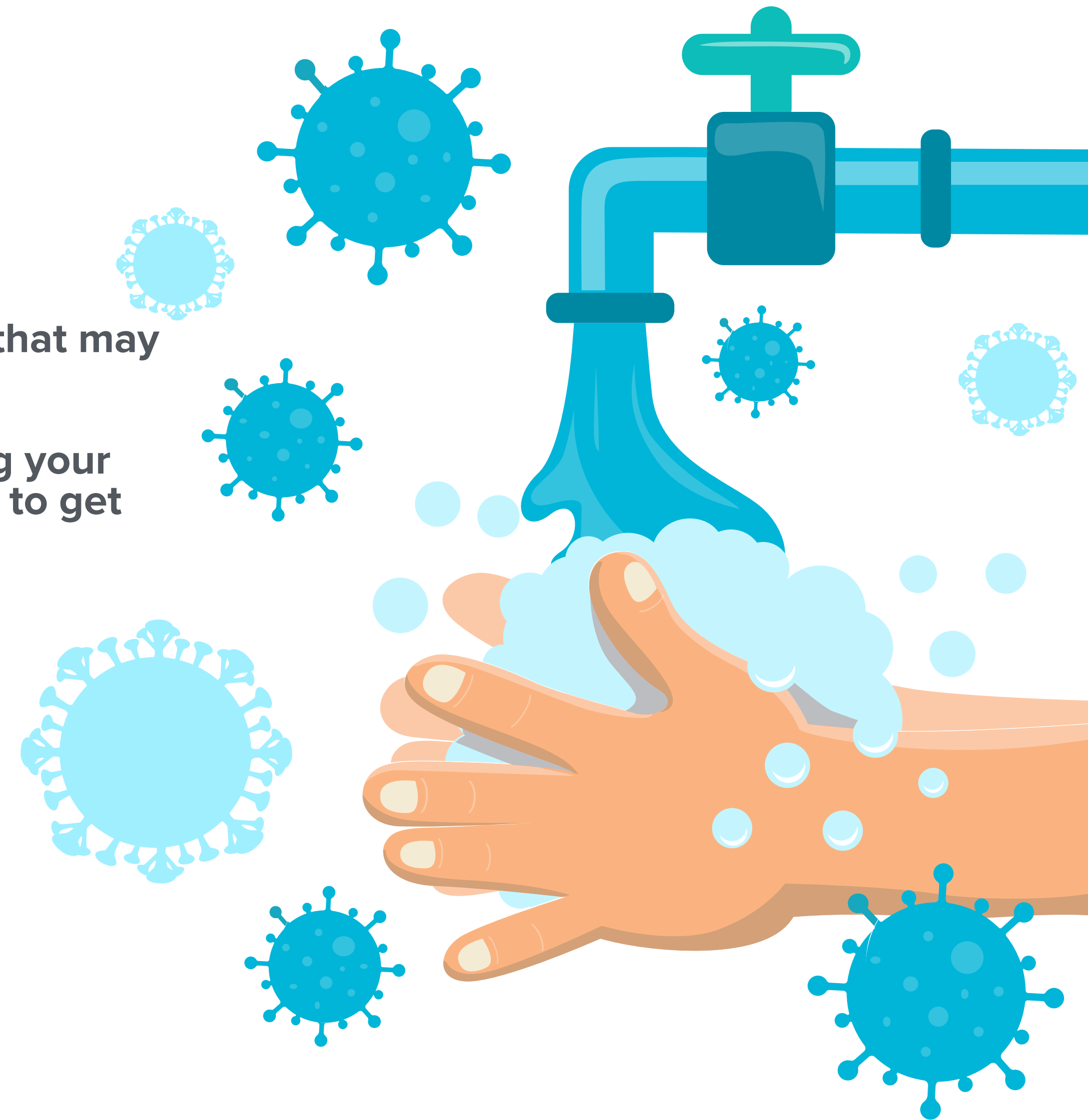
# WASH YOUR HANDS

- Regularly and thoroughly wash your hands with soap and water.
- Why?

Thoroughly washing your hands with soap and water kills viruses that may be on your hands.

You can help yourself and your loved ones stay healthy by washing your hands often, especially during these key times when you are likely to get and spread germs:

- Before, during, and after preparing food.
- Before eating food.
- Before and after caring for someone at home who is sick.
- Before and after treating a cut or wound.
- After using the toilet.
- After blowing your nose, coughing, or sneezing.
- After touching an animal, animal feed, or animal waste.
- After touching rubbish.
- After arriving home from being out.



# HOW TO WASH Your Hands

Washing your hands is easy, and it's one of the most effective ways to prevent the spread of germs.



**Wet** your hands with clean, running water (**warm or cold**), turn off the tap, and apply soap.



**Lather** your hands by rubbing them together with the soap. Lather the backs of your hands, between your fingers, and under your nails.



**Scrub** your hands for at least 20 seconds. Need a timer? Hum the “Happy Birthday” song from beginning to end twice.



**Rinse** your hands well under clean, running water.



**Dry** your hands using a clean towel or air dry them.



# CLEANING

- Some Government Health Departments have published a list of hard surface disinfectants that are likely to be effective for use against coronavirus (COVID-19).
- Although they do not claim to kill viruses such as COVID-19, cleaners can play a role in helping limit the transfer of microorganisms. WHO recommends cleaning often, using either regular household cleaners or diluted bleach (1 part bleach to 9 parts water) the following high-touch surfaces: Food preparation areas, school desks, aid post surfaces, benches, chairs, tables and electronic devices.



