

**Recommended Guidelines for
Aquatic Therapy Centers on
preventive measures to contain spread of
Covid 19**



Publication

Disclaimer

ATNI is an Umbrella organization working towards providing quality education and standards of practice for aquatic practitioners.

The following recommendations are provided based on various references of CDC, WHO and other international organizations.

Therapists are required to use these recommended guidelines and not to consider these measures as exhaustive. Therapists should adapt regulations as suggested by the local authorities in operating the facility.

ATNI does not hold itself responsible for any adverse events arising out of these recommendations. The Recommendations will be updated as per the developments.

Risk of Transmission in **Aquatic Therapy** Facility



Reception Area

- Interaction at Reception Desk / table .
- Closed Sitting at the waiting area without social distancing.



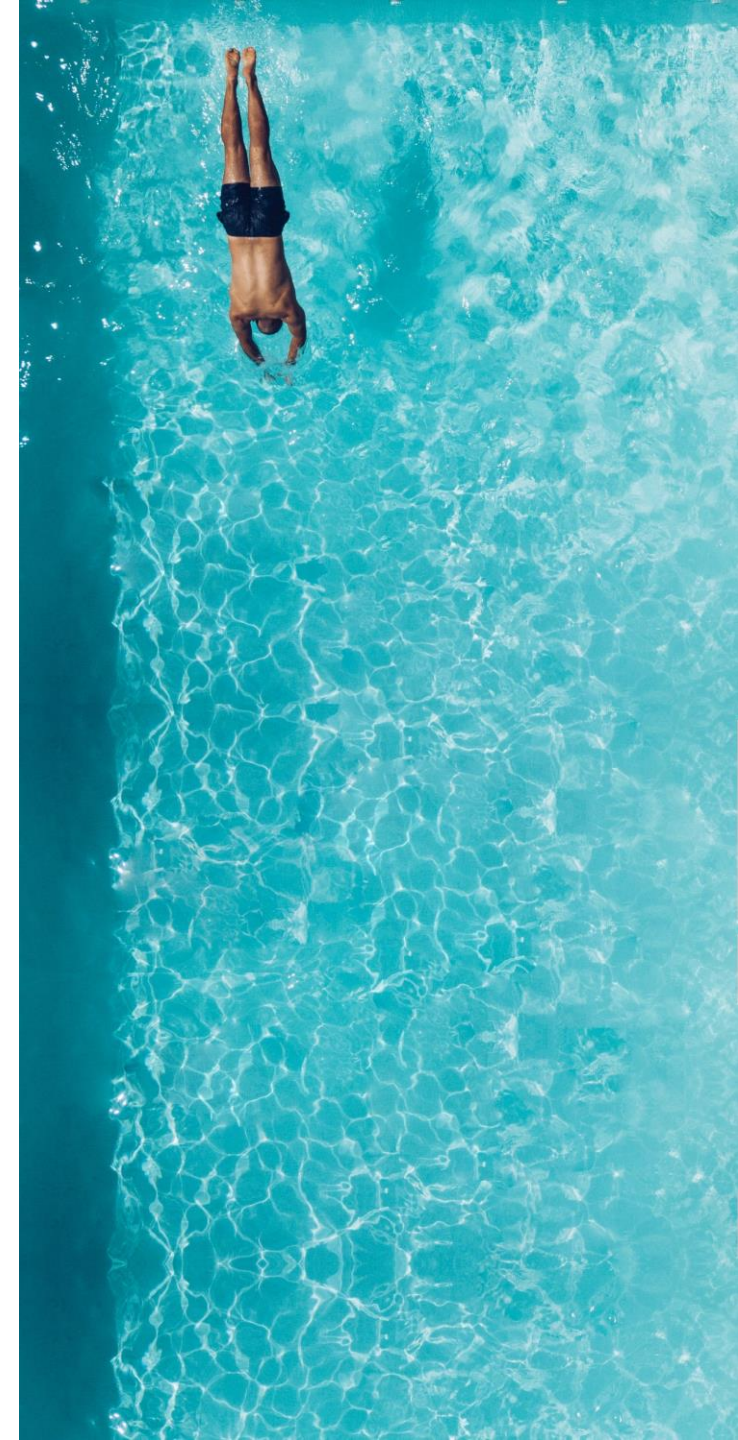
Changing room

- Using of the room for hanging clothes and keeping personal belongings.
- Touching surrounding areas for support.
- Usage of lockers .



Shower area

- Using shower can result in respiratory droplet or shower based aerosols.
- Touching surrounding areas for support.



