

# Safety Information Message

Reference

**SIM2109**Issued **10 Sept 2021**Review Date **10 Sept 2022**

## COVID-19 Social Distancing Diagrams & Information v2.0

### Summary

The Scottish Government COVID-19 Nosocomial Review Group (CNRG) has released updated guidance on NHS Scotland COVID-19 Social Distancing Diagrams & Information.

### Action

- Bring this notice to the attention of all appropriate managers and staff

### Background

This guidance contains documents providing bed spacing, treatment trolley/ chair spacing, and table/ desk spacing recommendations, risk assessment considerations and signage examples for existing NHS Scotland facilities. In particular Figure 1D has a new 1m distancing table and desk layout added. This guidance is appended to the end of this document.

Please note:

- This guidance **supersedes** Safety Information Message *SIM2108 COVID-19 Social Distancing Diagrams & Information* distributed on 12 July 2021
- This guidance **supplements** Information Message [IM/2020/024 NHS Scotland Health & Care COVID-19 remobilisation – Built Environment including physical distancing support diagrams v1.0](#) distributed on 18 Sept 2020 (this information is also available on [MS Teams](#))

### Enquiries

Enquiries and adverse incident reports should be addressed to:

**Incident Reporting & Investigation Centre (IRIC)**  
NHS National Services Scotland  
Gyle Square, 1 South Gyle Crescent, Edinburgh EH12 9EB  
Tel: 0131 275 7575 Email: [nss.irc@nhs.scot](mailto:nss.irc@nhs.scot)

For information on how to report an incident: [How to report an Adverse Incident](#)

General information about adverse incidents and safety alerts can be found in [CEL 43 \(2009\)](#) or by contacting IRIC at the above address.

NHS National Services Scotland is the common name for the Common Services Agency for the Scottish Health Service.

<https://www.nss.nhs.scot/>

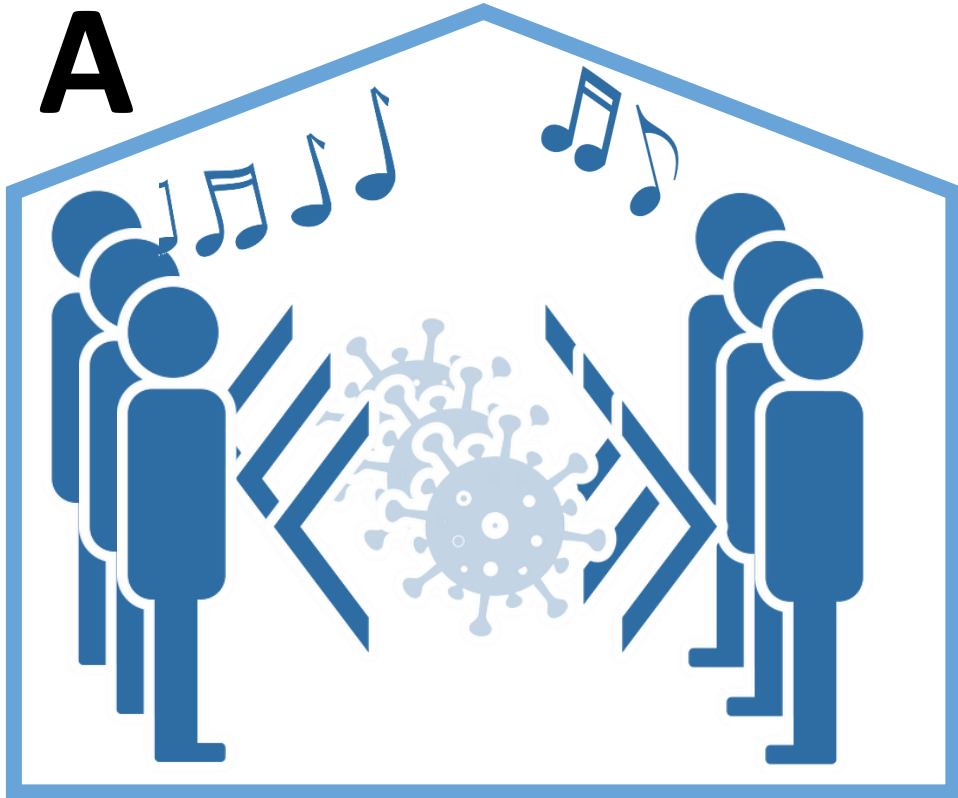
© Crown Copyright 2021.

NHSScotland

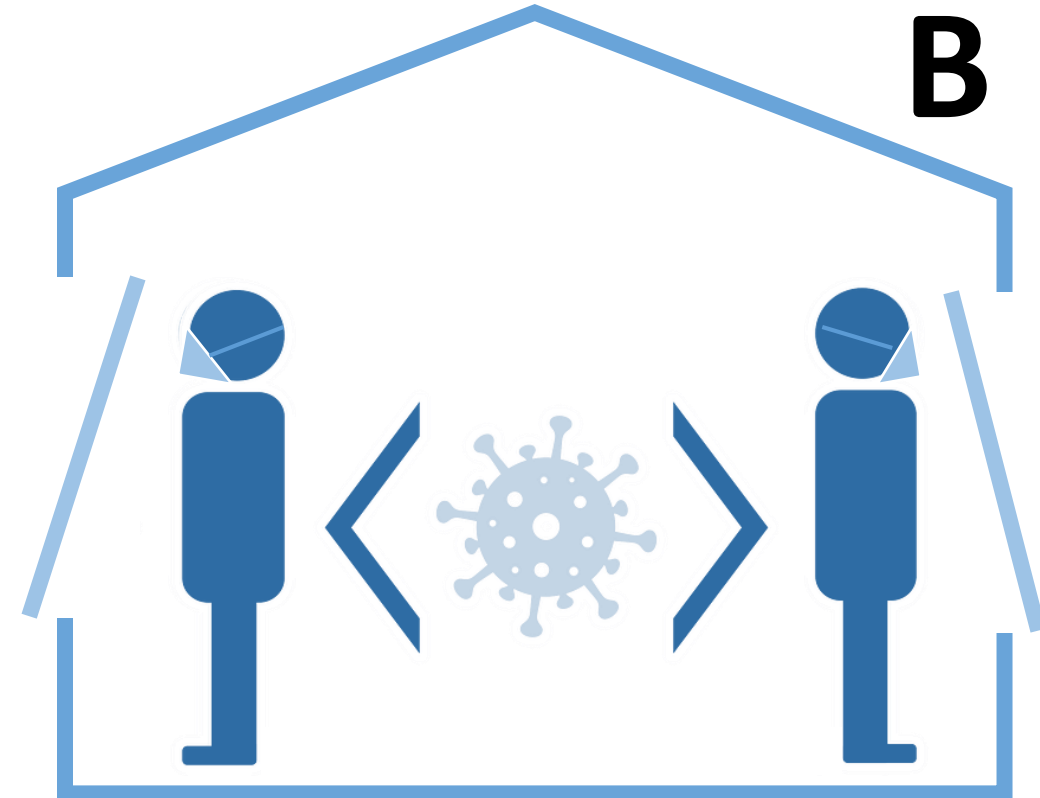
# COVID-19 Social Distancing Diagrams & Information

v2.0 Figure 1D: 1m distancing table & desk layout added (02Sep21)  
of presentation for 20<sup>th</sup> CRNG meeting 22 Jan 2021

supplement to our FAQs, posters and A3 detailed diagrams  
available @[NHSScotland msTeam Covid-19 FAQs](#) or  
[Information Message IM/2020/024 \(18 Sept 2020\)](#)



A patient is placed in room A or B at 2metres apart, but transmission risk can be **UNEQUAL**