# **AVOID TOUCHING YOUR FACE**

**Avoid touching eyes, nose and mouth**

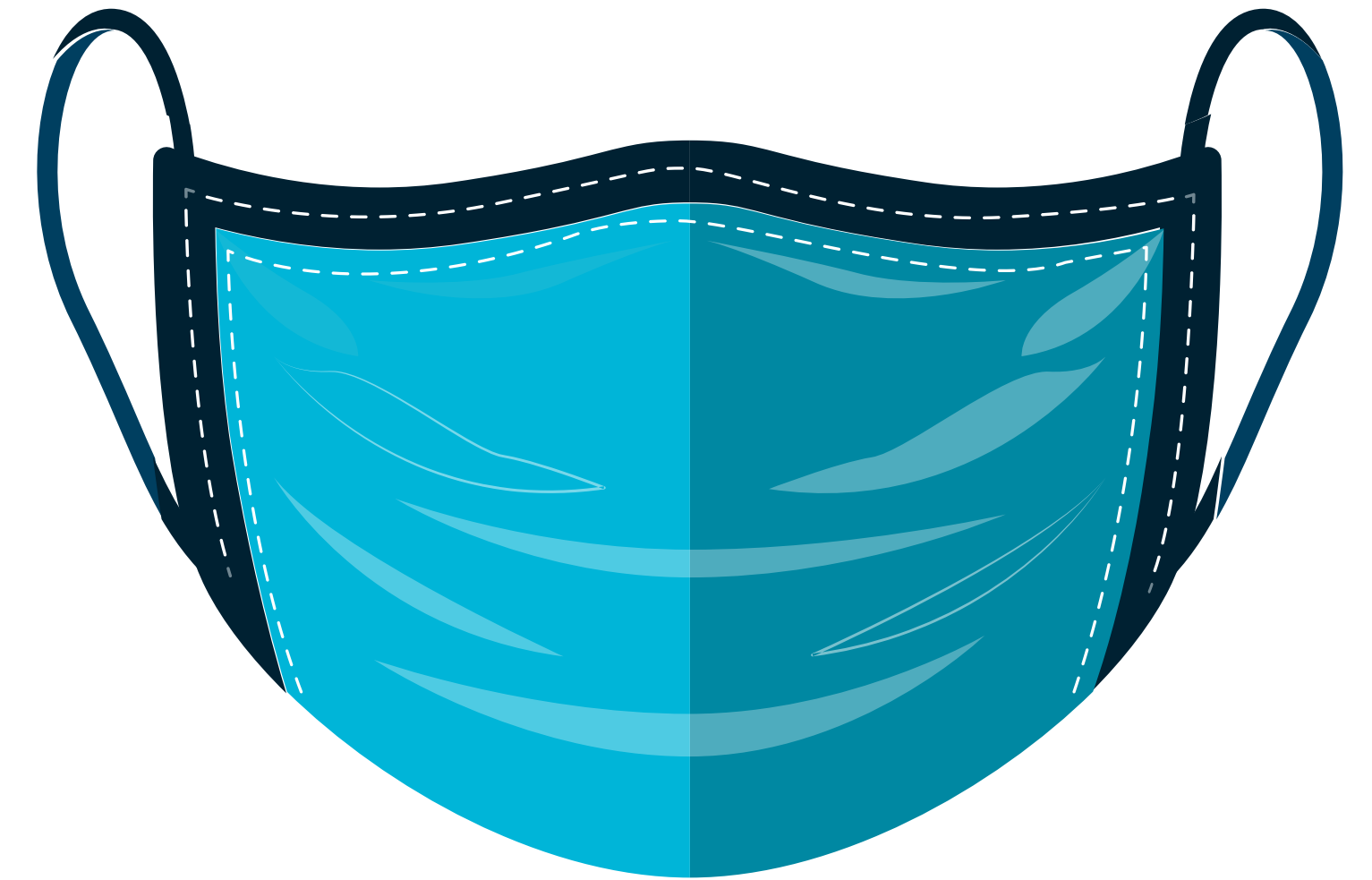
**WHY?**

**Hands touch many surfaces and can pick up viruses. Once contaminated, hands can transfer the virus to your eyes, nose or mouth. From there, the virus can enter your body and can make you sick.**

**But we've been touching our faces all our lives, and stopping that habit is easier said than done. Sometimes a face mask may assist in preventing you from touching your face.**

# WEARING A FACE MASK

- There is a potential risk of infection with improper mask use and disposal. If masks are not washed or changed frequently, they can pose a greater risk to your health.
- However, your health care provider may recommend you wear a mask if you are experiencing symptoms of COVID-19 while you are seeking or waiting for care. In this instance, masks are an appropriate part of infection prevention and control measures. The mask acts as a barrier and helps stop the tiny droplets from spreading you when you cough or sneeze.
- We also recognise that the PNG department of education has made it compulsory for teachers and students to wear a face mask at school. We strongly recommend following guidelines in this manual.
- If you choose to wear a mask, please follow the advice on the types of masks that are suitable and the care instructions for your mask.



# TYPE OF FACE MASK

- Surgical masks are recommended for single use only. This means they must be discarded at the end of each day. The material is not made to protect people from disease if worn multiple times over.
- Fabric masks can be effective however must be made out of high quality cotton material, must have three layers of fabric and for ultimate protection, should have a filter pouch.
- On the following page we show you instructions on how to make your own cloth mask based on design data from the Centre for Disease Control (CDC).



