



GUIDELINES AND RESEARCH UPDATES



TECHNICAL DOCUMENTS:

D1. Refugees and migrants in times of COVID-19: mapping trends of public health and migration policies and practices (WHO, 17 June) [[LINK](#)]

- This document provides an overview of the complex nexus of public health and migration policies amid the COVID-19 pandemic with the aim to inform policymakers on how the needs of refugees and migrants have been addressed in response to the pandemic. Based on the mapping of policies and practices, the report presents the policy considerations for an integrated approach to migration and public health.

D2. Hypertension and COVID-19: Scientific brief (WHO, 17 June) [[LINK](#)]

- This scientific brief summarizes the role of hypertension as a risk and prognostic factor in COVID-19, while itemizing research and knowledge gaps. It highlights the scientific evidences which suggests that hypertension increases the risk of severe COVID-19..

D3. WHO guideline on school health services (WHO, 22 June) [[LINK](#)]

- This guideline on school health services provides strong recommendation for the implementation of comprehensive school health services. This recommendation comes at a unique time in history, when COVID-19 has put so sharply in the spotlight the vital link between health and education.

D4. Indicator framework for the evaluation of the public health effectiveness of digital proximity tracing solutions (WHO, 25 June) [[LINK](#)]

- This publication discusses about the Digital proximity tracing (DPT) is a new technology that has been increasingly adopted by countries to support conventional contact tracing efforts in combating the COVID-19 pandemic. The indicator framework is designed to support the evaluation of the public health effectiveness of DPT.

D5. Recommendations for national SARS-CoV-2 testing strategies and diagnostic capacities (WHO, 25 June) [[LINK](#)]

- This document describes recommendations for national testing strategies and the use of PCR and rapid antigen tests in different transmission scenarios of the COVID-19 outbreak, including how testing might be rationalized in low resource settings. It suggests that all testing should be followed by a strong public health response including isolating those who test positive and providing them care, contact tracing and quarantine of contacts.

D6. Considerations for quarantine of contacts of COVID-19 cases (WHO, 25 June) [[LINK](#)]

- This document offers guidance on quarantine measures for individuals in the context of COVID-19. It is intended for those responsible for establishing local or national policy

for quarantine of individuals, and adherence to infection prevention and control measures.

D7. Ethical Framework for WHO's work in the ACT-Accelerator (WHO, 30 June) [[LINK](#)]

This framework has been developed in order to assist stakeholders in navigating ethical issues and dilemmas, and more broadly make value-informed decisions, arising from efforts to respond to the pandemic through the use of COVID-19 tools

JOURNAL ARTICLES

J1. Face masks, public policies and slowing the spread of COVID-19: Evidence from Canada (Journal of Health Economics, July 2021) [[LINK](#)]

- The study estimated the impact of indoor face mask mandates and other non-pharmaceutical interventions (NPI) on COVID-19 case growth in Canada. The authors observe that mask mandates are associated with a 22 percent weekly reduction in new COVID-19 cases and further added that mask mandates led to an increase of about 27% points in self-reported mask wearing in public.

J2. Comparative performance of SARS-CoV-2 lateral flow antigen tests and association with detection of infectious virus in clinical specimens: a single-centre laboratory evaluation study (The Lancet, 30 June) [[LINK](#)]

- The study evaluated six commercial LFDs (Lateral flow devices) and assessed their correlation with infectious virus culture and PCR cycle threshold (Ct) values. The study found a clear relationship between Ct values, quantitative culture of infectious virus, and antigen LFD positivity in clinical samples.

J3. Increased transmissibility and global spread of SARS-CoV-2 variants of concern as at June 2021 (EuroSurveillance, 17 June) [[LINK](#)]

- The study presents an analysis of the effective reproduction number and global spread of SARS-CoV-2 variants with data available by 3 June 2021. The analysis highlighted the global spread of SARS-CoV-2 variants and estimated their relative transmission rates. The findings suggest that B.1.617.2 variant is expected to rapidly outcompete other variants and become the dominant circulating lineage over the coming months.

J4. Risk of SARS-CoV-2 infection and subsequent hospital admission and death at different time intervals since first dose of COVID-19 vaccine administration, Italy, 27 December 2020 to mid-April 2021 (EuroSurveillance, 24 June) [[LINK](#)]

- This study assessed the risk of SARS-CoV-2 infections, as well as related hospitalizations and deaths following COVID-19 vaccination in Italy. The results suggest a significantly reduced risk of SARS-CoV-2 infection, and COVID-19 related hospitalization and death in vaccinated individuals from 2 weeks post-vaccination with a first dose compared with first 2 weeks following vaccination. Risk reduction gradually increased from week 2 post-first dose until weeks 5-6, after which it remained stable.

J5. Impact of Public Health and Social Measures on the COVID-19 Pandemic in the United States and Other Countries: Descriptive Analysis (JMIR Public Health and Surveillance, 2 June) [[LINK](#)]

- This study analyzed the epidemiological evidence for the impact of PHSMs on COVID-19 transmission in the United States and compared these data to those for 10 other countries of varying income levels, population sizes, and geographies. The findings

suggest that early implementation, consistent execution, adequate duration, and high adherence to PHSMs represent key factors of reducing the spread of COVID-19.

J6. Estimating and mitigating the risk of COVID-19 epidemic rebound associated with reopening of international borders in Vietnam: a modelling study (The Lancet, 1 July 2021) [[LINK](#)]

- The authors used epidemiological, behavioural, demographic, and policy data from the COVID-19 outbreak in Da Nang region in Vietnam to calibrate an agent-based model of COVID-19 transmission for Vietnam, and to estimate the risk of future outbreaks associated with reopening of international borders in the country. The authors conclude that successful response to COVID-19 in Vietnam could be improved even further with higher levels of symptomatic testing. If the previous approaches are used in response to new COVID-19 outbreaks, epidemic control is possible even in the presence of low levels of imported cases.

J7. Strategies to minimize SARS-CoV-2 transmission in classroom settings: Combined impacts of ventilation and mask effective filtration efficiency (Science and Technology for the Built Environment, 29 June) [[LINK](#)]

- The authors evaluated the impact of ventilation on aerosol dynamics and distribution along with the effective filtration efficiency (EFE) of four different mask types, with and without mask fitters, in a classroom setting. The modelled results provide valuable information on the effectiveness of masks, mask fitters, and ventilation rate interventions, and combinations of these, to reduce aerosol conditional infection probability in classroom settings.