Risk of Transmission in **Aquatic Therapy** Facility



Washroom

- Usage of Flush has been found to cause aerosols.
- Touching surrounding areas for support.
- Usage of wash basin while cleaning hands.



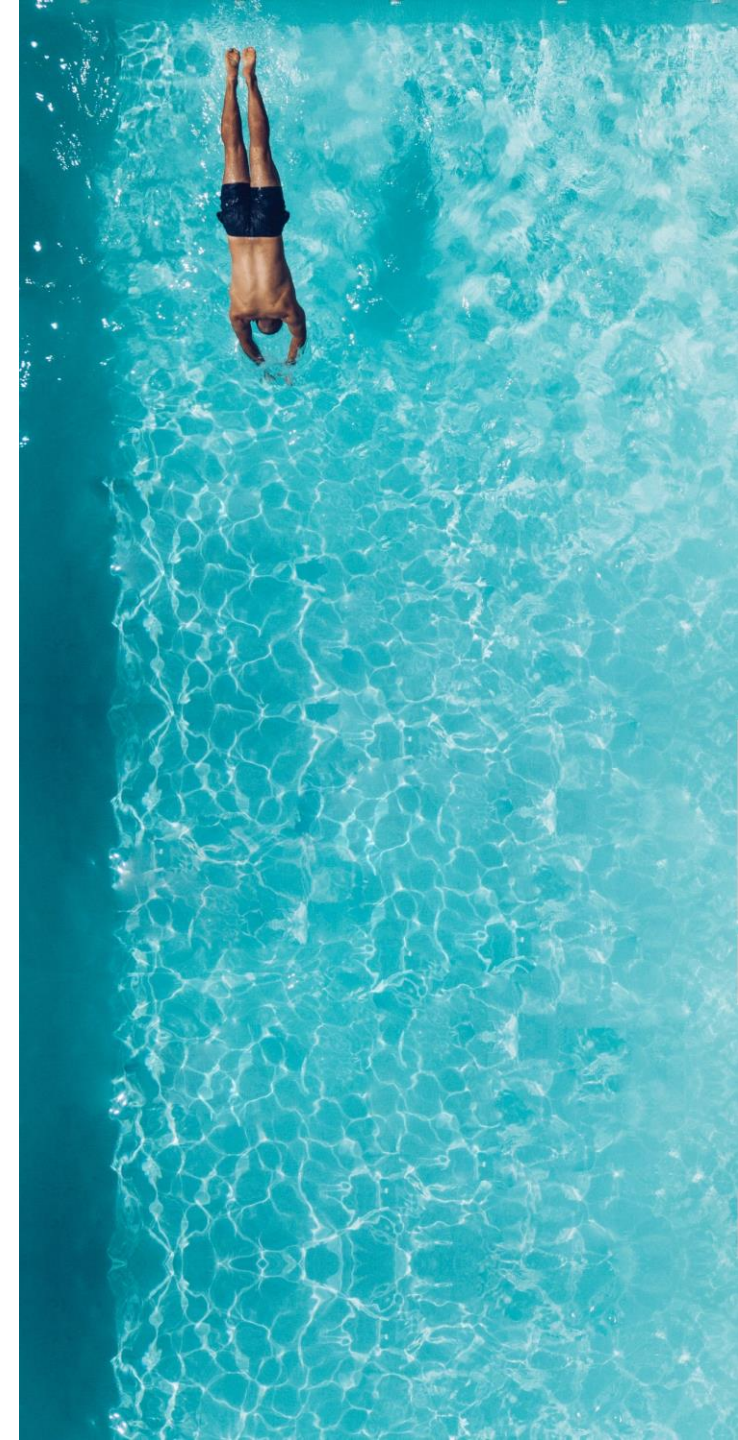
Pool Area

- Humidity, Ambient temperature, support railings, Path of Entry and exit into the pool can be a potential source for transmission.



Equipment

- Using of same aquatic equipment by other individuals can be a risk of transmission.



Preventive Measures in Pool Environment



Cleaning & Disinfecting

- Shower area after every usage.
- Changing room & lockers after every usage.
- Equipment used for therapy after every usage.
- All areas of contact.
- If the glasses / goggles / eye gear is soiled, remove and wear another, maintaining social distancing from the patient.
- After the session clean the goggles / mask with a disinfectant wipe or wash it with soap water.