# MASK MAKING INSTRUCTIONS

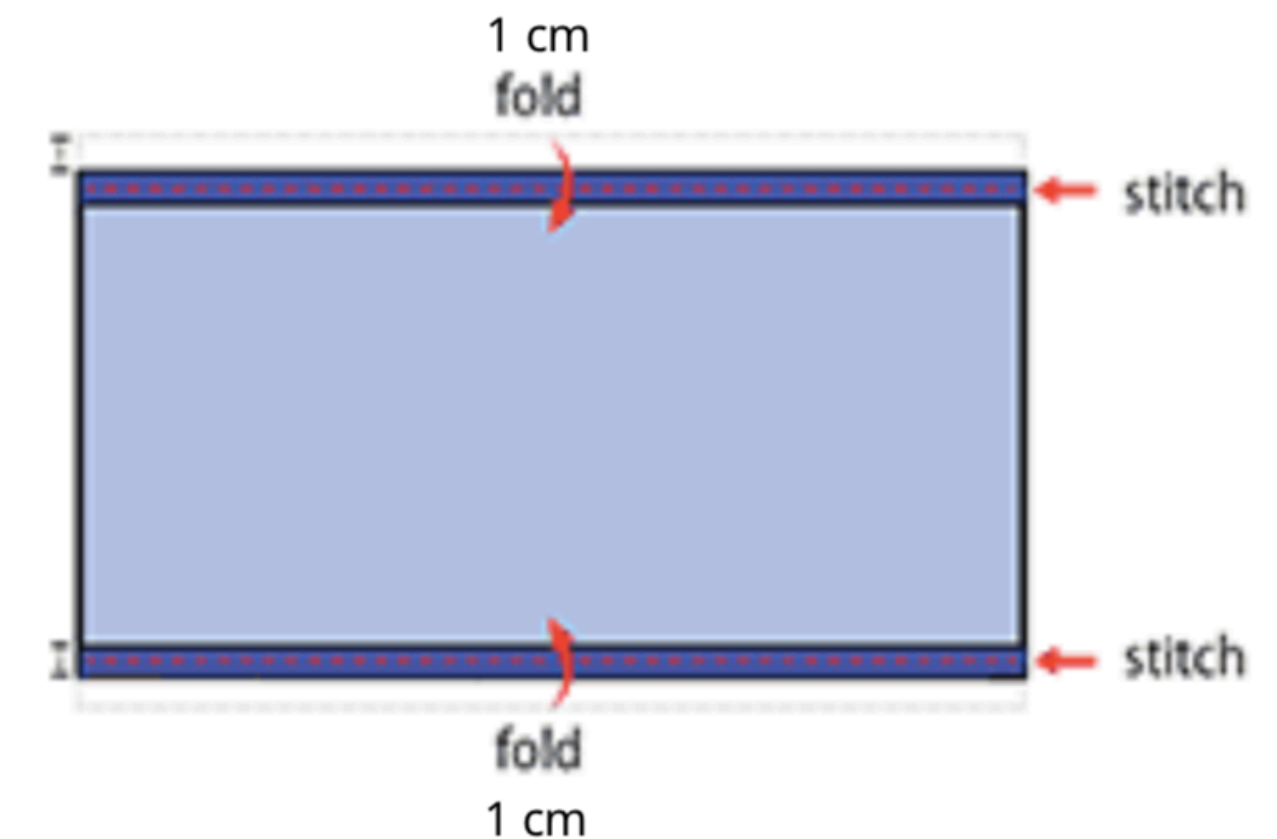
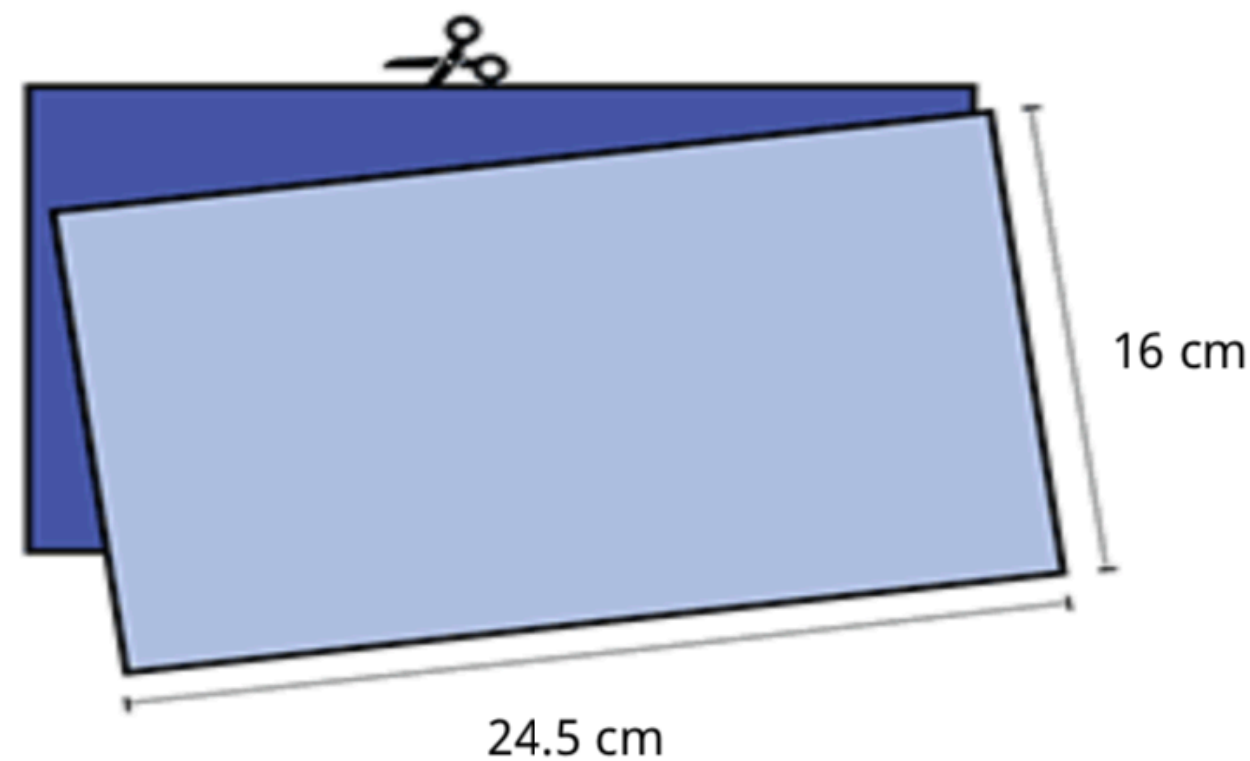
## Sewn Cloth Face Mask

\*This mask is for personal use only. It is not medical grade.