**Compounding Factors:** to be considered in-concert include:

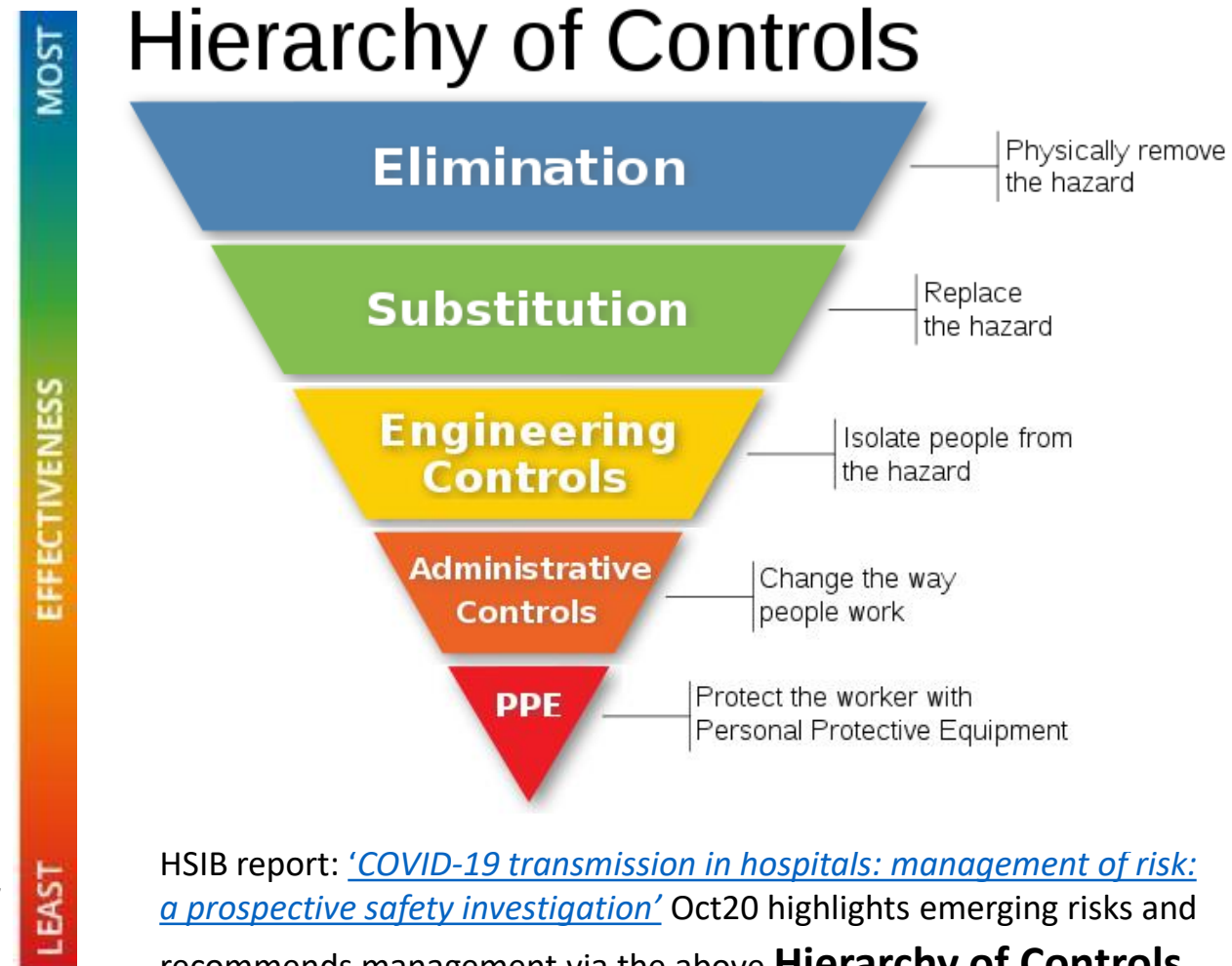
Placement x **Physical distancing** (Proximity x Direction) x Ventilation dilution x Contact time x Function or Interaction x Vocal projection x Hand hygiene x Surface cleaning x Face covering.

# COVID-19 – Built Environment transmission risks, with social distancing diagrams

Built Environment Health Protection Scotland (HPS) [COVID-19 Compendium](#) & [NHS remobilisation](#) considerations  
Health Facilities Scotland (HFS) FAQs & diagrams info at: [NHSScotland msTeam FAQs](#) or [COVID Social Distancing \(IM-2020-024\)](#)

**Hierarchy of Risk Control:** is legally mandated in the [Management of Health & Safety at Work Regulations 1999, Reg. 4, Schedule 1](#)

- **ELIMINATION:** *physically remove the hazard*  
e.g. clinical consultations via secure telephone or video; staff working from home; in-patient admission avoidance.
- **SUBSTITUTION:** *replace the hazard*  
e.g. outdoor / drive-in clinics for testing; move staff to non-patient facing role; 'Hospital at Home' care
- **ENGINEERING:** *isolate people from the hazard*  
e.g. single room patient placement; 2m / 6ft distancing; appropriate ventilation /dilution incl. open windows/ doors; technologies to reduce length-of-stay (LoS), occupancy or direct person-to-person contacts;
- **ADMINISTRATION:** *change the way people work*  
e.g. processes to reduce LoS etc incl opening times; improved cleaning, AGP fallow times; leaflets & signage
- **PERSONAL PROTECTION:** *equipment to protect the worker*  
e.g. face covering; hand hygiene, cough hygiene, PPE

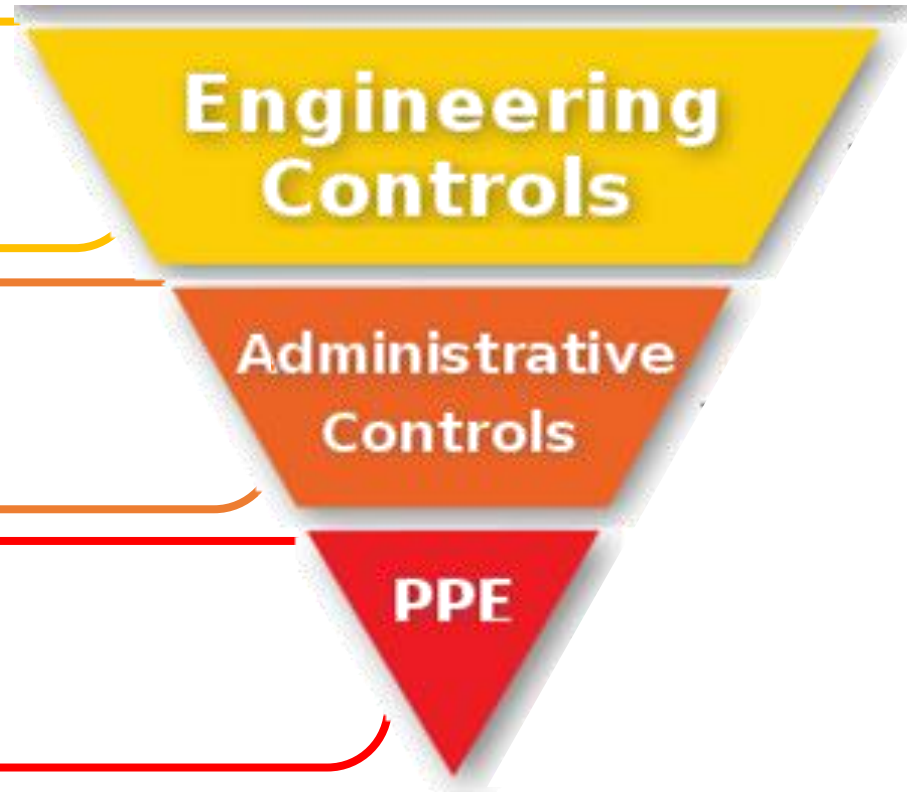


**Compounding Factors:** need to be considered in-concert e.g.

Placement x Physical distancing (Proximity x Direction) x Ventilation dilution x

Contact time x Vocal projection x Hand hygiene x Surface cleaning x Face covering signage

Face Covering



Ensure use of current evidence-based health & care setting lessons learned for risk-assessments, and infection controls measures e.g. [www.hps.scot.nhs.uk/a-to-z-of-topics/covid-19/](http://www.hps.scot.nhs.uk/a-to-z-of-topics/covid-19/); [www.hps.scot.nhs.uk/...Guidance for use in healthcare settings](http://www.hps.scot.nhs.uk/...Guidance for use in healthcare settings) and [NHS UK/COVID-19\\_Infection-prevention-control-guidance](http://NHS UK/COVID-19_Infection-prevention-control-guidance)

### Examples of control factors:

#### Engineering Controls

- **Ventilation:** regularly check, maintain & operate as appropriate, e.g. if Mechanical, clean and confirm at correct airflow, if Natural ventilation check windows, trickle vents etc are operable and utilised. By law, all occupied space must have operable ventilation; e.g. [HSE Covid Vent guidance](#)  
Fresh air & air changes to current guidance dilute Covid transmission e.g. [SHTM 03-01](#)

#### Administrative Controls

**Human Factors:** deploy intuitive layouts & signs etc, but be aware risky behaviours are re-activated over time, or by an over-familiarity, or an overreliance on unseen controls. Regularly reinforce good behaviours and re-fresh / re-invigorate with new actions e.g. re-visit, risk assess, solicit feedback, refresh comm's, swap signs: [HPS STOP](#); [NHSi FACTS](#)

#### PPE

**Personal Protective Equipment:** By Law, face coverings must be worn inside facilities unless exempt, or for an agreed task e.g. sleep, rest, washing, drinking, eating, but only whilst socially distant.

