



STANDARD OPERATING PROCEDURE FOR THE MANAGEMENT OF COVID-19 HEALTH CARE WASTE IN WESTERN CAPE HEALTH CARE FACILITIES SERVICED BY AVERDA HEALTH CARE WASTE SERVICES [WESTCOAST, GARDEN ROUTE AND CENTRAL KAROO DISTRICT]

1. PURPOSE:

The purpose of this SOP is to assist Western Cape Government Health (WCGH) facilities in managing the COVID-19 pandemic effectively by describing processes for handling (containerization), storage, transport (collection), treatment and disposal of waste generated in the treatment of patients who are infected with COVID-19.

2. DISPOSAL OF INFECTIOUS WASTE

- **No re-usable containers are to be used!!**
- The waste stream generated from isolation units/wards during the care of positive COVID-19 patients shall be treated as isolation waste.
- The waste, including PPE worn by the staff, should be discarded into the designated cardboard boxes fitted with **2 red liners (double bagged)**.
- The inner bag is to be sealed with a cable tie when $\frac{3}{4}$ full.
- The second liner must then be cable tied and the box to be closed and sealed with the tape.
- The box shall be clearly marked "**COVID-19**" and is to be taken to the facility's Health Care Risk Waste Central Storage Facility prior to collection by Averda.

3. DISPOSAL OF SHARPS

- All sharps waste such as syringes, needles, blades etc. should be discarded in an appropriate size sharps container. The most commonly used is the 5 litre sharps container.
- Seal the sharps container once $\frac{3}{4}$ full.
- Clearly mark such container "COVID-19".

4. DISPOSAL OF PHARMACEUTICAL WASTE

- COVID 19 wards/units shall be issued with a pharmaceutical waste container for the disposal of all pharmaceutical waste:
- No stock must be returned to the pharmacy – all unused stock must be discarded.
- Empty ward stock containers must be discarded into this container.
- Pharmaceutical waste container/s must be sealed when $\frac{3}{4}$ full.
- The container/s must be clearly marked "COVID-19".
- The sealed and marked containers are to be taken to the Central Storage Facility prior to collection by Averda.

5. COLLECTION, TRANSPORTATION AND TREATMENT OF COVID-19 ISOLATION WASTE

The health care facility is to forward an email to marika.human@averda.com and KBH.HealthWasteManagement@westerncape.gov.za advising the following:

- a. The number of COVID -19 sharps and other COVID 19 containers to be collected;
 - b. The number of COVID -19 cardboard box sets to be collected;
 - c. The contact person on site;
 - d. The Health Care Facility Name;
 - e. Put '**COVID-19 waste collection**' in the subject line of the email.
- On collection a separate waste manifest document shall be made available to the health care facility indicating the volumes of **COVID-19** waste removed.
 - The waste can be collected and transported with the other health care risk waste streams/categories provided it is clearly identified and marked "**COVID-19**".
 - The Health Care Waste Officers or designated representatives at the facility shall witness collection at **all times** of the waste.
 - Collection frequencies will be arranged internally between hospital/clinic representative and Averda. It is therefore crucial that COVID-19 isolation waste be routinely monitored during storage.

6. MANAGEMENT OF COVID-19 WASTE FOR PATIENTS UNDER INVESTIGATION

- The waste stream generated in units during the care of suspected COVID-19 patients shall be handled as health care risk waste.
- The waste shall be safely disposed of in doubled bagged (red liners) using the designated single use box sets and marked "Suspected COVID-19".
- A temporary room or storage area shall be identified to store such waste for "Suspected COVID-19".
- If the patient tests NEGATIVE for COVID-19, then the waste shall be handled as normal/regular health care risk waste (infectious waste) instead of isolation waste.
- If the patient tests POSITIVE for COVID-19, the waste shall be handled as isolation waste and all the other requirements as mentioned above shall be adhered to.

7. TRAINING

- Training of staff on this SOP is essential/mandatory.
- This SOP will also form part of the training program that is provided by Averda in all WCGH facilities.
- Training on this interim guideline will ensure preparedness of health care facilities, Averda and its staff and all other relevant stakeholders when managing waste generated during the COVID 19 pandemic.

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DATE: 31/1/2020