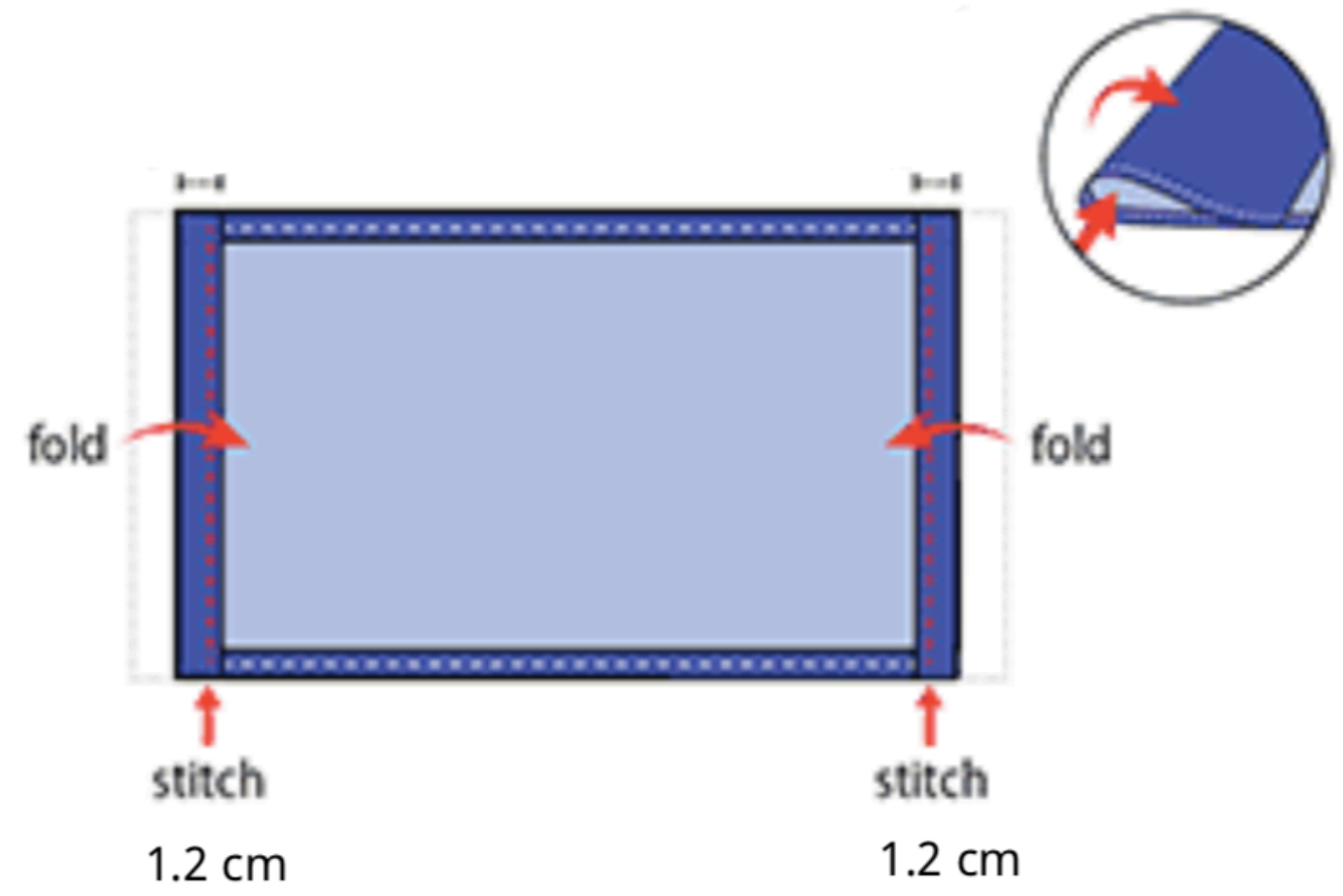
### You will need

- Two 24.5 x 16 cm rectangles of calico fabric
- One 24.5 x 16 cm rectangle of coloured fabric
- Two 15cm pieces of elastic
- Needle and thread (or hair pin)
- Scissors
- Sewing machine

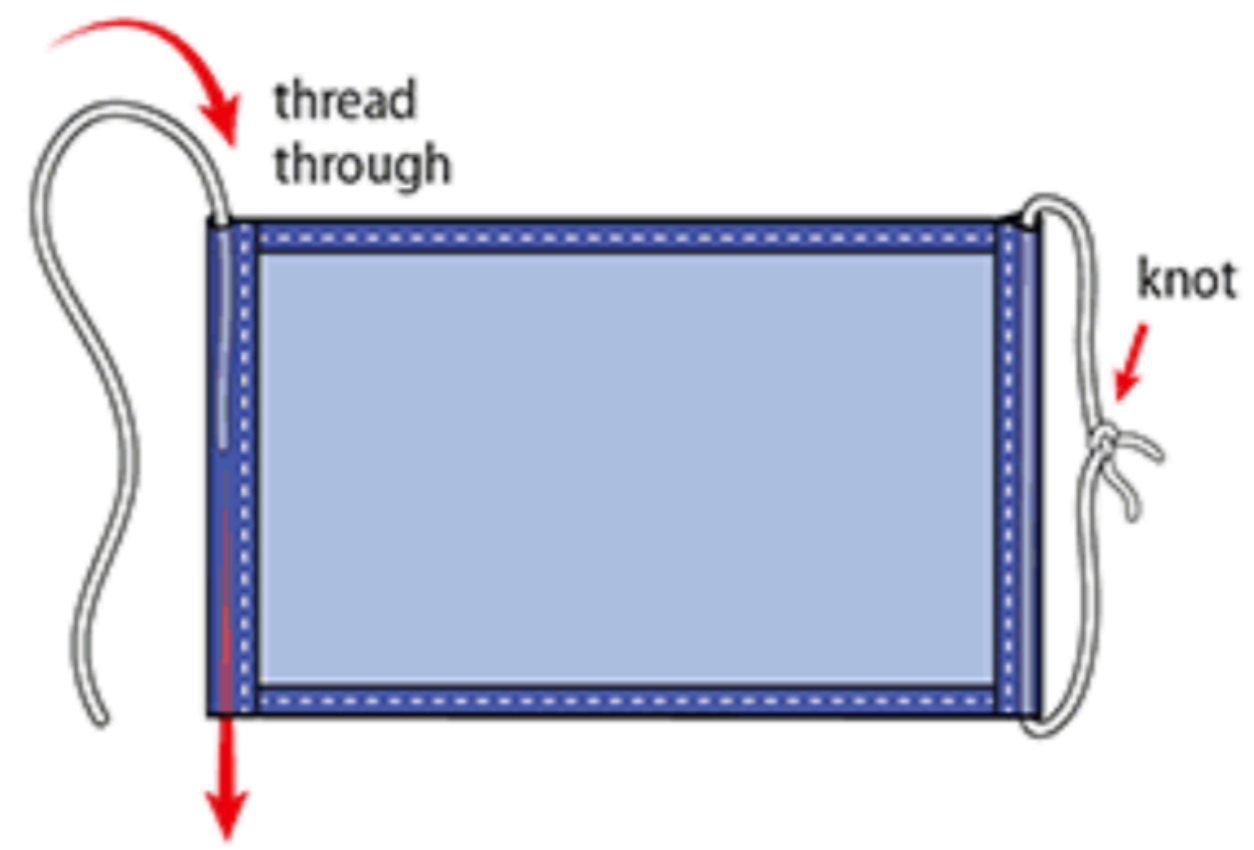
1. Cut out two 24.5 x 16 cm rectangles of Calico and one 24.5 x 16 cm rectangle of coloured fabric.
2. Stack the calico and coloured fabric on top of each other; you will sew the mask as if it was a single piece of fabric. Note that the coloured side is the outside layer of the mask. It is not the layer that you wear closest to your face.
3. Fold over the top long side 1 cm and stitch the 3 layers together. Fold over the bottom long side 1 cm and stitch the 3 layers together.



