



ANZCA and FPM CPD Program

COVID-19 airway management ER session guideline

Purpose

This guideline assists hospitals, private practice groups and other course providers develop and conduct COVID-19 airway management Emergency Response (ER) sessions. It defines the learning objectives and other requirements for education providers to become recognised COVID-19 airway management ER providers for the purposes of the [ANZCA and FPM CPD program](#).

For CPD participants, this guideline provides information on what recognised COVID-19 airway management ER sessions involve and how to record this activity.

Related documents

1. [COVID-19 ER activity recognition of suitability application form](#)
Course providers must apply for college recognition of your session as a suitable COVID-19 airway management ER activity for the ANZCA and FPM CPD program. Providers are encouraged to develop sessions that also satisfy local needs, incorporating local staff, work environments and equipment.

Importance of COVID-19 airway management ER education

The COVID-19 pandemic has emerged as a significant disease requiring the skills of airway experts. The highly infectious nature of this disease and the high rates of morbidity and mortality for healthcare workers adds to the complexity of clinical management.

Specialists are well placed to lead clinical management. Anaesthetists have the practical skills required to initiate and maintain the airway in the critically compromised.

The adaptive skills needed to limit spread of the disease have required additional education, thus, the addition of a specialised Emergency response.

Numerous factors are recognised that pose challenges to anaesthetists in this situation, including:

- Uncertainty as to when to identify a COVID-19 positive patient;
- Lack of familiarity with surgical airway techniques;
- Inadequate access to appropriate equipment; and
- Underdeveloped skills in leading a team in this crisis.

Definitions

The following terms are used in this guideline and defined here. Alternative definitions may be used in COVID-19 airway management workshops, however providers should demonstrate that these have equivalent meaning.

COVID-19 assumes both known and suspected patients are infected with the virus. According to the World Health Organisation Coronavirus disease (COVID-19) is an infectious disease caused by a newly discovered coronavirus. The COVID-19 virus spreads primarily through droplets of saliva or discharge from the nose when an infected person coughs or sneezes.

Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) is essential for maximum personal and patient protection.

Recommended resources

Recognised emergency algorithms

Currently, ANZCA does not exclusively endorse any one emergency algorithm for COVID-19 situations. The ANZCA Library has established the following clinical resources that may be useful for airway management and infection control and PPE, accessible by [clicking here](#).

Session format

This activity requires ANZCA and FPM CPD participants to complete a recognised education session, with acceptable formats including practical simulations, workshops or online learning resources.

Learning objectives

Scope of COVID-19 airway management ER sessions

By the end of the education session, participants will be able to:

1. Apply locally appropriate criteria to recognise when a COVID-19 situation has arisen.
2. Communicate clearly to others that a COVID-19 situation exists.
3. Follow the steps and decision-making points in a COVID-19 airway management protocol.
4. Be familiar with PPE, equipment and procedures relevant to the preferred emergency algorithm. Particular attention should be given to the selection of appropriate available personnel to perform airway management, use of negative pressure rooms, recognising the 'hot zone', appropriate technique for donning and doffing of PPE, use of videolaryngoscopy, use of a viral airway filter, and consideration of ethical decision making regarding front-of-neck access in COVID-19 patients.
5. Direct/lead the team in an emergency response for COVID-19.
6. Recognise that non-technical and teamwork skills, as well as initiation of management protocols, are vital to the management of a COVID-19 situation.

Optional learning objectives

Education session providers may elect to expand the focus of teaching to include additional objectives if it is deemed that this would facilitate more effective teaching for the particular target audience. Suggestions for consideration include:

- Recognise the non-technical and teamwork competencies that have a positive impact in evolving COVID-19 crises, and employ strategies to utilise them
- Discuss the role of cognitive aids in the management of COVID-19 situations
- Recognise the role of human centred design as it relates to emergency equipment and hospital systems
- Recognise the relationship of COVID-19 to anaesthesia related mortality, and the major risk factors for COVID-19.

Session structure

1. Education should be provided by ANZCA fellows skilled in airway management.
2. Education should include written and practical skill sessions.
3. There are no current recommendations for duration of training in these skills due to the rapidly evolving nature of management protocols. Further refinement once efficacy is measurable will be incorporated into the recommended structure.
4. Utilise the following equipment:
 - models of the neck allowing practice of infraglottic airway placement;
 - oxygen for oxygen delivery for infraglottic airway access / front-of-neck access; and
 - equipment relevant to preferred emergency algorithms
5. Course directors who wish to record information relating to the performance or conduct of participants must obtain written consent and adhere to the privacy policies of their organisation

and location. ANZCA does not collect this information and it is optional for the course provider and director to do so.

Session materials

The following materials (in hard or electronic format) may be provided to facilitators and/or participants as relevant:

- Facilitator guide (including equipment list, scenario outlines)
- Participant list (date, venue, participant names)
- Session learning objectives and outline
- Covid-19 airway management algorithms handout
- Session evaluation form (feedback from participants)
- Certification of completion, including ANZCA recognition code and session duration in hours (must be provided to participants).

ANZCA and FPM CPD portfolio recording

Participants record this activity under

- Category 3 *Emergency response: COVID-19 airway management ER* with the Certificate of completion uploaded as evidence.

Facilitators who are also CPD participants record this activity under

- Category 3 *Emergency response: COVID-19 airway management ER* with confirmation of facilitation uploaded as evidence.

Change control register

Version	Author/s	Reviewed by	Approved by	Approval date	Sections modified
1	Dr Debra Devonshire	CPD team	CPD Committee	2020	Created
2		CPD team L Roberts		2023	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Updated branding • Incorporated change control register