

# Final Report

## Compliance with Society guidelines in COVID 19: A Survey on members of society of Dermatologists, Venereologists and Leprologists of Nepal

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SODVELON

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## Executive Summary

COVID-19 seems to affect us in all the aspects of our life. It is essential to keep our services running by taking appropriate precautions based on our best of scientific knowledge. A guideline was published by Society of Dermatologists, Venereologists, and Leprologists of Nepal in the middle of April 2020 to safeguard the wellbeing of its members. This research was done to assess the compliance of this guideline among its members using a google survey. It was seen that only 45% of the members responded to the questionnaire. Only 55.6% of the respondents triaged patients while 84.4% used infection prevention measures as recommended by the society. Based on these findings it is recommended that Dermatologist should train themselves more in infection prevention measures in future in order to prevent themselves from acquiring COVID-19.

## Introduction

Because of ongoing pandemic of COVID-19, it is essential that Dermatologist are well protected from getting infection and preventing spread of disease among patients. A guideline was developed by ad hoc committee of SODVELON and was released on April 15th for management of Dermatology patients during COVID 19. The guideline was developed based on the evidence from different sources including international league of Dermatological societies, World health organization and epidemiological disease control division of Nepal<sup>1-3</sup> and modified by local expert for practical implications. The guidelines contains twelve points and ranges from guideline for seeing outpatient department to guide for disinfection to surgical procedures.<sup>4</sup> The main points of the guidelines includes 1) Deferring of patients in outpatient department for 3 months. 2) Attending only Dermatological emergencies 3) Following protective measures in Outpatient Department when seeing patients and 4) Triage of patients for COVID-19 while seeing patients. As the cases of Covid 19 is rising in Nepal, it is essential that dermatologist practice may be affected sooner or later. In order to ensure maximum protection of its member, there is need to see if the guidelines of practice laid down by society is adhered to or not. If there is lacunae, it can be corrected in timely manner to prevent infection transmission to both the patients and Dermatologists. If the guideline is inadequate as judged by participant it can be updated and improved. This study was undertaken in order to assess the quality of protection for its member and to update its previous guidelines. The objective of this study was to determine the current COVID 19 related practice amongst dermatologists of Nepal as measured against SODVELON standards.

## Materials and Methods

This was a descriptive cross-sectional study conducted in members of society of Dermatologists, Venereologists and leprologists of Nepal from 1<sup>st</sup> June 2020 to 1<sup>st</sup> July 2020. . A questionnaire was developed in google forms based on the guidelines of Society published on 15th April 2020. Additional questions was included with defined responses options. The invitation to participate was send via email to all the Nepal based members with every 72 hours reminders for next 2 weeks. Members were requested to enter relevant data in google forms. The form had two parts. First dealt with the personal details and the 2nd part dealt with the questionnaire related to society guidelines. All the data were entered in SPSS-20 and descriptive analysis of the data was done.

## Results

### Responses and profile of participants

In total, 90 (45%) of 200 respondents from different parts of the country provided data on the survey out of which 56.7% were males and 43.3% were females. The majority of respondent were from Kathmandu (66.7%) and the predominant age group (57.8%) was between 30 to 40 years

Of these 90 respondents, 51.1% had all types of dermatological practice, 41.1% were involved only in practice of general Dermatology while 7.8 % were involved predominantly in aesthetic practice. The duration of practice among these respondents was less than 5 years in 46.7%, 5 to 10 years in 27.8% and more than 10 years in 25.6 %.

### SODVELON standards

Out of all these respondents 81.1% knew that a guideline has been developed by society for management of Dermatology patients during COVID- 19 pandemic. Only 47.8 % of the respondents had deferred patients of outpatient department as per the guidelines. 66.7% of these respondents had attended dermatological emergencies and 84.4% were following protective measures as per the guidelines. Triage was done only by 55.6% of Dermatologists while seeing patients.

**Table 1: Sex distribution**

	Number	Percent
Male	51	56.7
Female	39	43.3
Total	90	100.0

**Table 2 : Age in years**

	Number	Percent
<30	3	3.3
30-40	52	57.8
40-50	24	26.7
50-60	3	3.3
>60	8	8.9
Total	90	100.0

**Table 3: Type of Dermatological practice**

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	Number	Percent
All	46	51.1
Aesthetic	7	7.8
General Dermatology	37	41.1
Total	90	100.0

**Table 4: Duration of practice**

	Number	Percent
<5	42	46.7
5-10	25	27.8
>10	23	25.6
Total	90	100.0

**Table 5: Do you know society has developed guidelines for management of Dermatology Patients in Nepal during the times of COVID -19 pandemic?**

	Number	Percent
No	10	11.1
Yes	73	81.1
got it but not gone through it	6	6.7
Thought it was not useful	1	1.1
Total	90	100.0

