

# ADD SPACES

## To your COVID ward care approach

---

**During the COVID-19 pandemic it is important to reduce the variation in individual ward/service/organisational practices and try as much as possible to adopt a shared, safe standard for staff looking after ward patients.**

**SPACES is a standardised approach to the management of ward care. It is based on the principles of “Maximum patient contact - minimum staff exposure”.**

**It gives a set of short, practical and pragmatic actions to reduce staff exposure to infection during ward work. It stands for Sharing Patient Assessments Cuts Exposure for Staff, to make it easy to remember.**

Adopting SPACES can help keeping staff safe and reduce use of the Personal Protection Equipment (PPE) required when caring for COVID-19 patients. Please follow Public Health England guidance on PPE use all times:  
[www.england.nhs.uk/coronavirus/secondary-care/prevention/personal-protective-equipment-ppe](http://www.england.nhs.uk/coronavirus/secondary-care/prevention/personal-protective-equipment-ppe)

### **What does it mean in practice?**

It helps reduce multiple entries into rooms for “standard” procedures, observations, and assessments.

Essentially, when one healthcare worker is making patient contact, s/he should deliver all the most basic aspects of care, **check position and comfort, perform symptoms assessment and reporting/documenting** during their visit, irrespective of their title. This applies to all healthcare workers, including medics, nurses, allied health professions (AHPs) and healthcare assistants (HCAs).

This is to ensure that there is no duplication (i.e. a nurse/HCA taking food trays, and shortly after a medic joining to make a clinical assessment, followed by another nurse taking observations). In this way, no further visit from other team members will be needed until a full check or action is due again.

### **Following the SPACES approach, any healthcare worker will:**

- **Bring in a new food tray and/or remove an old food tray as required**
- **Check position/comfort.**
- **Take basic observations: Pulse, Respiratory Rate (Rhythm, Effort), SpO2 with FiO2, Blood pressure (BP), Temperature (Temp).**
- **Ask the following questions: how is/how are your Cough, Breathlessness, Appetite, Fluid intake, Pain, Bowels, Passing urine?**
- **Record all observations and answers (including NEWS chart).**
- **Report patient has been seen.**

**In addition, to further reduce exposure risks, ward staff should switch to remote assessments and consultations wherever possible**, using phones, intercoms, 2-way radios and any other suitable way that reduces face-to-face contact. As long as this does not compromise the quality of care, patient safety and wellbeing.

### **Who is SPACES for?**

Everyone working on a hospital ward with suspected or proven COVID-19 cases, and particularly for multi professional teams, however we envisage this approach being applicable and beneficial to social care settings, with the necessary adjustments to the list of actions.

# ADD SPACES

## To your COVID ward care approach

---

### **Do I need permission to print and use SPACES ?**

SPACES is free to download and use for everyone. It was developed to support healthcare staff to reduce the risk of contracting infections while caring for patients. It does not require permission to be used. BTS will not enforce any copyright on it so long as it not used for profit or any financial gains. We kindly ask that if you were to make any modifications to it, that you explicitly clarify that these are not part of the original document.

### **Who developed SPACES?**

SPACES was developed in collaboration with a multidisciplinary respiratory team consisting of nurses, consultants and other healthcare professionals based at Glenfield Hospital, University Hospitals of Leicester NHS Trust. The team's original idea was further refined into the final SPACES approach by BTS through the involvement of a small expert group of respiratory physicians, and with feedback and endorsement from the Royal College of Physicians and the Royal College of Nursing. The SPACES approach is currently being assessed by NHS England as part of their endorsement process.

SPACES is in line with the NHS and Public Health England's guidance on COVID-19 infection prevention and control.  
[www.gov.uk/government/publications/wuhan-novel-coronavirus-infection-prevention-and-control](http://www.gov.uk/government/publications/wuhan-novel-coronavirus-infection-prevention-and-control)  
[www.england.nhs.uk/coronavirus/secondary-care/infection-control/](http://www.england.nhs.uk/coronavirus/secondary-care/infection-control/)

Please note SPACES is different from the Royal College of Nursing "SPACE" principles.

### **How often will SPACES be updated?**

BTS will monitor emerging evidence on its use and the COVID-19 pandemic and review the documents as appropriate.