

4. Infection prevention and control precautions

Standard infection control precautions (SICPs) and transmission based precautions (TBPs) must be used when managing patients with suspected or confirmed COVID-19.

4.1 Standard infection control precautions (SICPs) definition

Standard infection control precautions (SICPs) are the basic infection prevention and control measures necessary to reduce the risk of transmission of infectious agents from both recognised and unrecognised sources. Sources include blood and other body fluids, secretions and excretions (excluding sweat), non-intact skin or mucous membranes, and any equipment or items in the care environment. SICPs should be used by all staff, in all care settings, at all times, for all patients.

4.2 Transmission Based Precautions (TBPs) definition

Transmission based precautions (TBPs) are applied when SICPs alone are insufficient to prevent cross transmission of an infectious agent. TBPs are additional infection control precautions required when caring for a patient with a known or suspected infectious agent. TBPs are categorised by the route of transmission of the infectious agent:

4.3 Routes of transmission:

- **Contact precautions:** Used to prevent and control infection transmission via direct contact or indirectly from the immediate care environment (including care equipment). This is the most common route of infection transmission.
- **Droplet precautions:** Used to prevent and control infection transmission over short distances via droplets ($>5\mu\text{m}$) from the respiratory tract of one individual directly onto a mucosal surface or conjunctivae of another individual. Droplets penetrate the respiratory system to above the alveolar level. The maximum distance for cross transmission from droplets has not been definitively determined, although a distance of approximately 1 metre (3 feet) around the infected individual has frequently been reported in the