GOVERNMENT OF NAGALAND  
DIRECTORATE OF HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE  
NAGALAND : KOHIMA

NO. DHFW/COVID-19/2019-20/ 1245-47  Dated Kohima, the 12th May, 2020

To,

The CMO / MS  
Dimapur / Kiphire / Kohima / Longleng / Mokokchung / Mon / Peren / Phek / Tuensang / Wokha / Zunheboto

Subject: **Discharge Policy for COVID-19 positive cases**

Sir/Madam,

Please find herewith the ‘Revised Discharge Policy for COVID-19’ and ‘Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs) on Revised Discharge Policy’, issued by Ministry of Health and Family Welfare, Government of India. As per Nagaland state policy, all COVID-19 confirmed cases are to be admitted in COVID Hospitals. Therefore, although the infrastructure arrangement and nomenclature may be different from that of GOI (COVID Care Centre, Dedicated COVID Health Centre, etc), based on the clinical condition of the patient, the discharge policy in the State will be as per the MoHFW policy as enclosed. This is for your information and necessary action.

Yours faithfully

(DR. VIZOLIE Z. SUOKHRIE)  
Principal Director  
Directorate of Health and Family Welfare  
Nagaland : Kohima  

Dated Kohima, the 12th May, 2020

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Copy to:  
1. The State Surveillance Unit, IDSP Nagaland for information  
2. The District Surveillance Unit, IDSP of all districts for information and necessary action  
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(DR. VIZOLIE Z. SUOKHRIE)  
Principal Director  
Directorate of Health and Family Welfare  
Nagaland : Kohima
Revised Discharge Policy for COVID-19

The revised discharge policy is aligned with the guidelines on the 3 tier COVID facilities and the categorization of the patients based on clinical severity (Available at: https://www.mohfw.gov.in/pdf/FinalGuidanceonMangementofCovidcasesversion2.pdf)

1. Mild/very mild/pre-symptomatic cases

Mild/very mild/pre-symptomatic cases admitted to a COVID Care Facility will undergo regular temperature and pulse oximetry monitoring. The patient can be discharged after 10 days of symptom onset and no fever for 3 days. There will be no need for testing prior to discharge.

At the time of discharge, the patient will be advised to follow the home isolation for further 7 days as per guidelines available at (https://www.mohfw.gov.in/pdf/GuidelinesforHomeIsolationofverymildpresymptomaticCOVID19cases.pdf).

At any point of time, prior to discharge from CCC, if the oxygen saturation dips below 95%, patient is moved to Dedicated COVID Health Centre (DCHC).

After discharge from the facility, if he/she again develops symptoms of fever, cough or breathing difficulty he will contact the COVID Care Centre or State helpline or 1075. His/her health will again be followed up through tele-conference on 14th day.

2. Moderate cases admitted to Dedicated COVID Health Centre (Oxygen beds)

2.1. Patients whose symptoms resolve within 3 days and maintains saturation above 95% for the next 4 days

Cases clinically classified as “moderate cases” will undergo monitoring of body temperature and oxygen saturation. If the fever resolve within 3 days and the patient maintains saturation above 95% for the next 4 days (without oxygen support), such patient will be discharged after 10 days of symptom onset in case of:

- Absence of fever without antipyretics
- Resolution of breathlessness
- No oxygen requirement

There will be no need for testing prior to discharge.
At the time of discharge, the patient will be advised to follow the home isolation for 7 days as per guidelines available at https://www.mohfw.gov.in/pdf/GuidelinesforHomeIsolationofverymildpresymptomaticCOVID19case s.pdf).

2.2. Patient on Oxygenation whose fever does not resolve within 3 days and demand of oxygen therapy continues

Such patients will be discharged only after
- resolution of clinical symptoms
- ability to maintain oxygen saturation for 3 consecutive days

3. Severe Cases including immunocompromised (HIV patients, transplant recipients, malignancy)

Discharge criteria for severe cases will be based on
- Clinical recovery
- Patient tested negative once by RT-PCR (after resolution of symptoms)

![Revised Discharge Policy for COVID-19](https://www.mohfw.gov.in/pdf/GuidelinesforHomeIsolationofverymildpresymptomaticCOVID19cases.pdf)
Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs) on Revised Discharge Policy, dated 8th May, 2020

A revised discharge policy for COVID-19 cases was issued by MoHFW on 8th May, 2020. (Available at: https://www.mohfw.gov.in/pdf/ReviseddischargePolicyforCOVID19.pdf). The policy was prepared in consultation with ICMR and is in line with the MoHFW’s guidelines on the categorization of the patients based on clinical severity and their management in the 3 tier COVID facilities (Available at: https://www.mohfw.gov.in/pdf/FinalGuidanceonMangementofCovidcasesversion2.pdf).