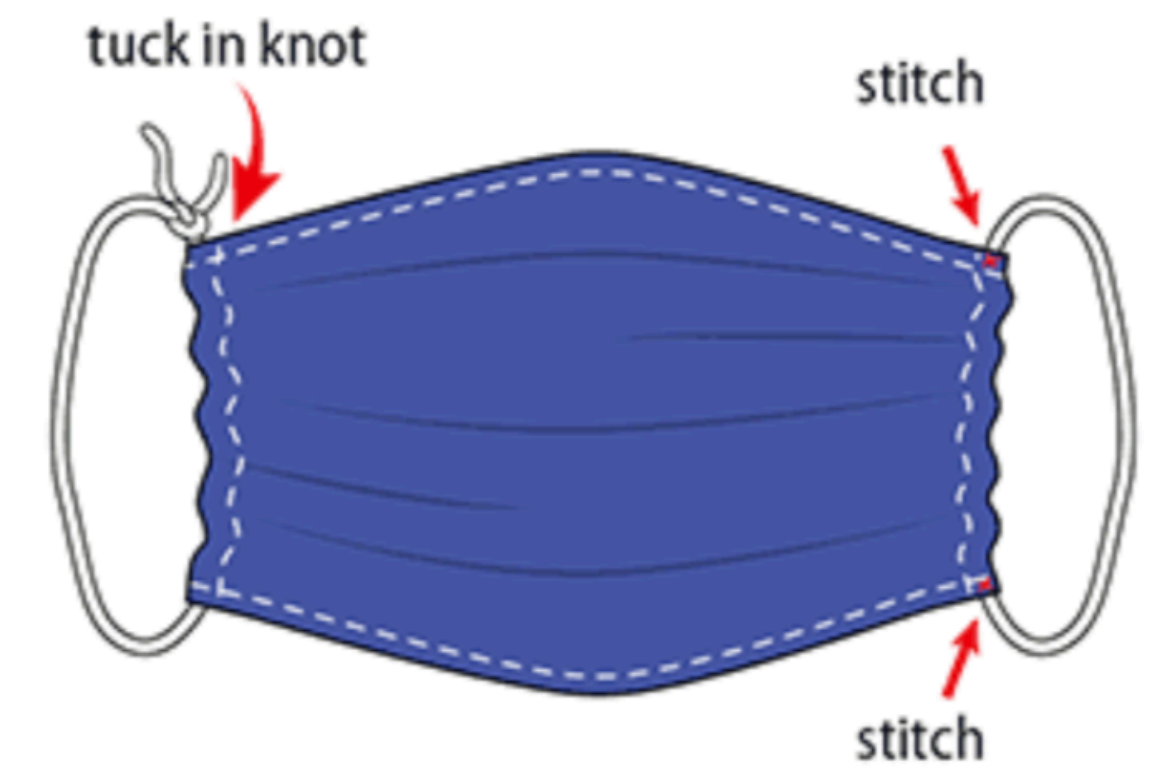
4. Then fold the triple layer of fabric over 1.2 cm along the short sides and stitch down, leaving a pocket to thread the elastic through.



5. Run a 15 cm length of elastic through the wider hem on each short side of the mask. These will be the ear loops. Use a large needle or a hair pin to thread it through. Tie the ends tight.



6. Gently pull on the elastic so that the knots are tucked inside the hem. Gather the sides of the mask on the elastic and adjust so the mask fits your face. Then securely stitch the elastic in place to keep it from slipping.





# HOW TO WEAR A FACE MASK & CARING FOR YOUR MASK

- According to the CDC, cloth face coverings should:
- fit snugly but comfortably against the side of the face;
- be secured with ties or ear loops;
- include 3 layers of fabric;
- allow for breathing without restriction;
- be able to be thoroughly washed and dried without damage or change to shape. This should occur each and every day;
- not be placed on a child below the age of two years old;
- not be placed on a person who is experiencing breathing difficulties.
  
- A cloth mask will not protect you 100% from the virus, so further precaution should be taken as per the guidelines contained within this module.