Ensure use of current evidence-based health & care setting lessons learned for risk-assessments, and infection controls measures e.g. [www.hps.scot.nhs.uk/a-to-z-of-topics/covid-19/](http://www.hps.scot.nhs.uk/a-to-z-of-topics/covid-19/); [www.hps.scot.nhs.uk/...Guidance for use in healthcare settings](http://www.hps.scot.nhs.uk/...Guidance for use in healthcare settings) and [NHS UK/COVID-19 Infection-prevention-control-guidance](https://www.nhs.uk/covid-19/infection-prevention-control-guidance)



# COVID-19 – Built Environment transmission risks, with social distancing diagrams

**Ergonomic assumptions:** a person's mouth, nose & eyes are their direct COVID transmission source & receiver  
A3 diagrams @ [COVID Social Distancing \(IM-2020-024\)](#)

Any Person in health & care facility (**red/brown**)  
MUST wear a Face Mask or Covering unless exempt

Any Person exempt for an agreed purpose (**green/blue**)  
e.g. sleep, rest, washing, drinking, eating, plus  
MUST be placed in a single-room or be non-ambulatory

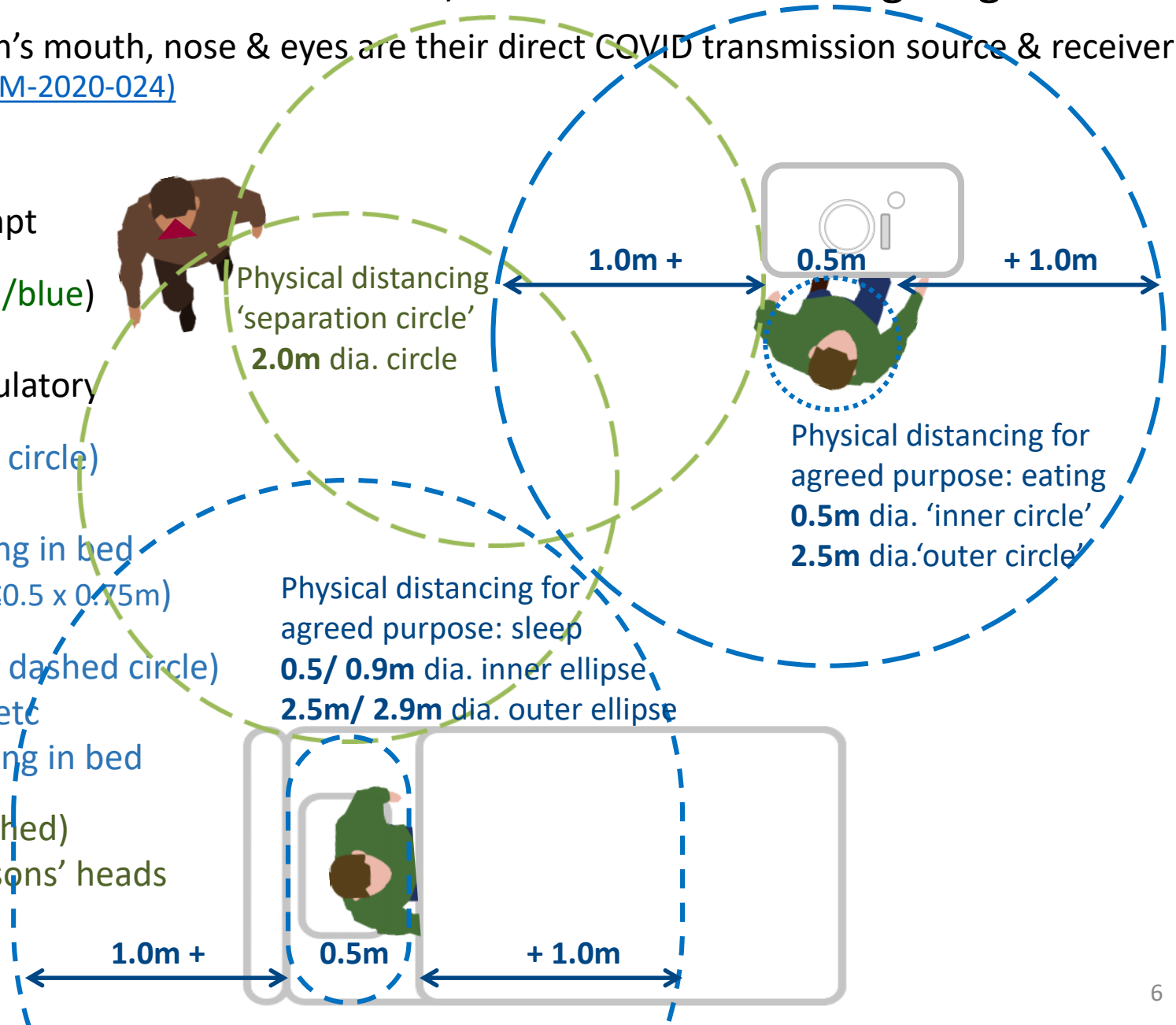
Head space: '**inner circle**' allowance (blue dotted circle)  
**0.5 metre** diameter circle for sitting, standing etc  
**0.5 / 0.9m** (min 0.7m\*) diameter ellipse for sleeping in bed  
(\* for pre 1995 designed facility with standard pillow  $\leq 0.5 \times 0.75\text{m}$ )

Physical distancing: '**outer circle**' allowance (blue dashed circle)  
**2.5 metre** diameter circle for sitting or standing etc  
**2.5 / 2.9m** (min 2.7m\*) diameter ellipse for sleeping in bed

Physical distancing: '**separation circle**' (green dashed)  
**2.0 metre** diameter circle maintained between persons' heads

## Social distancing diagram KEY:

2-Sep-21



# COVID-19 – Built Environment transmission risks, with social distancing diagrams

**Dining/ Workroom/ Office** : a multi-person space with tables or desks and chairs requiring 2m social distancing

A3 diagrams @ [COVID Social Distancing \(IM-2020-024\)](#)

Assumes ANY person likely to move within **<2.0m/ 6ft** of another person wears a Face Covering

Area Calculation of blue outer circle:  $\pi R^2 = 3.14 \times 1.25 \times 1.25 = \text{min } \sim 5.0 \text{ m}^2 / \text{person}$

