



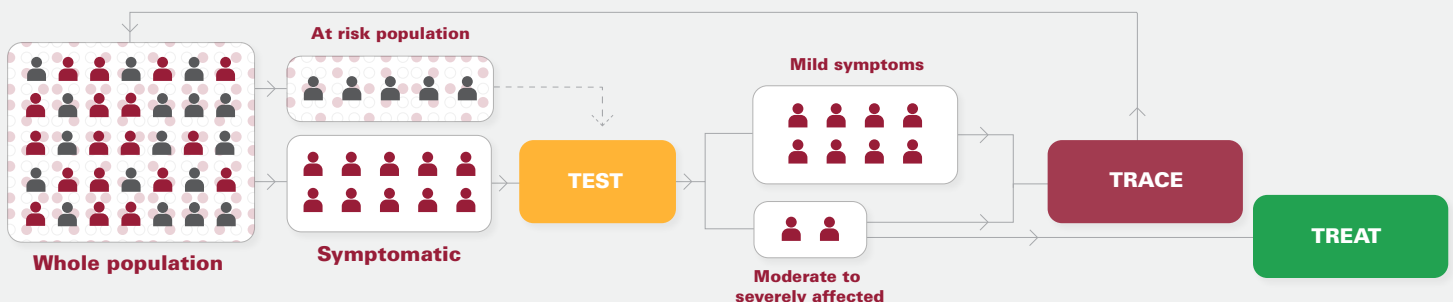
Test, Trace and Treat:

Partnership to Accelerate COVID-19 Testing (PACT) in Africa

To help increase continental testing efforts and reduce COVID-19 transmission in Africa, Africa CDC has launched the Partnership to Accelerate COVID-19 Testing (PACT): Test, Trace, Treat. PACT will mobilize experts, community workers, supplies and other resources to TEST, TRACE and TREAT COVID-19 cases in a timely manner to minimize the impact of the pandemic on the Africa continent. Anchored on the African Union Joint Continental Strategy for COVID-19 Outbreak¹, PACT will ultimately help prevent transmission and deaths, and minimize the social and economic harm associated with COVID-19.

¹ Africa Joint Continental Strategy for COVID-19 Outbreak

All stakeholders are being called on to coordinate, communicate, collaborate, and cooperate to support the PACT Initiative to control COVID-19 in Africa.





TREAT

to provide supportive care in symptomatic cases

Most patients with COVID-19 have mild to moderate uncomplicated illness (81%); however, some will develop illness requiring oxygen therapy (14%), and about 5% will require intensive care treatment. PACTTREAT aims to ensure that patients experiencing moderate to severe symptoms have access to the supportive care they need, with minimal impact to the existing healthcare services. To ensure access to supportive care for symptomatic COVID-19 patients and minimize related deaths, actions should target the following:

1 HOME-BASED CARE

Patients with mild disease and no risk factors can be isolated and managed at home as long as they can be cared for by family members and followed up by health workers.² It requires careful clinical judgment and an assessment to ensure that the residential setting is suitable for providing care. Patients and household members should be educated about personal hygiene, basic IPC measures, and how to care as safely as possible for the COVID-19 patient to prevent the spread of infection to household contacts. Alternatively, patients with mild disease and no risk factors can be managed at **non-traditional facilities**, such as repurposed hotels and stadiums.² Home isolation/facility care comes to end when a case tests negative.

2 IMMEDIATE TRIAGE AND TESTING

Immediate triage and testing in healthcare facilities is needed to quickly identify, isolate, and prioritise testing for people with suspect symptoms is key. These triage areas should be clearly marked, ideally set-up before the entrance, and well-ventilated (or set up outside in the open air). Screening of patients for COVID-19 should be done using recommended case definitions and a standardised triage questionnaire or algorithm.

3 IDENTIFYING THE VULNERABLE

This should be an early focus so that patients with severe illness and the medically vulnerable who are at higher risk of developing severe disease (e.g. older patients, existing comorbidities, and obese individuals) can be admitted, closely monitored and treated early.³ Strict adherence to infection prevention and control (IPC) protocol is an integral part of clinical management.

² [Home care for patients with COVID-19 presenting with mild symptoms and management of their contacts](#)

³ [Clinical management of severe acute respiratory infection when COVID-19 is suspected](#)

4 ENSURING ABILITY TO TREAT

By making sure that evidence-based therapeutics are available (e.g. pressers and anticoagulants) and critical equipment is in place and functioning (e.g. oxygen and ventilators). Provision of timely, effective, and safe supportive therapies is the cornerstone of therapy for patients with severe COVID-19.

Infection prevention and control (IPC) considerations

- Infection prevention and control practices,⁴ physical distancing measures,⁵ and good hand and respiratory hygiene for COVID-19 should be implemented throughout all response efforts.
- Healthcare workers and hospital staff should have and wear recommended PPE, adhere to standard and transmission-based precautions related to COVID-19, and maintain appropriate physical distance, where possible.⁶
- Hand washing stations with running water and soap or alcohol-based hand rubs should be placed at the entrance of the healthcare facility, triage areas and patient waiting areas.
- Patients entering the facilities should maintain at least 1 metre in the waiting area and while consulting (e.g. a plexiglass barrier can be placed between the patient and HCW). Medical masks should be provided to all patients in triage or temporary holding areas.
- Facilities, including triage and temporary holding areas, should be cleaned with a focus on frequently touched surfaces.⁷

In support of the PACT TREAT component, Africa aims to train 100,000 healthcare workers and establish a continent-wide procurement platform for laboratory and medical supplies by October 2020.

⁴ *Africa CDC: 2019 Novel Coronavirus Disease Outbreak: What Health Care Workers Should Know*

⁵ *Africa CDC: Guidance on Community Physical Distancing During COVID-19 Pandemic*

⁶ *Africa CDC: COVID-19 Guidance: Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) for Different Clinical Settings and Activities*

⁷ *Africa CDC: Environmental decontamination in the context of COVID-19*



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