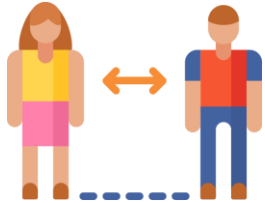
PPE

- One on one – with Essential PPE for therapist.
- Supervised – with Essential PPE for therapist.
- Face shield/Snorkel mask/Goggles only for therapist while treating One on one Cases.
- Surgical mask/water proof mask only for therapist while treating supervised patients .

Measures of Hand hygiene

- Washing hands with soap and water before and after each session must be followed.
- Before entering the pool after wearing your personal protective equipment and when removing it.
- After physical contact with patients.
- After handling frequently touched equipment's outside the pool area.
- Have a poster for hand wash, steps to prevent COVID-19 and signs and symptoms put at appropriate places in clinic which follows the universal hand wash method.

Preventive Measures in Pool Environment



Physical distance

- Physical distancing is necessary as the virus spreads by breathing in micro-droplets from another person sneezing, coughing, or exhaling.
- Ensure 4 square meters of space per person. (Calculate room area and divide by 4)
- Ensure there is 1.5 meters between people by spreading furniture or floor mark.
- Ensure a distance of 3 mtr in the pool with PPE When more than 1 patient is present in the pool.
- Only one shower that is enclosed on all four sides must be in use at any given point of time.
- Only one person allowed in changing room, if assistance is required, it can be provided with essential PPE.



Pool water

- Chlorine level 1.5 ppm cl
- Ph 7.2 to 7.8
- Water temperature 32-34 degree centigrade
- Physical distancing



Environment

- Humidity 55% to 65%
- Ambient temperature 27 degree centigrade
- Hand rub available at critical areas of contact
- Individual Water bottles & Restriction of water dispenser
- Clothes to be packed and taken back by patients.
- Posters of hygiene displayed at relevant areas.

Recommended Phases of reopening

Phase 1

- Starts from the day pool opens for patients.
- Lasts for a duration of one month to observe the measures in place.
- Understand the response of patients.
- Check for risk of transmission.

Phase 2

- Lasts for a duration of 2 months after Phase 1.
- Ensure smooth functioning of infection preventive measures.
- Increase capacity of operation.
- Observe for risk of transmission.

Phase 3

- As per requirement and expand to normal operations.
 - Be ready to switch back to Phase 2 or Phase 1 based on local developments and directives of relevant authorities.
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Triaging and Screening



Triaging-Before coming to pool

- Check Temperature.
- History of Signs and symptoms like
 - Cough, cold, fever and loss of smell and taste, fatigue and shortness of breath.
 - Check for travel history
 - If positive for above then patient has to be discontinued for Aquatic Therapy services and direct them to relevant health care center. If negative then can undergo further screening



Screening

Routine for contraindications and precautions as per individual facility competency.

Patient Eligibility



Phase 1

- Vulnerable population* is excluded.
- Non Covid cases only.

Phase 2

- Vulnerable population* included but case by case at therapist discretion.
- Include patients who are stable and are in control for underlying conditions.
- Non Covid cases only.

Phase 3

- Include patients who are stable and are in control for underlying conditions.
- Other Vulnerable population* requiring therapy but not in control of underlying condition can be included but case by case at therapist discretion.
- Post Covid cases can be accepted for rehabilitation but only after two tests for Covid 19 is negative.

* Vulnerable population

People above 65 years, People living in long-term care facility, People of all ages with uncontrolled underlying medical conditions. Including: Chronic Lung Disease, Serious heart Conditions, immunocompromised, Severe obesity, Diabetes, Chronic Kidney Disease, Liver Disease

Aquatic Therapy in various phases of reopening

Phase 1

- 30% of capacity.
- Strict infection preventive measures.
- 30 minute break between appointments.
- 2 Patients should not be allowed in the same session.
- Cleaning and disinfection after each session .
- Entry of next patient only after exit of previous patient.
- Duration of treatment 30 to 40 minutes.