FAQs

1. **What was earlier criteria for discharging COVID-19 patients**

   The earlier criteria for discharging rt-PCR positive were (a) chest radiograph has cleared and (b) two consecutive negative test results on rt-PCR.

2. **What is the new discharge policy for COVID-19 patients?**

   **For mild/very mild/pre-symptomatic cases**
   - Patient can be discharged after 10 days of symptom onset and no fever for 3 days
   - No need for testing prior to discharge
   - Patient will be advised to follow home isolation for a further 7 days after discharge

   **For moderate cases**
   - Patient can be discharged (a) if asymptomatic for 3 days and (b) after 10 days of symptom onset
   - No need for testing prior to discharge
   - Patient will be advised to follow home isolation for a further 7 days after discharge

   **For severe cases**
   - Clinical recovery
   - Patient tested negative once by RT-PCR (after resolution of symptoms)

3. **Why was the discharge policy changed?**

   Several countries have changed the criteria for discharge from ‘test based strategy to ‘symptom based strategy’ or ‘time based strategy’. A review of ICMR laboratory surveillance data also indicated that after initial rt-PCR positive results, patients became negative after a median duration of 10 days. Recent studies have also suggested that the viral load peaks in the pre-symptomatic period (2 days before symptoms) and goes down over the next 7 days.

4. **How then it will be established that a patient is cured of the disease?**

   Being cured of a disease may have different connotations for general public, treating doctors and the virologists. Unless there is a fear of resurgence of infection and subsequent transmissibility of an infection, resolution of clinical manifestation is usually taken as an evidence for cure.
5. Is there a risk of transmission from patients discharged based on the revised criteria?

Available evidence does not indicate any increase in the risk of transmission from patients discharged based on the revised discharge criteria. The revised criterion also specifies that such patients will follow home isolation for a further 7 days.

6. What precautions the patient should undertake during home isolation?

It has to be remembered that provision for home isolation of pre-symptomatic/very mild/mild confirmed cases of COVID-19 has been made, provided that such patients are assessed to be eligible for the same in terms of their clinical status and feasibility to successfully isolate in home environment settings. This should be done after signing a self-declaration form by the patient.

Such patients (with no co-morbidities) should at all times use triple layer medical mask. Patient must stay in the identified room and away from other people in home, especially elderlies and those with co-morbid conditions like hypertension, cardiovascular disease, renal disease etc. They should maintain strict personal hygiene and self-monitor his/her health with daily temperature monitoring and report promptly if develops any deterioration of symptom.

Detailed eligibility criteria and advisory for such patients is available at https://www.mohfw.gov.in/pdf/RevisedguidelinesforHomeisolationofverymildpresymptomaticCOVID19cases10May2020.pdf

7. Is there a need to get tested after the home isolation period is over?

No. As per the latest revised discharge policy, there is no need for testing prior to discharge all pre-symptomatic/very mild/mild confirmed cases of COVID-19 after 10 days of symptom onset and no fever for 3 days. Therefore it stands to reason, that no testing is also needed for patients undergoing home isolation (pre-symptomatic/very mild/mild confirmed cases) after the home isolation period is over.

8. What does the current discharge policy mean for patients who are being home isolated?

As detailed above, as far as testing is concerned, there is no need for testing after the home isolation period is over. However, (as the current discharge policy advises patients to remain in home isolation for a 7 days period after discharge), the period of home isolation would end after 17 (10+7) days of symptom onset and no fever for 10 (3+7) days. The Home Isolation Guidelines as at https://www.mohfw.gov.in/pdf/RevisedguidelinesforHomeIsolationofverymildpresymptomaticCOVID19cases10May2020.pdf should be strictly followed.

9. Does this policy apply to those undergoing home or facility quarantine?

Discharge policy is meant for patients (symptomatic/pre-symptomatic) diagnosed (using rt-PCR testing) to be suffering from COVID-19. Quarantine (home or facility) is meant for asymptomatic/healthy persons who may have been exposed to the COVID-19 infection but are not manifesting any symptoms. Therefore there is no question of discharge of such persons. However their stay under quarantine period will remain 14 days from the date of last exposure. The MHA Guidelines dated 5th May, 2020 as available at https://www.mha.gov.in/sites/default/files/MHA%20SOPs%20Dt.%205.5.2020%20reg%20movement%2
of Indian nationals stranded outside the country and specified persons to travel abroad.pdf should be followed.