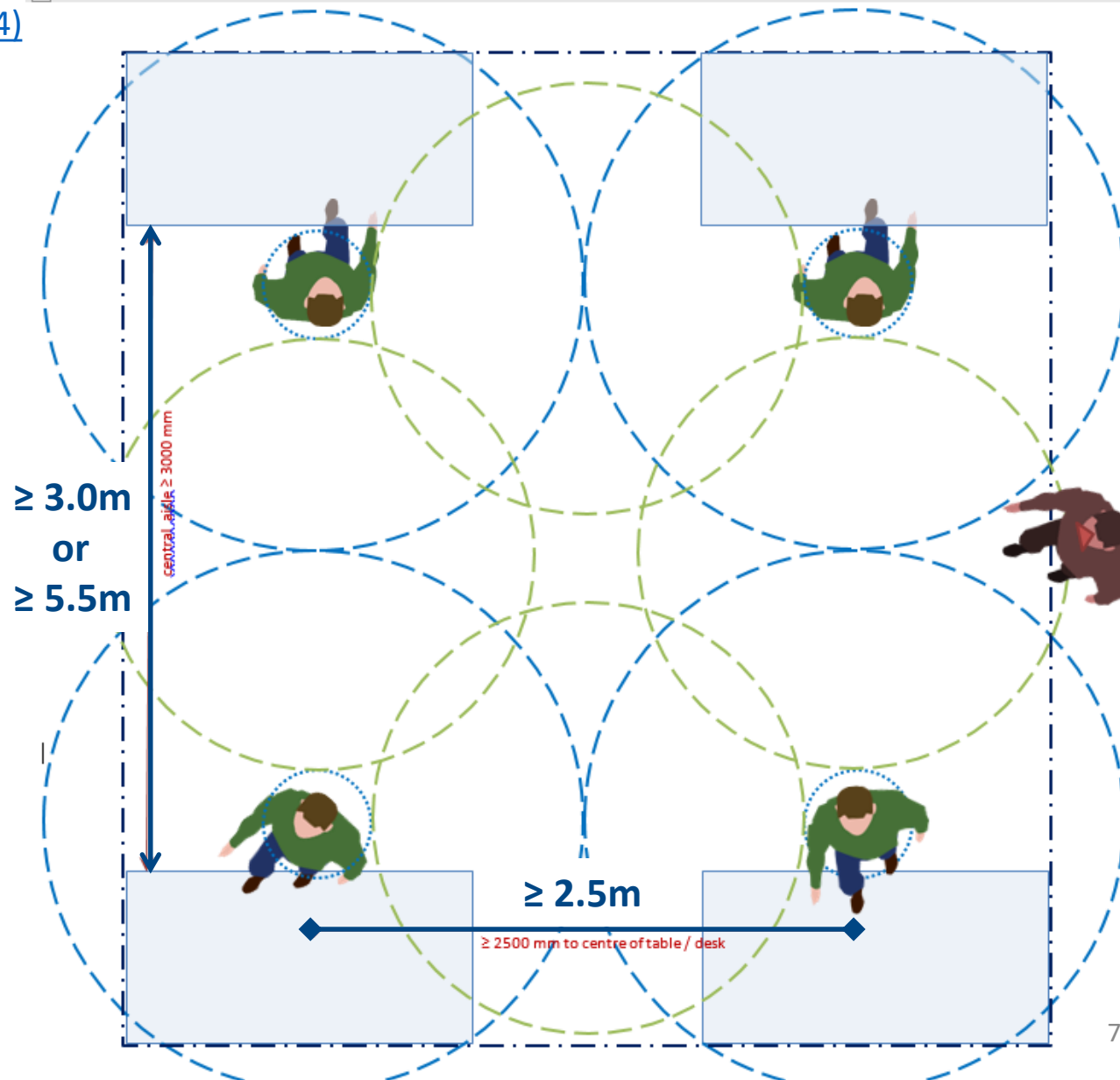
Room/ space: circa **20 m<sup>2</sup>** / **4** people (shown 4.5 x 4.4 m & shaded 1.6 x 0.75 m desk /table)

[central aisle **≥3.0m** shown; to allow non-face-cover movement **≥ 5.5m** i.e. min = **~7.0 m<sup>2</sup>** / person]

Layout 1A, with persons facing away, is preferred for Social distancing i.e. Proximity x Direction

**Fig 1A - Corner desk/ table layout diagram:**

2-Sep-21





# COVID-19 – Built Environment transmission risks, with social distancing diagrams

**Workroom/ Office** : a multi-person space with tables or desks and chairs requiring 1m social distancing

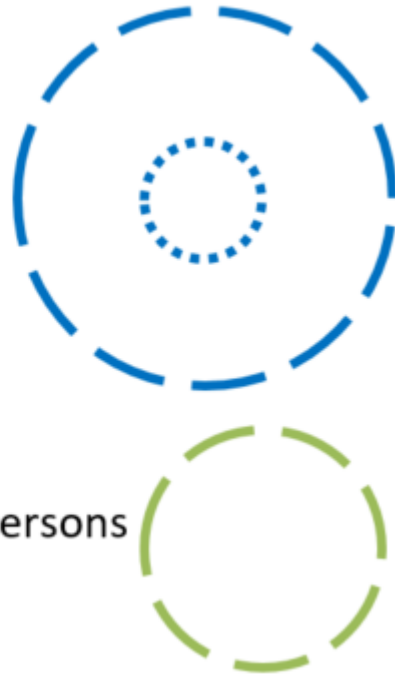
Update on A3 diagrams @ [COVID Social Distancing \(IM-2020-024\)](#)

Assumes ALL persons in space wear a Face Covering,  
with allowance of **1.0m/ ~3ft** between persons

Inner circle or head zone /person  
(**0.5m Dia** / 0.25m Radius)  
(blue dotted)

**Reduced** outer circle /person  
(**1.5m Dia** / 0.75m Radius)  
(blue dashed)

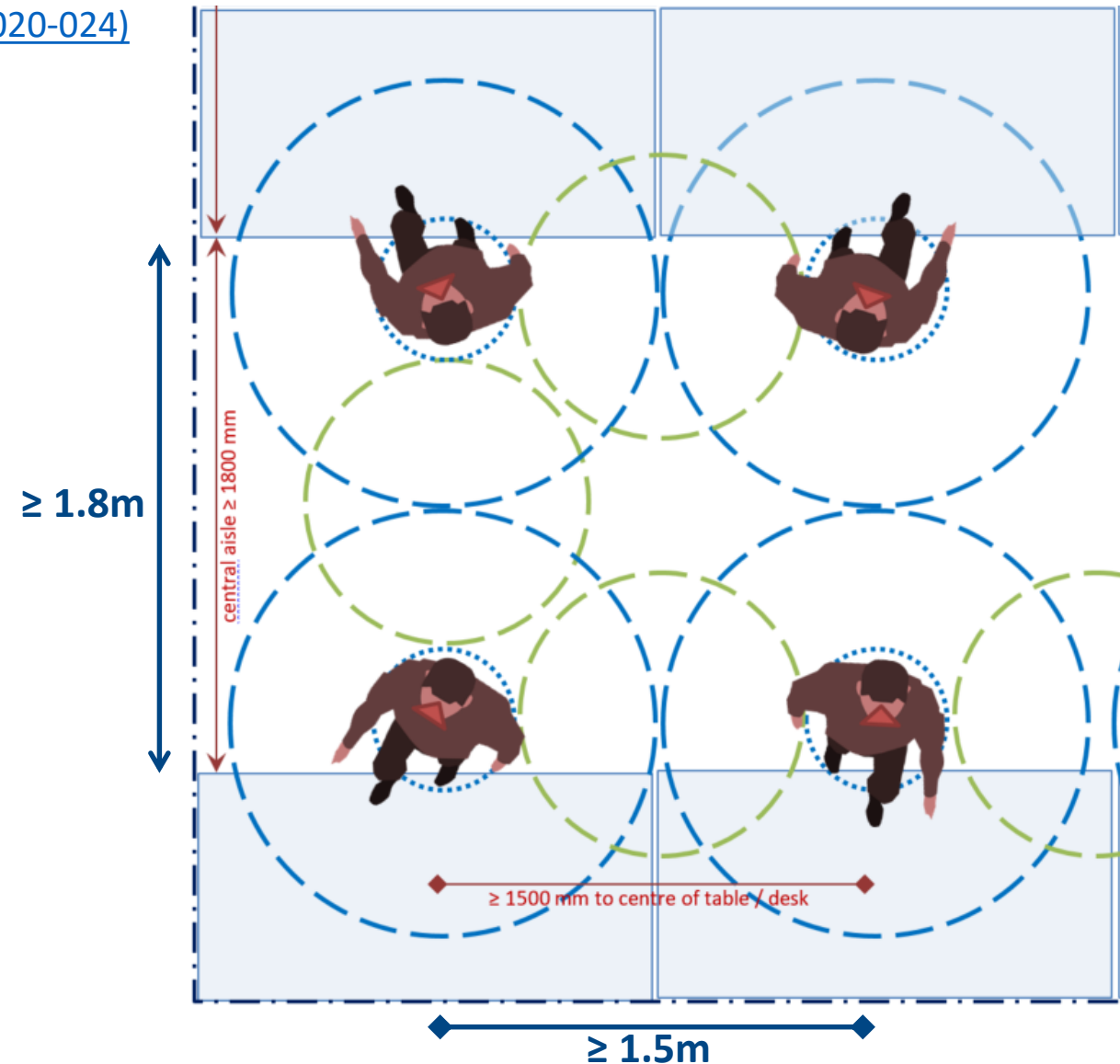
**Reduced** physical distancing between persons  
(**1m Dia** / 0.5m Radius)  
(green dashed)



