

SOCIETY OF GYNAECOLOGY AND OBSTETRICS OF NIGERIA (SOGON)



SOGON ADVICE ON SARS-COV-19 (COVID-19) INFECTION- PRACTICE GUIDANCE FOR MEMBERS

Background- 27th March 2020

COVID-19 pandemic is still ongoing and has destabilized many countries from the exponential rate of spread of the infection.

In many countries, hospitals and medical staffs are working assiduously and are completely overwhelmed. Significant disruptions of community life are occurring daily. Since the disease was reported in late 2019 in Wuhan, Hubei Province of China, the infection has since spread all over the world. There have been numbers of practice guidance from notable organizations including the World Health Organization (WHO), medical specialties and other professional organizations across the world. This practice guidance from the Society of Gynaecology and Obstetrics of Nigeria (SOGON) is being issued to further assist members as they carry out their peculiar responsibility of caring for women in health and disease, even in these difficult times. The guidance is subject to change from time to time as the pandemic evolves. SOGON also advise its members to adhere to specific policy guidelines issued by the Nigerian Governments (Federal and State) and specialized agencies like the Nigeria Centre for Disease Control (NCDC).

Nigeria is currently in the containment mode and every effort is geared towards prevention of spread.

PRACTICE GUIDANCE TO SOGON MEMBERS

Duty rosters should be reorganized to take into consideration the effects of lockdowns and difficulty in mobility. Staff duty arrangements into teams to work on shifts could be a consideration. Those not on duties should maintain strict social distancing at home.

At present there is no evidence of preponderance risk of COVID-19 infection during pregnancy. Furthermore, there is no evidence of vertical transmission of coronavirus infection to the fetus and risk of teratogenicity of SARS-COV2 infection during pregnancy. No evidence of adverse effects of COVID-19 infection during pregnancy and neonatal complications, from coronavirus infection, following delivery by infected mothers. Therefore, all that needs to be done in the management of pregnant women with suspected or proven cases of the disease, is routine management with attention

to the existing guidelines for personal and respiratory hygiene as well as social distancing. This should be done in designated health facilities where facilities for the care of such patients are available.

SOGON will continue to monitor the evolution of the COVID-19 pandemic and advise accordingly in tandem with the WHO, national and state governments and specialized agencies like the NCDC.

Antenatal and Gynaecological clinics

Medical consultations and advice over telephones should be instituted for non-emergencies to prevent unnecessary hospital visits.

In this respect, it is advisable that clinic appointments should be sufficiently spaced to avoid congestion in the outpatient departments to prevent person to person coronavirus transmission.

SOGON advise that for logistics reasons, observance of social distancing/lockdowns, staff shortages, inability to commute to and from the clinics/hospitals, the decision to stop or postpone certain non-essential clinical services should be a local clinic management decision in consonance with directives from the government and NCDC. Of importance is the welfare of our patients and staffs, which should not be compromised.

It is recommended that all units engage in drills to facilitate timely and appropriate response when necessary.

Overcrowding in waiting rooms should be avoided, therefore, patient appointments should be spaced enough to avoid this. During consultations staff should keep a safe distance from the patients and between patients.

Application of universal precautions for all infectious diseases should be observed at any point in time when the health worker comes close to patients.

Before and after consultations hand washing with soap, in addition to hand sanitizers by patients and hospital staff should be strongly encouraged.

It is pertinent to check body temperatures, ask about travel history e.g. recent return from Europe, China or USA and whether the patients have symptoms e.g. fever, cough. Where there is reasonable ground for suspicion that the patient has risk factors, it is recommended that further evaluation be done in a separate area of the clinic that does not expose other screened patients.

Those with significant risk of infection and/or overtly with COVID-19 disease should be referred to fully prepared hospitals as advised by our governments and NCDC.

Pregnancy emergencies and labour

SOGON members should continue to attend to emergencies for pregnant women whether in labour or not and carry out planned elective caesarean sections.

Application of universal precautions for all infectious diseases should be observed at any point in time when the health worker comes close to patients.

Usual management protocols and practice guidelines in emergencies such as premature rupture of membranes, preterm labour, antepartum haemorrhage, post partum haemorrhage, etc are to be maintained.

There is no need to interfere with the routine labour and puerperal process and management.

Care of COVID-19 patients

SOGON advise that for patients with confirmed COVID-19, those testing positive or those with risk factors for the disease, appropriate referrals to designated hospitals, for diagnostic tests and/or for proper management should be made expediently. This should be in conjunction with policy guidelines from NCDC on response and management of suspected or patients with diagnosis of COVID-19.

These patients should be managed in designated places in these hospitals and confirmatory tests can be performed for suspicious cases.

The Infectious Disease team in hospitals where these patients are to be managed should be informed and invited.

*****For more information for Health Care Professionals on the Management of Coronavirus (COVID-19) in Pregnancy visit the SOGON Website at www.sogon.org**

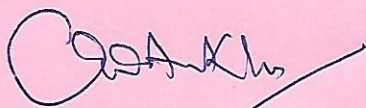
Gynaecology Surgeries

It is advisable that all elective gynaecological surgeries should preferably be postponed.

SOGON COVID-19 guidance updates and practice advice as it relates to our profession will come from time to time and as deemed necessary.

Thank you.

Yours sincerely,



Dr. Chris O. Aimakhu
Secretary General, SOGON