**Table 6: Have you deferred patient of outpatient department for 3 months as per the guidelines?**

	Number	Percent
No	47	52.2
Yes	43	47.8
Total	90	100.0

**Table 7: Have you attended Dermatological emergencies?**

	Number	Percent
<b>No</b>	<b>30</b>	<b>33.3</b>
<b>Yes</b>	<b>60</b>	<b>66.7</b>
<b>Total</b>	<b>90</b>	<b>100.0</b>

**Table 8: For those who are attending patients, are you following protective measures as per the guidelines of the society, for eg disinfection, physical distance?**

	Number	Percent
<b>No</b>	<b>11</b>	<b>12.2</b>
<b>Yes</b>	<b>76</b>	<b>84.4</b>
<b>Not practicing these days</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>3.3</b>
<b>Total</b>	<b>90</b>	<b>100.0</b>

**Table 9: Are you doing triage for the patients coming in your Outpatient department?**

	Number	Percent
<b>No</b>	<b>30</b>	<b>33.3</b>
<b>Yes</b>	<b>50</b>	<b>55.6</b>
<b>Not practicing these days</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>11.1</b>
<b>Total</b>	<b>90</b>	<b>100.0</b>

## Discussion

This study showed that out of all respondents 81.1% knew that a guideline has been formed for managing dermatological patients during COVID -19 pandemic. The study showed that 84.4% were following protective measures as instructed in the guidelines. This two findings are positive in the sense



that it will prevent Dermatologist from getting COVID-19 once there is re-opening of practice in full swing.

Surprisingly, it was seen that only 55.6% of Dermatologists used to triage the patients as recommended. This might expose Dermatologist to COVID-19 patients unknowingly and should there be any breach in protective measures, it will be hazardous to them. Another interesting finding of this survey is that 66.7% of the Dermatologists attended emergency. This fact shows that the emergency physician should be made aware of dermatological emergencies during COVID-19 pandemic.

The important fact which came out with this survey is that only 45% of total Dermatologists participated in survey. The inference could be that most of them are not technology friendly. As the present world is shifting towards virtual consultation, it is essential that we should be technically updated.

Covid-19 is highly infectious disease and health care workers are more at risk of acquiring the disease. Because of contagious nature, it is essential to follow a strict protocol for infection prevention. One of the study in Netherland showed that 5% of health care worker were SARS-COV 2 positive, however, the study couldn't rule out nosocomial spread.<sup>5</sup> In an another study, it was seen that front line health care workers were 3 times greater risk in acquiring covid-19 compared to general community.<sup>6</sup> In one of the study from tertiary hospital in Wuhan, China it was seen that infections occurred in early stage of disease outbreak, and that non-first line health care worker higher infection rate than first line health care worker.<sup>7</sup> In one of the Italian study the prevalence of current or probable previous infection was 3.4%.<sup>8</sup>

Because of the risk of transmission as shown by different studies above, it is essential that Dermatologist follow a strict protocol of infection prevention while seeing patients. It is also important that only essential services to be attended in order to minimize risk of exposure. The results of this study helps us remind our dermatologist's colleague to adhere 100% to the guidelines for infection prevention.

## Limitations of the study

The major limitation of this study as that the participants might not have responded deliberately or the participant's might have reported wrongly to the questions.

## Conclusions

Only 45% of the members of the society participated in the survey out of which 81.1% knew that the guidelines existed, 55.6% triaged the patients and 84.4% followed Infection prevention measures as per the guidelines. This shows that the society should be proactive to ensure adoption of these measures by its members in order to prevent COVID-19 infection in future.

## References

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2. <https://www.aad.org/member/practice/coronavirus/reopening-your-dermatology-practice>
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5. [https://doi.org/10.1016/S1473-3099\(20\)30527-2](https://doi.org/10.1016/S1473-3099(20)30527-2)
6. [https://doi.org/10.1016/S2468-2667\(20\)30179-1](https://doi.org/10.1016/S2468-2667(20)30179-1)
7. JAMA Network Open. 2020;3 (5):e209666. doi:10.1001/jamanetworkopen.2020.9666
8. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jhin.2020.06.021>

## Annexes

### Annex 1 : Questionnaire

#### 1<sup>st</sup> Part

1. What is the duration of your practice?
  - a. less than 5 years
  - b. 5-10 years
  - c. More than 10 years
2. What is type of your practice?
  - a. Only Hospital/university hospital based
  - b. Only Clinic based
  - c. Both
3. What type of Dermatological practice you do?
  - a. General Dermatology, Venereology, and Leprology predominantly
  - b. Aesthetic predominantly
  - c. Dermatosurgery including excisions /repair/Vitiligo surgery
  - d. All
4. Which part of the country you practice?
  - a. Kathmandu
  - b. Out of Kathmandu
5. What is your present age ?
  - a. 30-40 years
  - b. 40-50 year
  - c.50-60 years
  - d.More than 60 years
  - e. Less than 30 years

#### Part 2

1. Do you know society has developed guidelines for management of Dermatology Patients in Nepal?

a. Yes

b. No

c. I got the mail, but I didn't go through

d. I thought it was not useful

2. Have you deferred patient of outpatient department for 3 months as per the guidelines?

a. Yes

b. No

c. Others ...