Layout 1D, with persons facing away, is preferred for  
Social distancing i.e. Proximity x Direction

**Fig 1D(extract) – 1m distancing desk/ table layout**

2-Sep-21



# COVID-19 – Built Environment transmission risks, with social distancing diagrams

**Workroom/ Office** : a multi-person space with tables or desks and chairs requiring face covering and 1m social distancing  
Update for 1m on A3 diagrams:  
@[COVID Social Distancing \(IM-2020-024\)](#)

Assumes ALL persons in space wear a Face Covering, with allowance of **1.0m/ ~3ft** between persons

Area Calculation of blue outer circle:  $\pi R^2 = 3.14 \times 0.75 \times 0.75 = \text{min } \sim 1.8 \text{ m}^2 / \text{person}$

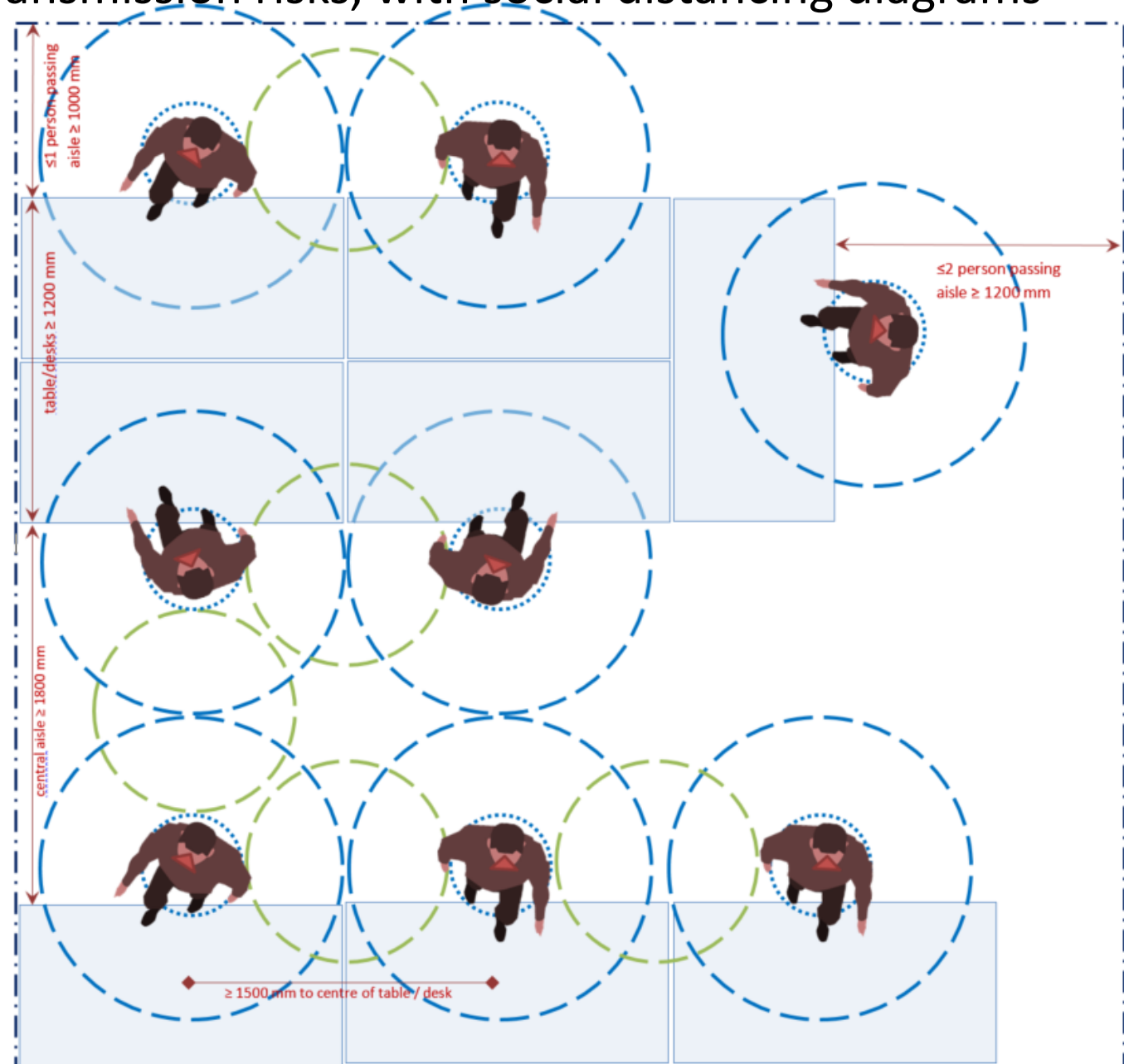
Room/ space: circa **26 m<sup>2</sup>** / **8** people (shown 5.15 x 5.05 m & shaded 1.6 x 0.75 m desk /table)

[aisle minimum widths shown, to allow face-cover movement only; i.e.  $\geq 3.25 \text{ m}^2 / \text{person}$ ]

Persons facing away, preferred for social distancing i.e. Proximity x Direction; see Fig 1A for 2m distancing

## Fig 1D – 1m distancing desk/ table layout

2-Sep-21



Type B1

e.g. Signage for Visitors

Type B2

**All visitors  
must wear a  
face covering**



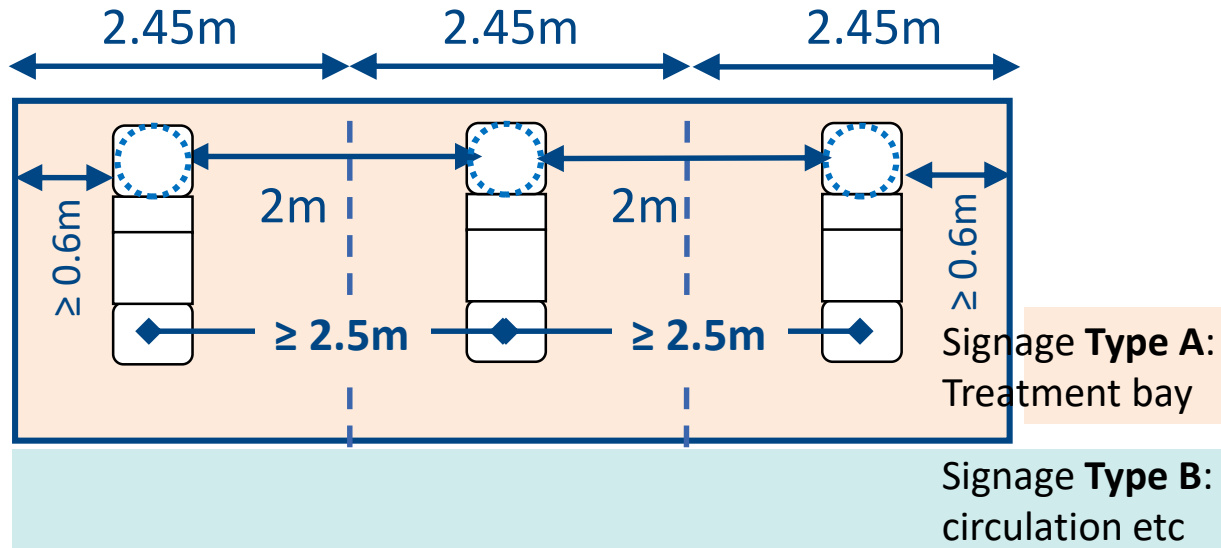
**All visitors  
must wear a  
face covering**



# COVID-19 – Built Environment transmission risks, with social distancing diagrams

**Treatment spaces:** a multi-person space with patient trolley or couch and chairs requiring social distancing

A3 diagrams: @[COVID Social Distancing \(IM-2020-024\)](#); and @[NHSScotland msTeam Covid-19 FAQs](#)