# WHAT IF YOU HAVE ANY SYMPTOMS?

- If you are feeling ill with respiratory symptoms such as dry cough and difficulty breathing or you have cold and flu symptoms, there is a chance you may have COVID-19. You must advise the health worker of your symptoms prior to your arrival at a health facility - this will help them prepare for your arrival and ensure other patients are kept away from you.



## Cough

At times, coughing can be very forceful. Prolonged, vigorous coughing can irritate the lungs and cause even more coughing.



## Fever

Fever is an increase in your body temperature, often due to an illness. Having a fever is a sign that something out of the ordinary is going on in your body.



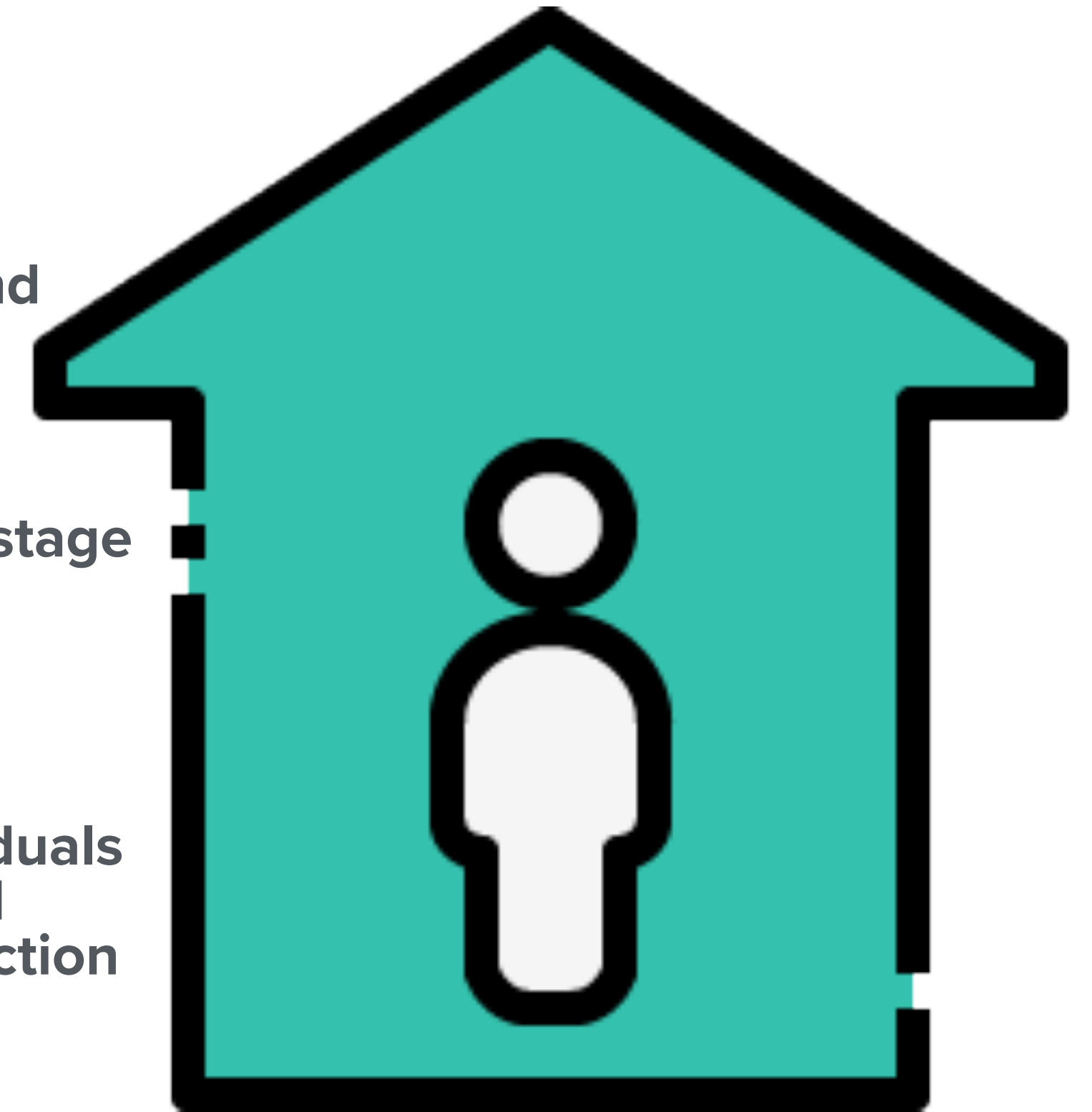
## difficulty breathing

Some people with respiratory problems can feel breathless just by doing normal activities like getting out of a chair or walking to another room.

- If there is a COVID-19 testing facility nearby, you should ask your health worker for a referral for testing immediately.
- There is currently no cure for COVID-19 but a vaccine will soon be made available to your community to prevent you from getting this disease. Your health worker will be able to prescribe paracetamol to help control the fever and sore throat. Other than this, the best thing for recovery is rest.
- If you feel ill, please stay well away from vulnerable people including the elderly (anyone aged over 70) and people with compromised immune systems (ie people with TB, malaria, HIV/AIDS).
- Rest must be undertaken in self-isolation. Self isolation is when you remove yourself from all others and quarantine in an area where you will not pass the virus on. It's important that this self isolation period lasts for 14 days

# SELF ISOLATION

- Isolation and quarantine help protect your family, the community and the public by preventing exposure to people who have or may have a contagious disease.
- Quarantine for 14 days if you have no symptoms and you:
  - Are returning from travel
  - Had close contact with someone who has or is suspected to have COVID-19.
  - Have been told by the public health authority that you may have been exposed and need to quarantine.
- Quarantine means that for 14 days you need to:
  - stay at home and monitor yourself for symptoms, even if mild.
  - avoid contact with others to help prevent transmission of the virus at the earliest stage of illness.
  - practise physical (social) distancing in your home. Try to remain in your own room wherever possible.
  - not go out in your community.
- It's important that your family members and the broader community support individuals in self-isolation. You must seek support from others to bring you food each day and encourage all community members and family members to stay away for the protection of themselves.
- Just because you are isolating because you are exhibiting symptoms of COVID-19 doesn't mean you have the virus (unless you have been tested and returned a positive result). It is with an abundance of caution you are self isolating and the community needs to understand that it is for the benefit of everyone that sick people with any respiratory illness symptoms self isolate.

