3.03 - Transportation of Patients with an Emerging Infectious Disease (EID) or a Possible EID

Purpose: To minimize the risk of transmission of an EID to transportation personnel, Healthcare Workers (HCWs), other UTMB personnel, volunteers, visitors and other patients during transportation of EID patients to areas of the hospital outside of the unit where they are hospitalized.

Audience: Transportation personnel, HCWs and other UTMB employees.

Policy Statement:

I. The number of transportation personnel who transport EID patients on each shift will be limited based on the numbers of EID patients in the hospital.

   A. All personnel who transport patients will be trained in All Barrier Precautions (ABP) isolation procedures and decontamination of transportation equipment.
   B. The numbers of transportation personnel who transport EID patients will be adjusted upward or downward in consultation with the Department of Healthcare Epidemiology.

II. Procedures for picking up the EID patient to be transported

   A. On arrival to the patient's room, the transporter will follow the instructions on the isolation sign on the door of the patient's room.*
   B. All Barrier Precautions procedures will be followed.
   C. The conveyance vehicle will be draped with a clean sheet.
   D. The transport employee will don an N-95 mask (fit tested), goggles and 2 gowns and 2 pairs of gloves.
   E. A surgical mask and a clean gown will be placed on the patient, and the patient will perform hand hygiene.
   F. After the patient has been placed on the stretcher or in the wheelchair, the sheet will be wrapped around the patient.
   G. After moving the patient to the door, the transport person will remove <u>one pair of gloves and one gown</u> and discard them in the room.
   H. The patient will then be moved from the room for transport.

   * If the number of patients exceeds the number of isolation rooms during a pandemic, all healthcare workers will use ABPs when in contact with all patients.

III. Restricted pathways for transport of EID patients

A. During transport, prior to entering an elevator, all passengers will be asked to exit the elevator.

B. On arrival at the destination, the transport person will wait outside for personnel at the destination to arrive. Personnel at the destination will already have donned an N-95 mask (fit tested), goggles, gown and gloves.

C. The transport person will assist in moving the patient from the stretcher or wheelchair to the appropriate surface in the receiving department.

D. The transporter will remain at the site to which the patient was transported.

E. The transporter will remove gloves, goggles, gown and mask. Goggles, gloves, gown and mask will be placed in regular trash. Bags for disposal of trash will be located with the EID cart for the department to which the patient was transported. The transport person will decontaminate their hands with an alcohol hand rub.

F. Prior to assisting with placement of the patient back onto the transport vehicle, the transport person will don an N-95 mask (fit tested), goggles, gown and gloves.

IV. Transporting an EID patient from a department in the hospital back to the nursing unit where they are hospitalized.

A. After the patient has been placed on the vehicle, the sheets will be folded over the patient.

B. The transport person will check to see that the patient is wearing a surgical mask prior to departure. If the patient's mask is not covering mouth and nose, it will be adjusted. If the patient does not have a mask, one will be placed on the patient prior to departure.

C. After arrival at the unit, the transporter will move the patient into his/her room, close the door and assist staff from the unit with moving the patient back into bed.

1. The transport vehicle will be moved to the door.
2. The transporter will place the sheet(s) into the laundry bag, in the room.
3. The transport person will then remove his/her gloves, goggles and gown, discarding them in the trash bag in the room.
4. The person from Transportation will then push the transport vehicle, out of the room taking care to avoid contact with the stretcher with any part of their body other than their hands.

The transporter will then wash hands with an antiseptic soap and water or apply an alcohol hand rub.

5. The transport person will then remove the mask, discard it appropriately and then wash hands again or apply an alcohol hand rub.
6. The transport vehicle will then be decontaminated.

V. Decontamination of transport equipment

A. Wearing a gown and gloves, the transport person will apply a hospital grade disinfectant to all surfaces of the stretcher or wheelchair.

1. Stretcher
   a. All surfaces of the pad
   b. Metal surfaces under and around the pad
   c. Slide rails
   d. Handles
   e. Any other surfaces touched by the hands of transportation personnel
2. Wheelchair
   a. Seat and seat back surfaces
   b. Arms of the chair
   c. Surfaces on wheels
   d. Handles used to push the wheelchair
   e. Outside surfaces of the seatback
   f. Any other surfaces touched by the hands of transportation personnel

B. If the equipment has been soiled, the surfaces involved will first be cleaned with a detergent and water and allowed to dry prior to application of the disinfectant. After cleaning a surface that is soiled, gloves should be changed before application of the disinfectant.

C. After disinfection of the transport vehicle, the person will remove their gloves, and gown and discard them in the regular trash. They will then wash their hands with antimicrobial soap and water or apply an alcohol hand rub.