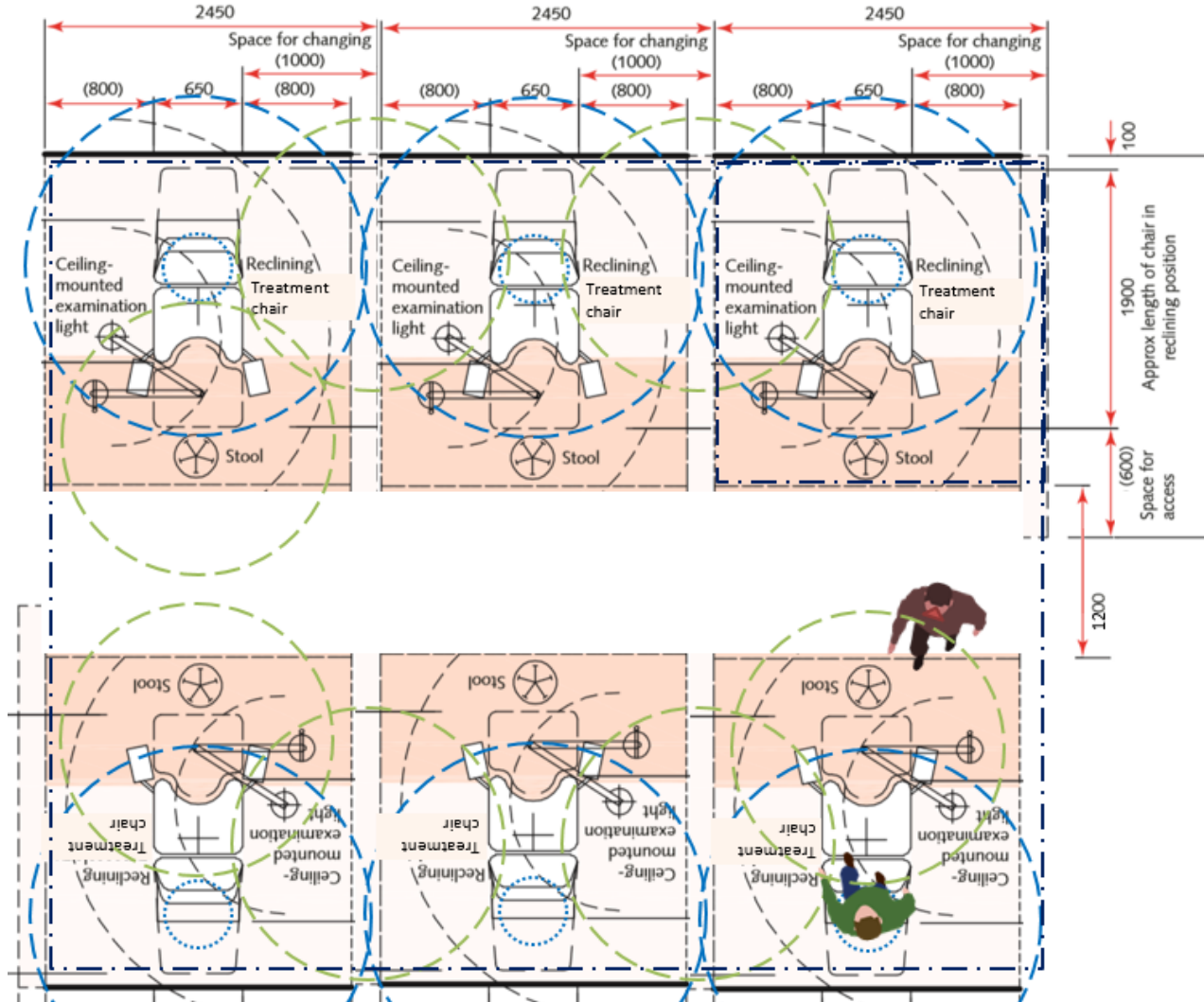
Assumes ANY person likely to move within **<2.0m/ 6ft** of another person wears a Face Covering

Area Calculation for 1 person bay:  $2.45 \times 2.6 \text{ m} = \sim 6.5 \text{ m}^2$   
Room/ space, incl  $\geq 1.2 \text{ m}$  centre aisle =  $\sim 47 \text{ m}^2$  / 6 people

[IF room depth  $\geq 6.4 \text{ m}$ ; MAY allow non-face-covering movement etc in aisle, dependant on head positions]

**Fig 2B - 6no chair Treatment space @2.45m layout:**

2-Sep-21



**Type A1** e.g. Signage for Patients **Type A2**

**Patients to wear face  
covering outside of  
individual treatment area**



**Patients to wear face  
covering outside of  
individual treatment area**





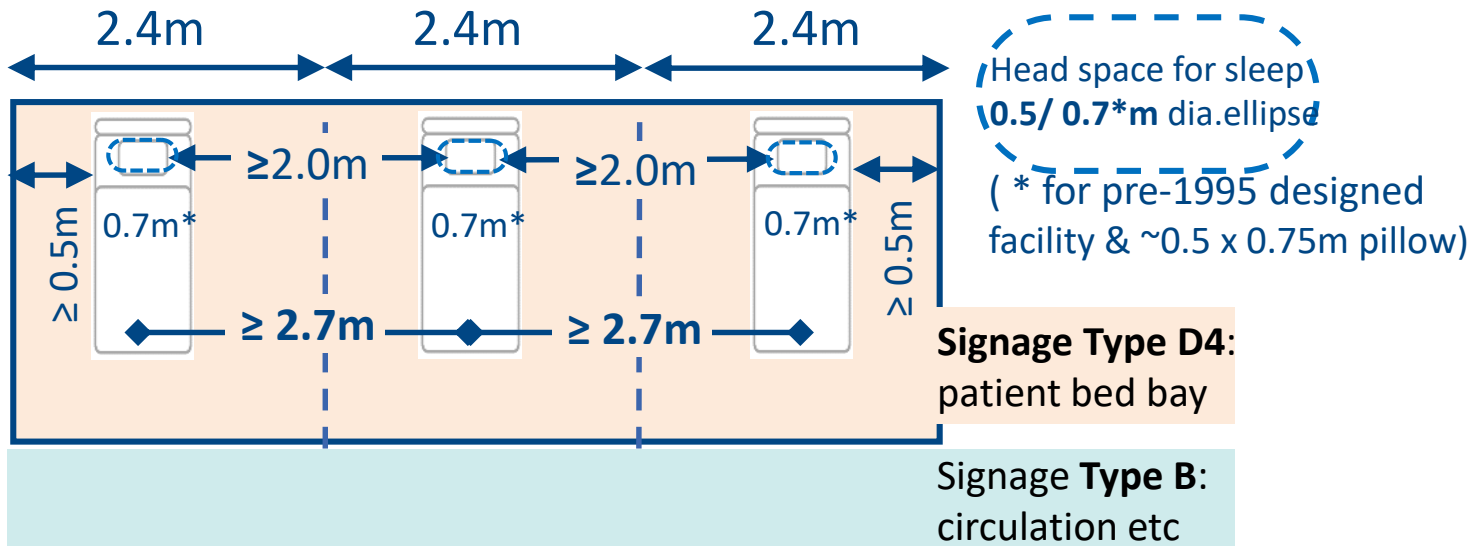




# COVID-19 – Built Environment transmission risks, with social distancing diagrams

**Bedroom spaces:** a multi-person space with patient beds and chairs requiring social distancing (pre 1995 design)

A3 diagrams: @[COVID Social Distancing \(IM-2020-024\)](#); and @[NHSScotland msTeam Covid-19 FAQs](#)



Assumes ANY person likely to move within **<2.0m/ 6ft**

of another person wears a Face Covering, i.e. All movement.

Layout can achieve  **$\geq 2.0\text{m}$**  patient physical distance in Bed\*.

[An ensuite or WHB aisle may allow an increase to bed distancing.

