

STANDARD OPERATING PROCEDURE (SOP) FOR PAIRED NASOPHARYNGEAL SWAB (NPS) SAMPLE OF COVID-19 FOR HEALTH CARE WORKERS (HCW) DURING COVID-19 PANDEMIC

COVID-19 has spread at a rapid rate on a global scale. The spread has been seen in many work places including health facilities. HCWs are the critical workforce in maintaining health service for people during the pandemic.

In the current guideline of COVID-19 Management in Malaysia (5th Edition), it is stated that two samples taken 48 hours apart, should both be negative before allowing them to work. To improve efficiency of sample collection and testing as well results reporting, the following SOP is used.

Steps in providing paired NPS samples of COVID-19

1. Collect NPS as 1st sample three days post exposure (Day 3) using Viral Transport Media (VTM).
2. The samples will be kept at 4⁰C in a fridge at laboratory either in hospital or health clinic.
3. 2nd sample of NPS to be collected 48 hours after the 1st sample (Day 5) from the same HCW using another VTM.
4. Paired NPS samples (1st and 2nd sample) in respective VTM then to be sent to testing laboratory.

5. One single result will be reported by the testing laboratory.
6. Priority will be given to HCW's sample at the laboratory (sample should be tagged as HCW at the requesting facility).

**In the event post exposure is known only after Day 3, the first sample should be taken immediately followed by a second sample 48 hours later. The rest of the steps remain the same.*

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