

GUIDELINES FOR QUARANTINE AT GRAM PANCHAYAT LEVEL

(For and inclusive and community led quarantine system)

With the movement of people towards the villages, as a necessary requirement for preventive care, people need to be quarantined either in their homes or some other facility dedicated for the purpose. It is however, being observed that people are still not completely aware of what quarantine actually entails and what exactly do they need to do for people who are in quarantine or those who are taking care of these people. Social behavior is also needs to be regulated to avoid any kind of stigma or prejudice against the people coming to the villages, treat them with dignity and provide access to the basic necessities – both material and socio-cultural.

HOME QUARANTINE

The following things need to be followed for those who are home quarantined:

1. The person's movement should be restricted within the house and preferably given a space of his/her own, avoiding physical contact with others in the house.
2. A separate set of utensils, bedding, clothes, etc. must be provided to them; if they are physically capable of washing their own items, they should do it on their own. If there is a caregiver, they must wear gloves while taking care of these people, later disinfecting the gloves and washing hands regularly.
3. They must wash their hands often with soap and water.
4. They must wear masks when in close proximity to others; also the people taking care of them must wear masks. The masks must be disinfected and disposed by either burning/deep burial.
5. In case of any symptoms appearing, the nearest health centre/ person in charge in the GP must be immediately informed.

6. If possible, a separate space for toilet facility should be provided for the quarantined person; where not possible, the toilet must be carefully cleaned and sanitized after use. A separate set of bucket/mug, other toiletries must be provided.
7. They should not be isolated completely. For healthy psychosocial being of these people, it is important that there is some engagement, in the form for talking, some physical activity (exercise, craft work, etc.), etc.
8. The house/ the space of quarantine must be sanitized regularly.
9. Regular checkups by the health workers must be ensured.

QUARANTINE AT PUBLIC FACILITY

At many places, people coming from outside are being quarantined at some public facility – mostly in the school premises. The following things need to be followed for those who are quarantined in these public facilities:

1. Separate bedding is provided for each person and they are placed with a minimum 2 meters distance.
2. Masks and gloves are provided to them and their care givers.
3. A separate set of utensils, bedding, clothes, etc. must be provided to them; if they are physically capable of washing their own items, they should do it on their own. If there is a caregiver, they must wear mask and gloves while taking care of these people, later disinfecting the gloves and washing hands regularly.
4. A mechanism for regular cleaning and sanitizing the toilet facilities must be done. Separate toilets for different sexes must be there. Gender segregated facilities need to be ensured. At present, there are no reports of individuals belonging to transgender community being in quarantine centres, or being tested or even being among the patients. This cannot be ignored and must be looked into, if there are transgendered persons being quarantined, appropriate facilities to be given according to their needs.
5. A mechanism for their meals has to be developed (whether each is given tiffin from their individual homes or meal service is developed by hiring a cook from the village or something like a community kitchen is developed).
6. A separate station for hand washing to be kept, which also must be sanitized regularly.
7. They are not to be treated with any kind of prejudice of carrying an infection but need to be treated with care and proper supervision and facilities.
8. In the evenings, there may be some cultural activities, discussions arranged so that they remain engaged and not socially excluded for their psychosocial well-being. However, the person's movement should be restricted within the premises and all activities must be done with maintaining physical distancing.

Managing quarantine centres with a humanitarian approach

It is necessary that the quarantine time for people, doesn't feel like they have been captivated within a confined space or they are being punished. First of all, a local name should be given to the centres that sounds more approachable and in the local language. As mentioned, socio-cultural activities to be planned as form of recreation so that their stay is comfortable. This doesn't mean a strict time table is developed, but activities can be planned in a flexible manner. The people themselves can decide what activities they might enjoy and do while maintaining physical distance from each other. This would make the process community led as well. Generally, the following activities may be carried out:

1. In the mornings, there may be a prayer (or song), not specific to a particular community but a more general/ neutral song that speak more about humanity and social cohesion and the important announcements regarding COVID-19 can be done.
2. Newspaper reading can be done, when everyday different people can read out the main headlines to the rest of the people.
3. There may be sessions of storytelling and experience sharing by the people, along with songs.
4. Special sessions may be arranged by the PRI members for explaining the issues related to high risk behavior and general do's and don'ts for precautions against COVID-19.
5. Similarly, this time may be used as an opportunity to orient the people on welfare schemes, democracy, issues of social exclusion and the importance of social cohesion and harmony, workers' rights, gender issues, environment and climate change. Making this a participatory process is important.
6. Orienting the people on the function of local entrepreneurship from agriculture, dairy, etc. may also be taken up.
7. It is also important to build women leadership in the GPs, so that they can address the gender specific needs and issues of women in quarantine.
8. Books and radio may be provided to the people in quarantine for their engagement and entertainment.
9. Activities for skill updation may be arranged, depending on interests of the people in a gender appropriate manner.
10. Exercise or yoga may be promoted as an activity for healthy lifestyle.
11. At the end of each day, the people may decide on what activities they want to the next day to break the monotony of activities.



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