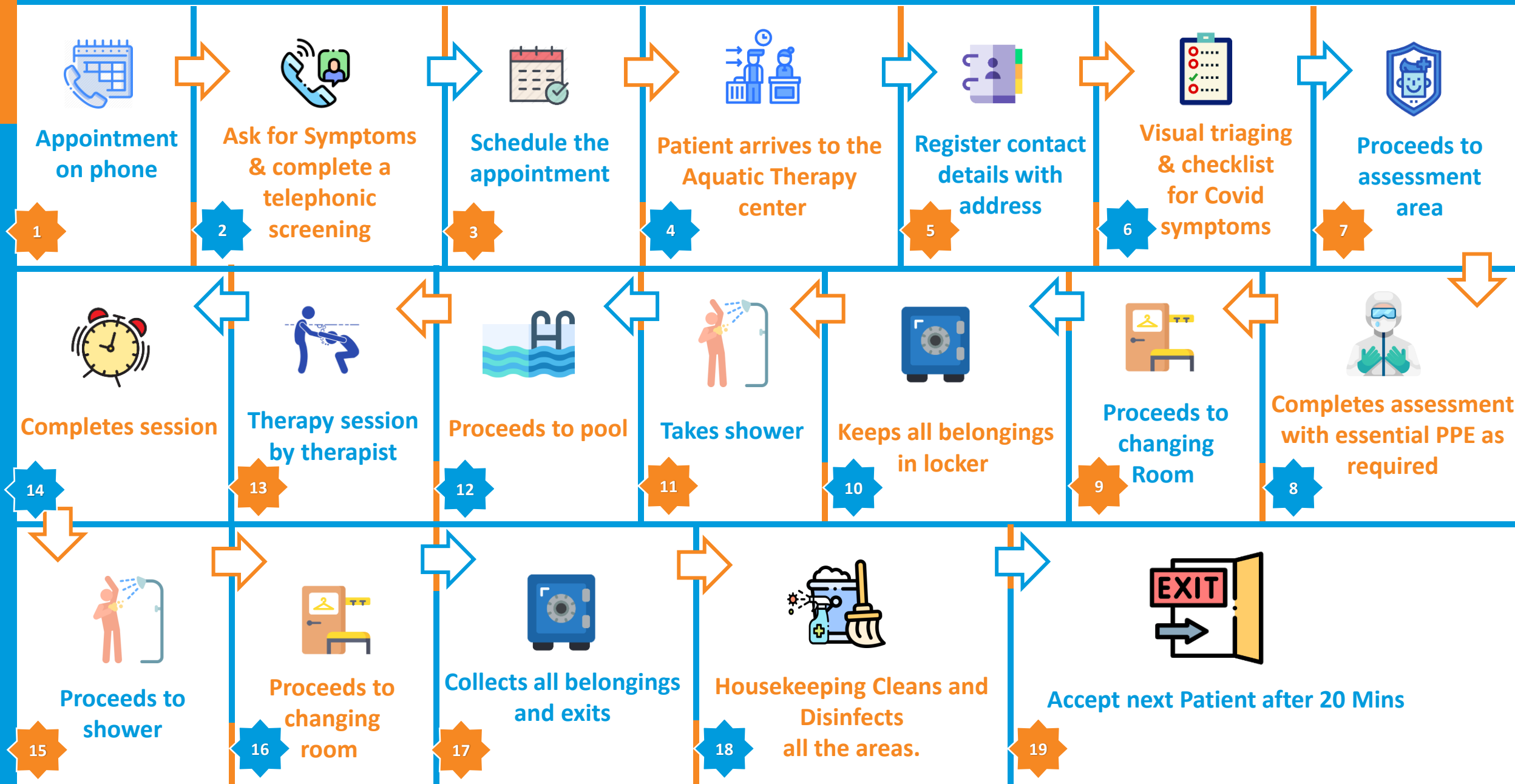
Phase 2

- 60% of capacity.
- Strict infection preventive measures.
- 20 minutes break between session.
- 2 Patients should not be allowed in the same session.
- Cleaning and disinfection after each session.
- Next patient can be in waiting area before exit of previous patient.
- Duration of treatment 40 to 50 minutes.

Phase 3

- 80% of capacity.
- Moderate preventive measures/as per local government directives.
- 15 minutes break between session.
- 2 Patients can be allowed in the same session with social distancing.
- Cleaning and disinfection after each session.
- Next patient can be in changing room.
- Duration of treatment as per therapist requirement.

Patient Pathway



Emergency Response

- Identify evacuation procedure from the pool.
- Establish an emergency response protocol for the facility.
- Identify nearby emergency services.
- Display the contact details in prominent areas.
- Establish specific role for personnel of the facility in response to emergency.
- The therapist should be certified in CPR and steps of CPR should be displayed in prominent areas.



Patient and family education

ATNI endorses awareness materials made available by Ministry of Health and family welfare on the following points:

- What is CORONA Virus?
- How does it spread?
- How to prevent the spread?
- What to do if I am experiencing the symptoms?

The resources are available on the website under awareness.

<https://www.mohfw.gov.in/>



It is recommended to give the awareness material to the patient during their first appointment.

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Document prepared by

- Dr Rajashree Fadnavis
- Dr Dipti Patil
- Dr Prachi Shah

Document reviewed and approved by

ATNI Review Team

