

Question submitted to RapidInfo4U

1. Can a Classroom Feeding Observation for Dysphagia take place within a Pod?
2. When conducting a Classroom Feeding Observation for Dysphagia do parents of children in the same Pod as the patient need to be informed of, and consent to, the observation?

Answer

1. Yes, assuming local and national COVID-19 guidelines are followed including PPE and social distancing, a Classroom Feeding Observation for Dysphagia can take place within a Pod.
2. When conducting a Classroom Feeding Observation for Dysphagia there are no guidelines which state that parents of children in the same Pod as the client need to be informed.

Safety guidelines

These guidelines are taken from the Department of Education COVID-19 Response Plan for Reopening our Primary and Special Schools, version 2, published in August 2020. Access the document [here](#). Each school will have their own specific procedures in place and these must be adhered to by visitors. The following are the national guidelines that apply to all schools. Visitors who are admitted to schools are subject to the same controls as apply to staff entering the school.

Classroom 'Bubbles' and 'Pods'

A 'Class Bubble' is a class grouping which stays apart from other classes as much as possible. Within the Class Bubble, pupils and teachers *may* be further separated into small discrete groups or 'Pods'. The COVID-19 Response Plan states that the Pods should be as small as feasible but there is no maximum or minimum size given. The Response Plan dictates that there must be at least 1 metre distance between each Pod, and between individual pupils and teachers in each Pod, whenever possible. On viewing a classroom it will not necessarily be possible to distinguish between Pods because there is 1 meter between *all* children. During

group work or sharing any resources, the Pods come into effect. The stated goal of the Pods are to limit contact and sharing of common facilities between people in different Pods as much as possible, rather than to avoid all contact between Pods, as this will not be possible.

Prior Approval

The COVID-19 Response Plan states that any visitors to a school must obtain prior approval from the principal and that each school must have a visitor contact log. Therefore, to perform a Classroom Feeding Observation an SLT must first obtain approval from the principal and ensure that they record their visit in the school contact log.

Personal Protective Equipment

It is a requirement for face coverings to be worn where it is not possible to maintain a physical distance of 2 metres from other staff or pupils in the school. Therefore, if the Classroom Feeding Observation is performed 2 meters or more away from the client (and all other children and staff) there is no need to wear a face covering. If this is not the case, a face covering must be worn. Cloth face coverings are acceptable masks to wear in this instance. Clear visors are only recommended for use for staff interacting with pupils with hearing difficulties or learning difficulties. Medical face masks, to EU Standard EN 14683, are only recommended for use where staff by necessity need to be in close and continued proximity with pupils with intimate care needs such as SNAs.

Conclusion

Classroom Feeding Observation for Dysphagia can take place within a Pod as long as local and national COVID-19 guidelines are followed.

Disclaimer

This document has not been peer-reviewed; it should not replace individual clinical judgement. The views expressed in this document are not a substitute for professional medical advice. The content of this document is correct as of 18/9/2020.



Rapid Evidence Search & Summary (RESS)

Our team of multidisciplinary researchers and clinicians in conjunction with the University of Limerick Library and Information Services have developed a detailed protocol for conducting a Rapid Evidence Search & Summary (RESS) to answer questions submitted to RapidInfo4U. Our RESS protocol uses PICO or PEO methods to refine your question and follows a detailed search procedure capturing guidance documents from governments, institutions and professional bodies; searching clinical and COVID specific repositories; and identifying the most recent reviews and RCTs in the scientific literature using established databases.