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Cc: 'EU HEALTHY GATEWAYS 5.1.5 [redacted] 5.1.2e [redacted] @healthygateways.eu]; 'EU HEALTHY GATEWAYS 5.1.5 [redacted] 5.1.2e [redacted] @healthygateways.eu];

From: 5.1.5 [redacted]

Sent: Sun 3/29/2020 12:10:05 PM

Subject: EU HEALTHY GATEWAYS: Brief guidance on prevention strategies among flight crew in EU

Received: Sun 3/29/2020 12:12:34 PM

Dear Partners,

We received from the 5.1.2a [redacted] non-EU collaborating partners in EU HEALTHY GATEWAYS) an inquiry about recommendations for preventing COVID-19 among flight crews on duty.

We are pleased to share below the specific questions and responses provided based on EU HEALTHY GATEWAYS, European and WHO guidance for your information.

1) What personal protective equipment to wear in flight?

A) Routinely:

We recommend that all flight crew use medical masks (e.g. a face mask that is surgical or procedural) routinely for the duration of the flight if they are available, as we know there is currently an insufficient supply of PPE globally. Crew should be informed and trained on the proper use of medical masks such as how to safely put on, remove and properly dispose of them, and when to perform hand hygiene (e.g. before wearing the mask and after removing the mask). Moreover, when training crew and providing masks consideration must be given to the duration of the flight since masks should be replaced as soon as they become damp and regularly at intervals not exceeding 4 hours. Hand hygiene should also be performed frequently.

The aircraft should carry Universal Precaution Kits (UPK) on board as per ICAO standards. In addition to the Universal Precaution Kit, when operating in high-risk areas additional equipment such as medical masks (e.g. surgical or procedural) and disposable gloves should be available.

B) When a suspect COVID-19 case is identified in flight:

EU HEALTHY GATEWAYS recommends flight crew use the following PPE when attending to the ill traveller, touching body fluids or potentially contaminated surfaces:

- / Medical mask (e.g. surgical or procedural)
- / Disposable gloves
- / Goggles (or face shield)
- / Apron (or long-sleeved impermeable gown if available)

Furthermore, the ill traveller should be provided a medical mask, if tolerated and practice frequent hand hygiene.

PPE should be available in the Universal Precaution Kit (UPK) carried on board the aircraft. Crew should be trained in the proper use of PPE, such as how to safely put on, remove and dispose of used PPE and other contaminated items as infectious waste. Crew should also be guided on appropriate hand hygiene (e.g. before wearing and after removing the PPE) and practice frequently.

2) Any regulations or activity limitations to follow while staying overnight abroad?

When crew cannot avoid staying abroad overnight we advise in accordance with European Union Aviation Safety Agency (EASA) guidance that measures should be implemented (in coordination with the airport operators and local authorities) to reduce risk of exposure by contact between crew and the local population, for example:

- Not using public transport: in agreement with the airport and local authorities the transport to and from the resting facilities (hotel) will not involve transiting the public areas of the airport terminal
- A minimum separation of one seat between crew members during transportation should be done as much as possible
- Once they reach the hotel, crew should stay in their hotel room and should be provided with a packed meal, and not allowed to exit their rooms except for emergency reasons. Additional meals and drinks should be provided via the hotel's room service
- The aircraft operator should agree with the hotel that the rooms to be used by crew members are to be disinfected prior to being used

Furthermore, crew should be advised to perform frequent hand hygiene, and always after entering the hotel room or before eating.

3) Any quarantine measures implemented after mission back to their home country?

The quarantine measures that will be implemented for crew after they return back to their home country largely depends on the national policies in their home country. We advise to ensure availability of crew members and continuity of flights, especially for cargo, humanitarian, repatriation and air ambulances and encourage to avoid as much as practicable putting restrictive measures on crew members unless they have relevant symptoms and a history of direct contact with a confirmed COVID-19 case. Especially, if the crew does not disembark in a country abroad we would then advise self-monitoring for symptoms of COVID-19 and measuring body temperature at least twice a day. Guidance should be given to crew members for health self-monitoring and how to report and inform operators about potential signs of COVID-19.

Further details from EASA for management of crew members in relation to the SARS-CoV-2 pandemic can be found here:

<https://www.easa.europa.eu/document-library/general-publications/guidance-management-crew-members>

4) Additional considerations regarding social distancing

We would also mention as a general comment that ventilation and filtration of air on board aircrafts are different from the community facilities. The air exchanges and the HEPA filters on board aircrafts remove at least 99.95% of particles whose diameter is equal to 0.3 µm and this is not applied in community settings. WHO does not advice social distancing on board aircrafts:

<https://apps.who.int/iris/bitstream/handle/10665/331488/WHO-2019-nCoV-Aviation-2020.1-eng.pdf>

According to the EU HEALTHY GATEWAYS and the WHO guidelines, a symptomatic traveller and any person exposed to a case during the previous 14 days must not travel via aircrafts. This policy should be applied strictly. However, the role of asymptomatic carriers of SARS-CoV-2 to the transmission is not clear yet. As a pre-cautionary measure, we would recommend to apply social distancing on aircrafts as practical as possible when this is possible (small number of passengers on board) and to have the aircraft ventilation system in operation when crew or passengers are on board the aircraft. If PPE (medical masks) are available it could be

an additional precautionary measure for all passengers and crew. However as we said above, we are aware that there is shortage of masks even at hospitals.

With kind regards,

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Register [here](#) to our mailing list to receive the Newsletter and other updates on issues related to preparedness and action at points of entry



Virus-free. www.avast.com