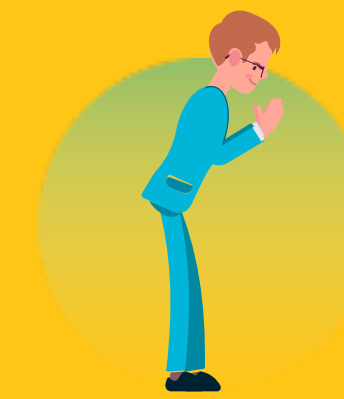


# SOCIAL DISTANCING

A term that has been relatively unheard of until now is social distancing. As we move into an uncertain future with COVID-19, experts say that the best prevention method is social distancing.

Social distancing is the practice of keeping space between each others. It is recommended that 1.5 meters (or two arm lengths) is kept between people of different households at all times. You should practice social distancing:

- at home when friends and family come to visit
- in the marketplace when selling or buying vegetables
- in the gardens
- walking in the village
- in church
- traveling to town
- shopping in town
- visiting friends and family



BOW



WAVE



NOD

Social distancing means you should also reduce or eliminate body contact with others from different households - this includes restricting hugs and embraces, kissing, hand shaking and contact sport as viruses can be passed on through body contact then individuals proceed to touch their face, causing infection. Instead, think about waving, nodding or bowing to greet others during this time.

# UNDERSTANDING THE IMPACT COVID-19 WILL HAVE ON VULNERABLE PEOPLE

- Times of crisis affect the most vulnerable in our society in distinct ways. A person is vulnerable because they have less agency or choice, or their particular characteristics mean that they will disproportionately experience the impact of harm. For people who are already vulnerable, their particular characteristics such as age, socio-economic status, availability of healthcare options or even access to clean water make them susceptible to the spread of disease. For others, unprecedented changes and restrictions on economic activity created by the coronavirus pandemic are rendering them jobless or removing the agency that they have in their employment relationship.
- **COVID-19 & Gender**  
Women and girls can experience worse health and social outcomes during a pandemic. Women are more likely to be victims of family and sexual violence (FSV) and gender based violence (GBV). Given abuse is often about power, an abuser may exploit an already stressful situation to gain more control. Early evidence from COVID-19 in several countries points to a significant rise in FSV as well as teenage pregnancies. Women are often the primary caregivers in homes, communities and health facilities, increasing their likelihood of infection.
- **COVID-19 & Disability**  
People with disabilities and people with compromised immune systems are heavily affected by COVID19. They are often excluded from communications on public health and travel updates, decision-making and information on accessibility of basic services. Their health conditions and social isolation can expose them to serious risks.
- **COVID-19 & Older People**  
Older people are extremely vulnerable to COVID-19. Older people do often not have as strong an immune system, which can make them more vulnerable to infectious disease. They are also more likely to have pre-existing conditions such as heart disease, lung disease, diabetes, or kidney disease, weakening their body's ability to fight infectious disease. Evidence for COVID-19 shows that older people are a highly vulnerable group who can get much sicker when infected by the virus and are much more likely to die .

# WHAT CAN YOU DO TO HELP VULNERABLE PEOPLE DURING THIS TIME?

- What can we do?
- Identify where vulnerable people might be in your communities.  
You may have previously undertaken work to identify vulnerable people or developed particular monitoring or equity programs to protect, support and encourage those who might otherwise be excluded or experience harm. In the COVID-19 crisis context you either need to refresh that analysis or commence this identification and assessment process. Use the principles which define vulnerability as the criteria to guide your identification of potential at-risk people or cohorts.
- Listen to vulnerable people to understand impact.  
Once you've identified who is vulnerable it is time to listen. Vulnerable people are often more vulnerable because they are not visible to decision-makers. The COVID-19 crisis introduces a new urgency to ensuring that you've created appropriate and regular listening mechanisms and that this is shaping your decisions on how to prevent or mitigate impact.
- Respond to risk or harm, making decisions for now and for the future.  
Facilitate access to services and direct COVID-19 resources for the most vulnerable people in your community. Ensure that people with a disability, women and girls, older people and other people who are vulnerable have first access to education and awareness, hygiene kits, clean water, and healthcare. If people are asked to isolate due to cold and flu symptoms, make sure they are supported during this time. Ensure that food and water and other essential supplies are delivered to their households and that they are not left to fend for themselves.
- Introduce the activities outlined in this manual to your communities and ensure access is made available to all people. Particularly focus on people with a disability, women and girls, older people, and any other vulnerable or at risk people in your community.

# COVID-19 AND DISPELLING MYTHS

- When word of a new unknown and potentially deadly virus started spreading across the world, many people were terrified. Understanding little about COVID-19, its symptoms and how to reduce risk of transmission, makes people and communities particularly vulnerable.
- Like many other countries, PNG's National Department of Health rushed to release information to the public in a rapidly changing situation. With the public knowing little about the virus, rumours and myths about COVID-19 started to rapidly circulate in the community, leading to stigmatisation and several incidences of violence towards people suspected of having COVID-19.
- At the time of writing (9th Aug. 2021), PNG has 17,774 confirmed cases of COVID-19 and 192 deaths. The government declared a national state of emergency (SoE) to slow the spread of the virus across the country, which includes similar restrictive measures to which many people around the world have become accustomed to. Schools were temporarily shut (but have since reopened), and business activities were limited and major restrictions on both international and domestic travel were put in place.
- To prevent rumours and myths from circulating, and people being stigmatised, it is critical that accurate education and awareness is undertaken, especially in remote and rural communities. Official messaging must be strengthened to promote more harmonious communities and reduce stigmatisation around COVID-19. Demonstrations should be undertaken on how to construct low-cost solutions for hand-washing infrastructure (tippy-taps), to enable more people to have the ability to wash their hands with soap.
- Misinformation about COVID-19 could kill people in PNG and the Pacific (according to the UN). It is critical that rumours and myths are dispelled immediately and that education and awareness campaigns reach everybody. Trusted, clear and effective communication and engagement approaches are critical to ensure that fear, panic and rumours do not undermine response efforts and lead to COVID-19 to spread even more quickly. There are many resources within this manual that will assist you with dispelling myths and educating your communities.

