

ICAM SECRETARIAT

COVID-19 RESPONSE PLAN

(Approved by the Council – July 2020)

1. BACKGROUND

On 31 December 2019, China, reported a cluster of 27 pneumonia cases with unknown virus. It was later reported that a novel coronavirus (the virus causing COVID-19) had been detected as the causative agent for cases of pneumonia.

On 30 January 2020, the World Health Organization (WHO) declared this first outbreak of novel coronavirus a 'public health emergency of international concern and following this, the Malawi Government on 20th March 2020 declared Malawi a State of Disaster due to the Coronavirus attack. The first positive cases were reported in Malawi on 2 April 2020.

COVID-19 transmission has been escalating with 2,716 confirmed cases in Malawi as at 16 July 2020. Local transmissions (1,862) have increased rapidly surpassing imported cases (854).

COVID -19 is real. It has turned the word economy upside down. Its impact on business is huge and some companies have closed, others have scaled down and yet others have laid off staff.

COVID -19 has not spared institutions. The attack on an employee is an attack on all employees and all who come into contact with such employees.

In view of the foregoing, the Institute has developed a response plan in case one or more members of staff test positive for COVID 19.

2. RESPONSE PLAN

The following steps will be followed to help ensure the health and safety of others in the Institute and to reduce the likelihood of additional transmissions.

2.1. Check with staff member (s) who tested positive

Once the diagnosis is confirmed, the member(s) of staff will follow all medical recommendations, including quarantine for 14 days to monitor symptoms.

Management will confirm if staff had symptoms of COVID-19 while they were either:

- i. At work
- ii. Within 48 hours after leaving work

The symptoms of COVID-19 include fever, cough, difficulty breathing, sore throat, runny nose, nausea, vomiting, or diarrhea.

The member of staff should seek medical treatment immediately if symptoms worsen.

2.2. Inform staff

- i. Notify the Institute staff of the diagnosis and ask the following questions of each person:
 - When were they last in contact with the individual diagnosed with COVID-19?
 - What was the date of the last contact?
 - How long was the contact?
 - What was the approximate distance of the contact?
 - Are they experiencing symptoms?

Staff will be requested to notify management immediately if they experience any change in symptoms.

- ii. Determine the last day that the person with COVID-19 was at the workplace.
- iii. Figure out who had close contact with the ill person, within 48 hours of that person feeling sick. (Close contact is defined as being within 2 meters for more than 10 minutes while the person with COVID-19 was or was not wearing a facemask, or having direct contact with their body fluids or secretions while they were not wearing a facemask. Close contact also includes people who live with, take care of, or are taken care of by the person with COVID-19.)
- iv. Tell close contacts that they must quarantine for 14 days since the last day that the ill person was at work.
- v. Give all other staff members a General Exposure Advisory. They should self-monitor for symptoms for 14 days after the last day that the case was at work. They should contact a healthcare provider (Government toll free numbers) if they develop symptoms.

2.3. Office closure

The Institute will temporarily close the offices immediately a staff member test positive for COVID 19. The following measures will be taken:

- i. The premises will be disinfected to ensure the safety of all staff and customers.
- ii. All the members of staff will be on self-quarantine. A second test will be administered to those that tested negative after a 14-day period and prior to re-opening of the offices.
- iii. Staff shall only return to work upon a negative test certified by the Blantyre District Health Office.

2.4. Business Continuity Plan

During the period of the closure, the Institute will continue to operate remotely. The following will be done:

- i. A communication will be sent to all members, students and stakeholders through different communication channels (emails, sms, print media adverts, social media adverts) informing them of the closure and the steps taken by the Institute to manage the situation.
- ii. The Institute will provide contact details for all key persons to ensure that service delivery is not disrupted.
- iii. Members and students will be encouraged to continue using electronic payment channels has been communicated throughout the COVID-19 period.