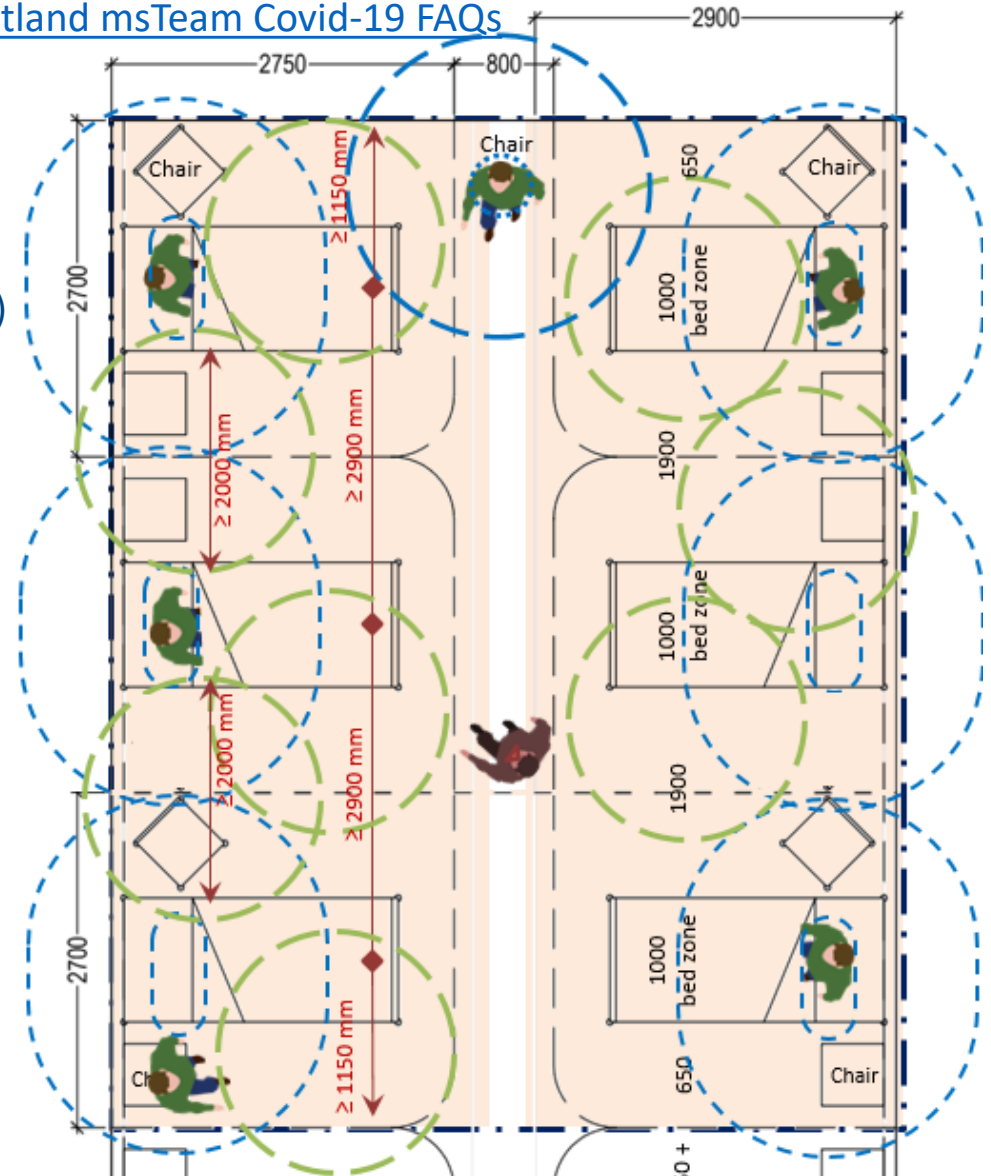
Patient chair shown at bed far-side ensures physical distancing; option for a patient chair at end of aisle is shown, but none for centre beds.

Consider a locker or curtain (or screen) 0.75 – 1.0m out from wall.]

Any  **$\geq 6$  bed** room @2.4m bay, consider **reducing or not occupying by 1,** or 2 beds, to reduce room total viral load, and to increase distancing.

**Fig 3B(i): 6 bed bay @2.4 width x 2.75 depth, with 0.8m aisle :**

2-Sep-21



COVID-19 – **Built Environment** transmission risks, with social distancing diagrams  
for workforce resources & posters : @ [www.hps.scot.nhs.uk/a-to-z-of-topics/covid-19/](http://www.hps.scot.nhs.uk/a-to-z-of-topics/covid-19/)

Type D1 e.g. Signage for Patients Type D2

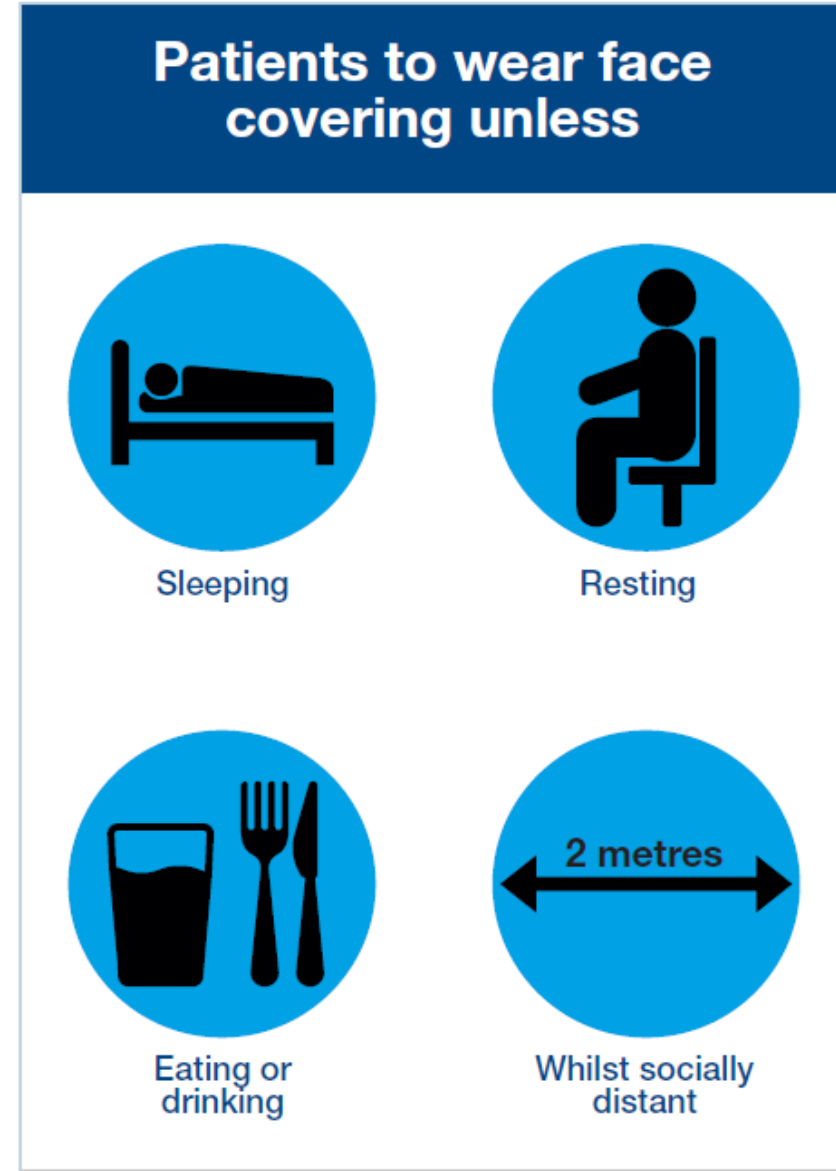
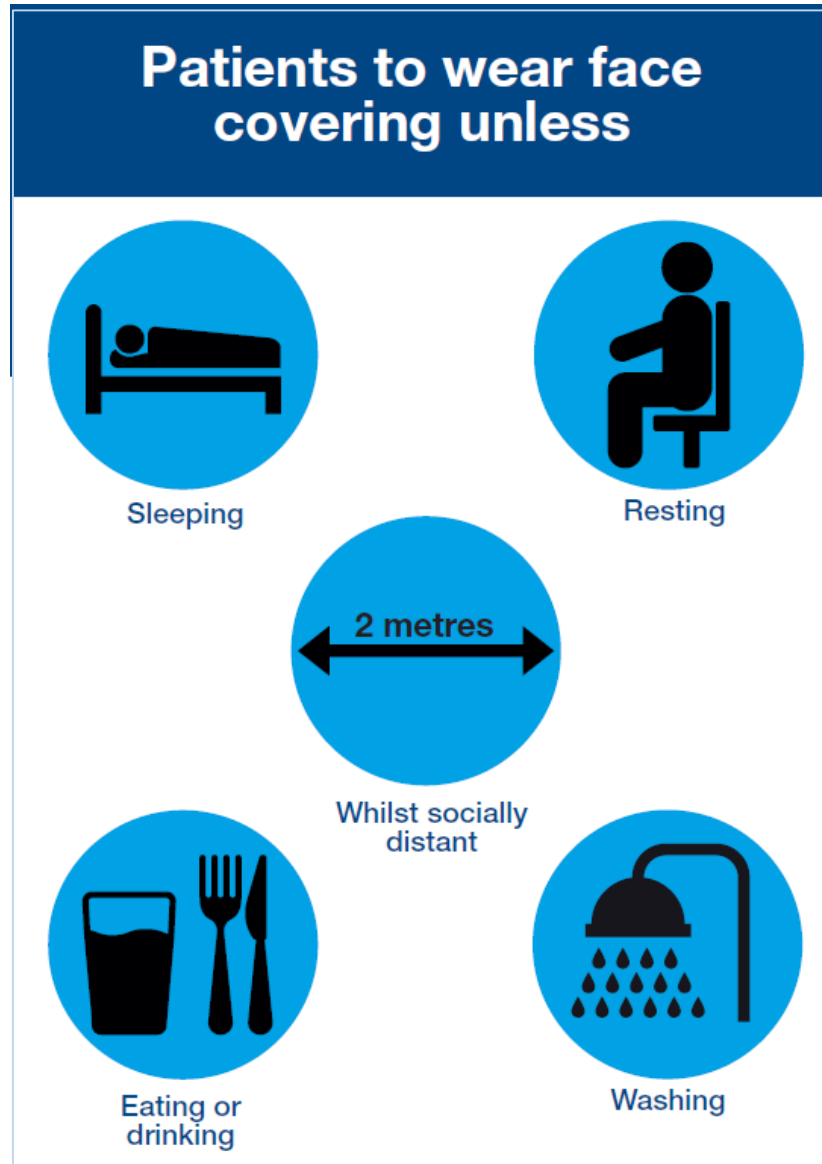
**Patients to wear  
face covering  
outside of  
patient bed area**



