

# **HIGHLY PATHOGENIC AVIAN INFLUENZA (HPAI):**

## **GUIDELINES ON THE USE OF PERSONAL PROTECTIVE EQUIPMENTS FOR WORKERS INVOLVED IN THE MASS SLAUGHTER OF ANIMALS POTENTIALLY INFECTED WITH HPAI**

### **1. GENERAL INFORMATION**

Avian influenza is a highly contagious disease of birds, whereby exposure to infected poultry and their faeces or dust/soil contaminated with faeces can result in human infection.

Protection measures must be adopted by all workers involved in the mass slaughter of infected animals. It must be stressed that general standard precautions must be used as well as a high level of hygiene practiced at all times. This includes:

- Rigorous and frequent hand washing and antiseptics (hand hygiene);
- Use of personal protective equipment when handling infected chickens, excretions, secretions etc;
- Appropriate disinfection procedures (including for environmental clean up) and handling of waste.

## **2. PERSONAL PROTECTIVE EQUIPMENT**

Cullers and transporters involved in the mass slaughter should be provided with the appropriate personal protective equipment:

- √ Protective clothing, preferably coveralls plus an impermeable apron, OR
- √ Surgical gowns with long cuffed sleeves plus an impermeable apron
- √ Heavy duty rubber or polyurethane boots that can be disinfected or protective foot covers that can be discarded
- √ Single use N95 (or equivalent specification) masks-ensure fitted correctly
- √ Protective eyewear/goggles that can be decontaminated
- √ Heavy duty rubber work gloves that can be disinfected
- √ Disposable cap or head cover

In addition, the following items are needed:

- √ Biohazard bags
- √ Plastic bags for items to be decontaminated
- √ "zip loc" bags for disposal of used N95 (or equivalent specification) mask
- √ Personal thermometer
- √ Alcohol based hand rub solution
- √ Alcohol based disinfectant wipes for reusable protective eyewear
- √ Sodium hypochlorite (to be diluted to 1/100 of 5% solution)

Environmental clean up should be carried in areas of culling, using the same protective measures as above.

### **3. REMOVING PERSONAL PROTECTIVE EQUIPMENT**

Cullers and transporters must be taught on proper procedures on the removal of personal protective equipment in the correct order:

1. Remove gown from neck down first, folding "dirty" surface inwards. Roll gently and tie before discarding into the biohazard bag.
2. Remove boots and place in plastic bag for decontamination ; or
3. Clean and disinfect boots by washing in soap and water followed by a disinfectant solution
4. Remove gloves (if possible decontaminate first using alcohol hand rub or wash in soapy water)
5. Use alcohol-based handrub or wash hands
6. Remove cap or head cover
7. Remove mask- by grasping elastic behind ears-do not touch the front of the mask
8. Use alcohol-based handrub or wash hands
  
9. Remove goggles. Disinfect using the alcohol based disinfectant wipes
10. Use alcohol handrub again or wash hands
11. Place all reusable equipment into plastic bag after it has been cleaned and disinfected
12. Place all disposable equipment into biohazard bag for incineration.

#### **4. OTHER REQUIREMENTS AND CONSIDERATIONS**

- √ Always practice a high level of hygiene at all times- always wash hands after every procedure, removal of personal protective equipment and after handling equipment.
- √ Individuals identified as cullers and transporters are advised to be vaccinated with the current WHO recommended influenza vaccine. They are also recommended to take antiviral prophylaxis- Oseltamivir phosphate (Tamiflu).
- √ Take care not to recontaminate yourself after removal of personal protective equipment.
- √ Shower if possible after every culling operation.
- √ Any items that can be used again such as rubber gloves or boots should be washed very well in soap/detergent and water. Wash twice to ensure the items are clean.
- √ Wash clothes worn during the procedure thoroughly- use detergent and hot or warm water. Dry clothes in the sun.
- √ Check temperatures twice daily. Keep a personal diary of contacts. In the event of developing fever, limit contacts and seek medical advise.

*Reference:*

*WHO Interim Recommendations for The protection of Persons involved In The Mass Slaughter of Animals Infected with Highly Pathogenic Avian Influenza Viruses; WHO WPRO Document 26<sup>th</sup> January 2004*

*Guidelines for the Use of Seasonal Influenza Vaccine In Humans At Risk Of H5N1 Infection; WHO Document*