COVID-19: SOCIAL DISTANCING GUIDELINES FOR WORKPLACE, HOMES AND INDIVIDUALS.

The World Health Organization (WHO) has declared COVID-19 as a pandemic on 12th March 2020. This was due to the increase in the number of cases reported around the world. One of the measures to reduce the impact of this pandemic is to practice social distancing. In view of this MOH recommends social distancing measures as follows:

(A) Social Distancing for Workplaces

Workplace measures

- Encourage employees to stay home and notify workplace administrators when sick
- If employees develop symptoms at work, avoid contact with fellow employees and inform employers (for screening/home surveillance)
- Encourage staff to telework when feasible
  - In between departments
  - Interstate
  - Inter organization
  - When employee is on home surveillance
- Encourage no handshake policy
- Increasing physical space between workers at the worksite (1 metre apart)
- Staggering work schedules

- Limit in-person meetings. If unavoidable, meeting should be short)
- Employees are encouraged to take their meals at their desk
- Avoid congregating in work and photocopier rooms
- Avoid large work-related gatherings (e.g., staff meetings, after-work functions).
- Avoid non-essential work travel.

* Note: refer Annex 25 Management Guidelines for workplaces

(B) Social Distancing for Individuals and Families at Home

- Those who have symptoms
  - Are advised to stay at home and self-isolate themselves
  - Avoid contact with family members (protective self separation)
  - Avoid going out unless absolutely necessary (following precautions)
  - Avoid public transport where possible
- Individuals at increased risk of severe illness (e.g. those with chronic diseases) should consider voluntary avoidance of crowded places e.g. large gatherings
- Limit recreational or other leisure classes, meetings and activities
- Stock up on food and medication to avoid frequent outings
- Consider getting home delivery food, medication or other essentials
- Limit visitors
- Establish ways to communicate with others (e.g., family, friends, co-workers) e.g. telecommunication
- Consider online payment methods for payment of utilities etc.

(C) Social Distancing for Schools and Childcare

- Reduce the frequency of large gatherings (e.g., assemblies), and limit the number of attendees per gathering.
- Alter schedules to reduce mixing (e.g., stagger recess, entry/dismissal times)
- Limit inter-school interactions
- Consider distance or e-learning in some settings or for students at increased risk of severe illness

(D) Social Distancing for Assisted or Senior Living Facilities

- Reduce large gatherings (e.g., group social events).
- Alter schedules to reduce mixing (e.g., stagger meal, activity, arrival/ departure times).
- Limit programs with external staff.
- Consider having residents stay in facility and limit exposure to the general community
- Limit visitors and screen them before allowing entry.

This guideline may be used as a basis for social distancing during this period of time. Everyone is advised to keep up to date with the latest developments and advice issued by the Ministry of health.

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