# CONTROLLING MYTHS AND RUMOURS

- Just like in any emergency, people can easily panic. Panic causes people to say things that are not based on evidence truth or science - these things are called rumours. Under times of stress, people tend to believe rumours that are said without fact checking themselves. It's important that you do your own thinking and research on information you receive regarding COVID-19 and check that what you are hearing is indeed supported by evidence and truth.
- Some of the **FALSE** myths and rumours circling around the world and throughout PNG are:
  - Just because someone is self isolating doesn't mean they certainly have the virus. These people could be self-isolating out of an abundance of caution for themselves and are ultimately protecting their community and keeping everyone safe.
  - **5G** communication towers do not spread the virus. It is scientifically impossible for viruses to spread via technology.
  - You are not immune because you have taken or are currently taking anti-malarial drugs. Please do not think that you are immune to COVID-19. No-one is immune.
  - I can't get COVID-19 because I live in a hot climate. There is no scientific evidence to suggest that the virus only spreads in cooler climates. PNG along with other tropical climates are not exempt from the virus spread.





# ONGOING AWARENESS

- It's important that as many people know about COVID-19 response strategies as possible.
- We encourage you to continue talking to others about ways in which they can keep safe.
- You are welcome to use this manual of information to pass onto others.
- On the following page you will find two great examples of awareness posters, published by the World Health Organisation.
- At the end of the day, we are all in this together.

# Reduce your risk of COVID-19



Clean your hands often

Cough or sneeze in your bent elbow – not your hands!



Avoid touching your eyes, nose and mouth

Limit social gatherings and time spent in crowded places



Avoid close contact with someone who is sick

Clean and disinfect frequently touched objects and surfaces



# Save gut long sik COVID-19



Wasim han olgeta taim

Taim yu kus, pasim maus wantaim elbo bilong yu



Noken holim pes bilong yu wantaim nus, maus na ai

Noken go long ol bikpla bung na stap longwe long ples igat planti manmeri



Stap 1m longwe long ol narapla sik manmeri husat igat kus na skin hot

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# BEYOND COVID-19

- There is life beyond COVID-19. The world will get through this pandemic - and it's important to remember this.
- It may take some time to adjust to a new normal way of living - change is difficult for everyone.
- During uncertain times like these, people can feel anxious, stressed and sad. It's important for the mental health of all people that we continue to look out for each other, now more than ever before.
- The vaccine will soon be available in PNG and this will help us to return towards more normal activities.
- Whilst restrictions will ease, it is likely that social distancing measures will need to be in place for some time, perhaps years. This doesn't mean you cannot continue enjoying a normal life. It means that you will need to make small adjustments to the way you interact with each other and move about your daily life. Overtime, this will feel more comfortable and 'normal.'



“As COVID-19 sweeps across the world causing one of the greatest health and economic crises of our time, I acknowledge the anxiety and pain that so many are feeling at this time. At KTF, we are playing our role by pivoting our entire suite of development activities towards a COVID-19 response.

No individual organisation, Government, business or initiative has the ability to address the challenges created by this crisis alone. Our strength is in our partnerships and we will overcome this by working together in a Spirit of Mateship that has underpinned our organisation since its establishment.

We are all in this together, and we will get through this together.”

Dr Genevieve Nelson, CEO, KTF



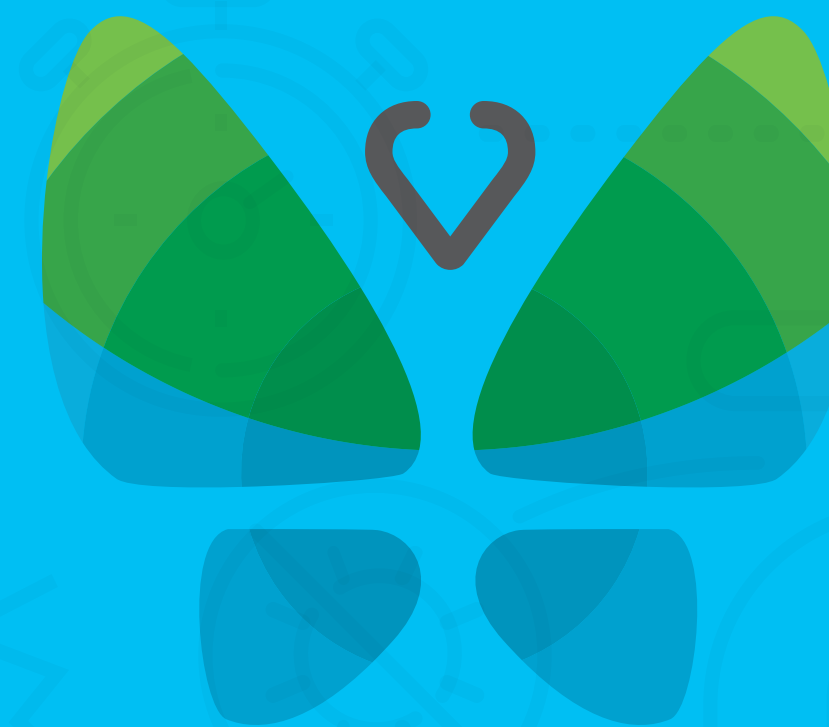
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This manual has been produced, printed and distributed by KTF, using information from the WHO, CDC and Government Health Departments of Australia, PNG and Canada. For more information on KTF's COVID-19 response, please visit [www.ktf.ngo/covid19](http://www.ktf.ngo/covid19)



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