3. Have you attended Dermatological emergencies?

a. Yes

b. No

c. Referred to other hospital with emergency services

4. For those who are attending patients, are you following protective measures as per the guidelines of the society, for eg disinfection, physical distance?

a. Yes

b. No

c. Hospitals are not bothered in doing so, so I am seeing patients without all these measures

d. Others

5. Are you doing triage for the patients coming in your Outpatient department?

a. Yes

b. No

c. I ve deferred patients at present.

6. Do you have any suggestions how society can be helpful to its member during this crisis?

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## Appendix 2: Informed Consent in Nepali

सुसूचित मन्जुरीनामा

म \_\_\_\_\_ (उमेर \_\_\_\_\_ वर्ष) ले \_\_\_\_\_ ले गर्न लाग्नु भएको \_\_\_\_\_ शिर्षकको अनुसन्धान सम्बन्धी संलग्न मिति २०७ / / को 'जानकारीपत्र/पुस्तिका' सुनेर/पढेर र प्रश्नोत्तर समेत गरेर यो अध्ययन-अनुसन्धान सम्बन्धमा जानकारी प्राप्त भयो ।

यो अनुसन्धान कार्यमा मेरो सहभागिता मेरो व्यक्तिगत इच्छामा भरपर्ने र मैले चाहेको खण्डमा कुनैपनि बेला यो अनुसन्धान प्रक्रियाबाट बाहिरिन पाउने भन्ने कुरा मैले बुझेको छु । यसको लागि मैले कुनै कारण दिनु नपर्ने र त्यसबाट मैले पाउने सेवा र मेरो कानुनी अधिकारमा असर नपर्ने समेत मलाई बुझाइएको छ ।

यस अनुसन्धानको प्रतिवेदन वा सम्बन्धित प्रकाशित कृतिहरूमा मेरो कुनै व्यक्तिगत परिचय खुल्ने जानकारी प्रकाशित हुनेछैन भन्ने कुरा मैले बुझेको छु ।

यी सबै कुराहरू जानी-बुझी, म यस अध्ययन-अनुसन्धानमा सहभागी हुन स्वेच्छाले राजी भई यो सुसूचित मन्जुरीनामामा सहिष्ठाप गरेको छु ।

सहभागीको सही \_\_\_\_\_

सहभागीको नाम थर \_\_\_\_\_

मिति : २०७ / /

सहभागीको बुढीआँलाकोल्याप्चे

साक्षीको सही \_\_\_\_\_

साक्षीको नाम थर \_\_\_\_\_

दायाँ	बायाँ

## Appendix 3: Ethical approval letter

त्रिभुवन विश्वविद्यालय  
चिकित्सा शास्त्र अध्ययन संस्थान  
डीनको कार्यालय, महाराजगंज  
पो.ब.नं.: १५२४, काठमाडौं, नेपाल।  
फोन नं. ४४१०९११, ४४१२०४०, ४४१३७२९, ४४१८१८७

पत्र संख्या / Ref.:- ११४(६-११) ०७७/०७८

मिति / Date:-

November 11, 2020

Research Department

Dr. Sudip Parajuli  
Lecturer  
Dept. of Dermatology  
MMc, IOM

Ref: Approval of Research Proposal

Dear Dr. Parajuli  
Thank you for the submission of your research proposal, entitled "**Compliance with society guidelines in COVID 19: A survey on members of Society of Dermatologists, Venereologists and Leprologists of Nepal.**"

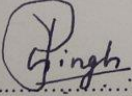
I am pleased to inform you that after careful evaluation, the above mentioned research proposal has been approved by Institutional Review Committee (IRC) of Institute of Medicine (IOM), Tribhuvan University on November 10, 2020.

As per our rules and regulations, the investigator has to strictly follow the protocol stipulated in the proposal. Any change in title, objectives, problem statement, research questions or hypothesis, methodology, implementation procedures, data management and budget may be made so and implemented only after prior approval from IRC. Thus, it is compulsory to submit the details of such changes intended with justifications prior to actual change in the protocol.

Please note that you can start recruiting the research participants only after getting approval letter from the IRC. You are also requested to follow the ethical guidelines of IRC of IOM.

After completion of your study you must submit a copy of final draft of your research to the Research Department.

If you have any further queries, please do not hesitate to contact us.

  
Prof. Dr. Yogendra P. Singh, MD, PhD  
Member Secretary  
Institutional Review Committee

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