**Patients to wear  
face covering  
outside of  
patient bed area**

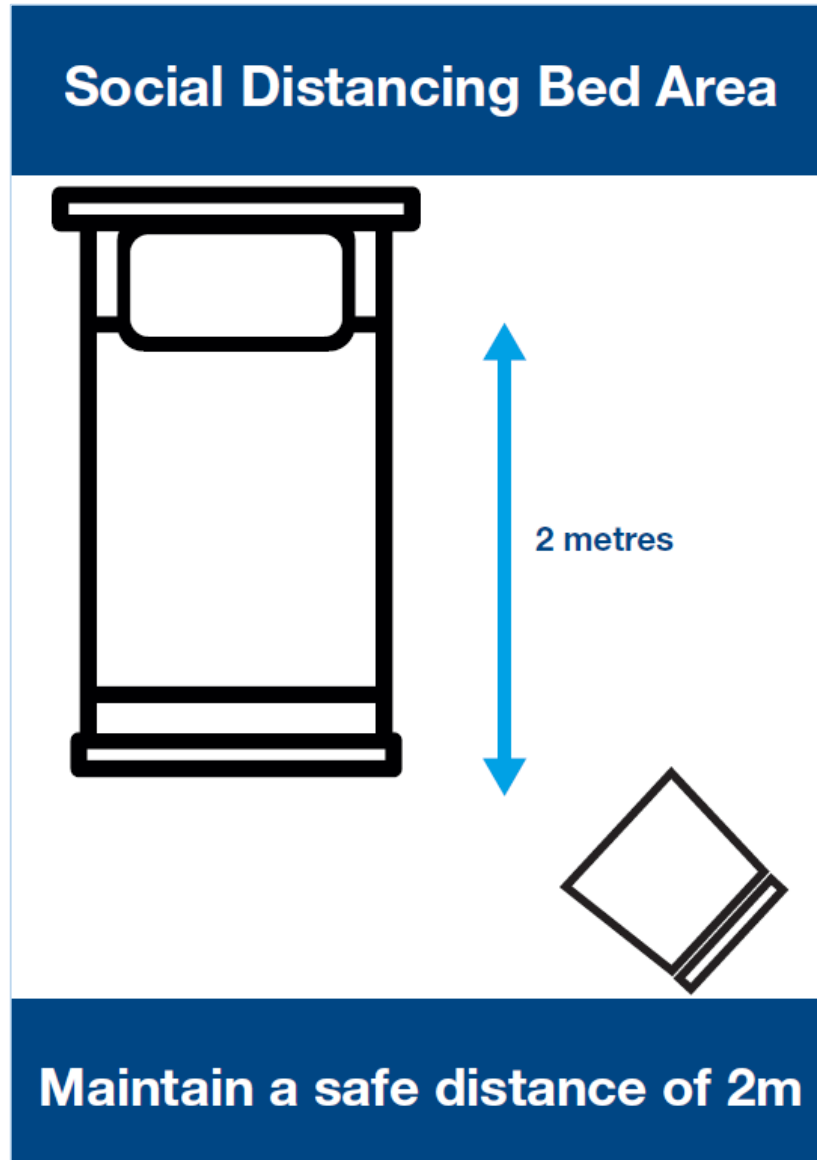


Type C1 e.g. Signage for Patients Type C2



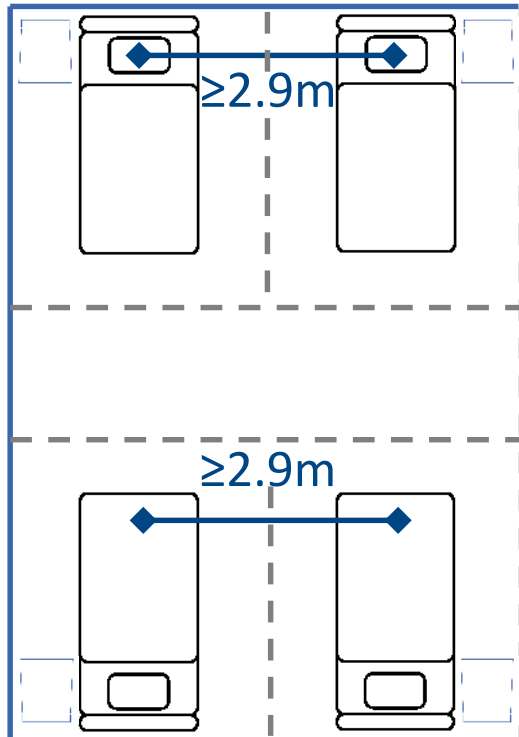
COVID-19 – **Built Environment** transmission risks, with social distancing diagrams for workforce resources & posters : @[www.hps.scot.nhs.uk/a-to-z-of-topics/covid-19/](http://www.hps.scot.nhs.uk/a-to-z-of-topics/covid-19/)

## Type E1 e.g. Signage for Bed spaces Type E2



## Type D3 e.g. Signage for Bed spaces Type D4 (\*pre-1995 designed facility)

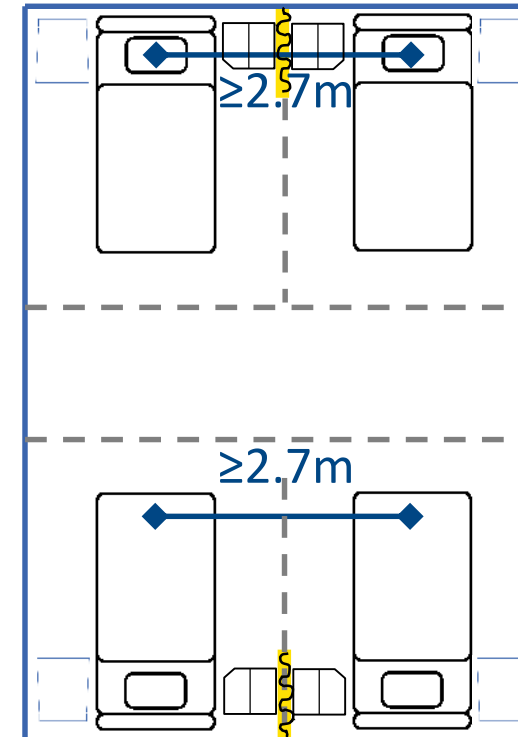
### Social Distancing Patient Area



Note: lockers or bed curtains may reduce aerosol direct route. Screens should not inhibit airflow.

Maintain a safe distance of 2m

### Social Distancing Patient Area



Note: lockers or bed curtains may reduce aerosol direct route. Screening should not inhibit airflow.

Maintain a safe distance of 2m