



Issue Date: 9<sup>th</sup> May 2018

## SAFETY ALERT NOTICE.

Drug / Product / Device : **Medical Face Masks**

### Identified Issue / Concern / Problem/ Evidence of harm.

Over the past few months there have been outbreaks of contagious conditions such as measles & Flu in the community. There have also been reports of staff being sneezed on and coughed on by patients in their care.

Some conditions are spread by aerosolised droplets and one of the safest effective methods of significantly reducing the spread of droplet based infection is a properly worn medical face mask.

### Actions Required / Risk Treatment strategy

- In all procedures which may potentially generate infectious aerosol such as intubation or insertion of an airway adjunct such as SGA / LT, a medical face mask in addition to standard precautions is to be worn by practitioners involved.
- When caring for patients known or suspected to be infected with a respiratory borne virus a face mask should be worn by the patient and the practitioner attending to protect from coughed / sneezed aerosol material.
- Patients in this category would include fever of  $>37.8^{\circ}\text{C}$ , feeling feverish or recent history of fever and  $>2$  symptoms (sore throat, cough, sneezing, runny nose, nasal congestion, headache)
- All practitioners interacting with patients with haemoptysis, Epistaxis or a productive cough should also wear medical face masks.
- Masks should be applied to clean shaven faces with the wire stiffener at the bridge of the nose and securely tied with clean hands or gloves. Never touch the front of the mask, remove by using clean gloved hands to tear or open ties from the rear. Masks after use must be disposed of into clinical waste and good hand hygiene observed.



Issued by: Quality, Safety & Risk – North Leinster.