

# SPECIAL CARE KIT

RESOURCES TO SUPPORT INDIVIDUALS WITH SPECIAL NEEDS FOR COVID-19

## INTRODUCTION

In this current pandemic situation, there are vulnerable populations who may be suspected of or diagnosed with COVID-19. Given that it can be an anxiety-inducing experience for individuals with special needs as well as their caregivers, they may require additional support to understand what is happening or is going to happen to them. This will help the individuals cooperate and cope better with the procedures of testing, diagnosis and treatment. On the other hand, frontline healthcare workers may not have the experience and know-how in managing these individuals. This can also increase their stress in an already demanding work environment for the healthcare workers.

This set of materials aim to provide support for the individuals with special needs who have to go through COVID-19 procedures. Clinical staff will also be able to use the materials to better communicate with and manage individuals with special needs presenting in their care, from the PHPCs, to ambulance staff, emergency rooms, and admission in the isolation wards. The materials are visually-enhanced, which can be used for individuals with special needs, intellectual disabilities, or any person who have limited communication and language ability to interact with the clinical staff.

We hope these materials can not only support the vulnerable populations during the COVID-19 pandemic, but also become a resource for the different agencies/organisations beyond the current situation, as we strive to build an inclusive society.

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

These resources are put together with support from the Ministry of Health (MOH) in collaboration with the following organisations:



## HOW TO USE

**Individuals with special needs may require additional support to understand what is happening around them.**

### **For clinical staff**

Provide support to the individual suspected with COVID-19 by:

1. Checking in with the caregiver about the level of understanding of the individual with special needs.
2. Using one of the social boards/stories to explain what is happening. Choose the relevant material based on the individual's ability to understand. Make copies for the individual to refer to if necessary.
3. Helping the individual reduce anxiety by using the visual cards.

Do:

- a. Speak slowly and calmly
- b. Use simple words
- c. Allow time for the individual to respond
- d. Enlist the help of the caregiver when necessary
- e. Note: Some individuals may need to hold on to a preferred object to calm down.

### **For caregiver**

1. Support your child by completing the "About Me" form and pass a copy of the form to the doctor/nurse. You may want to prepare a few copies to pass to the different people who may be supporting your child such as the PHPC staff, ambulance staff, emergency staff and the ward staff.
2. Inform the clinic/ambulance staff that your child has special needs.
3. Use the social story/board to explain to your child what is happening
4. Use any visuals that your child is familiar with in addition to the suggested visuals provided.

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## **Visual instructions to help the individual relax and stay calm**

RELAXATION EXERCISES TO HELP THE INDIVIDUAL TO REDUCE ANXIETY:

- DEEP BREATHING
- HAPPY THOUGHTS
- MUSCLE RELAXATION

## **Helping the individual to understand what is going to happen/is happening**

VISUAL SCHEDULE – FROM CLINIC TO HOSPITAL EMERGENCY ROOM

SOCIAL STORY – FROM CLINIC TO HOSPITAL

## **Information sheet for caregiver to complete and pass to clinical staff to help clinical staff understand and support the individual**

ABOUT ME – INFORMATION OF INDIVIDUAL



From PHPC/Clinics and Ambulances

## RELAXATION EXERCISE: DEEP BREATHING

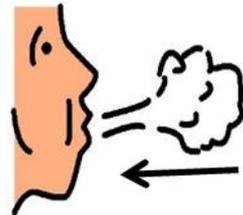
**Step 1:**



**Good Sitting Posture**

Sit up and put your feet on the floor.

**Step 2:**



**Take A Deep Breath**

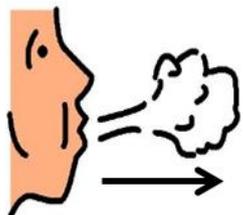
**Step 3:**



**Hold Your Breath**

Count to 4 quietly in your head.

**Step 4:**



**Breathe Out From  
Your Mouth**

Count to 4 quietly in your head.

**Step 5: Repeat 5 times**

## RELAXATION EXERCISE: HAPPY THOUGHTS

**Step 1:**



**Good Sitting  
Posture**

Sit up and put your feet on the floor.

**Step 2:**



**Think Happy  
Thoughts**

Think about something you really like.

## RELAXATION EXERCISE: MUSCLE RELAXATION

**Step 1:**



**Good Sitting Posture**

Sit up and put your feet on the floor.

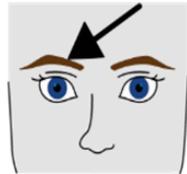
**Step 2:**



**Clench Your Hands  
And Arms**

Count to 10, then relax.

**Step 3:**



**Raise Your Eyebrows  
As High As You Can**

Count to 10, then relax.

**Step 4:**



**Stretch Your Legs And  
Point Your Toes Up**

Count to 10, then relax.

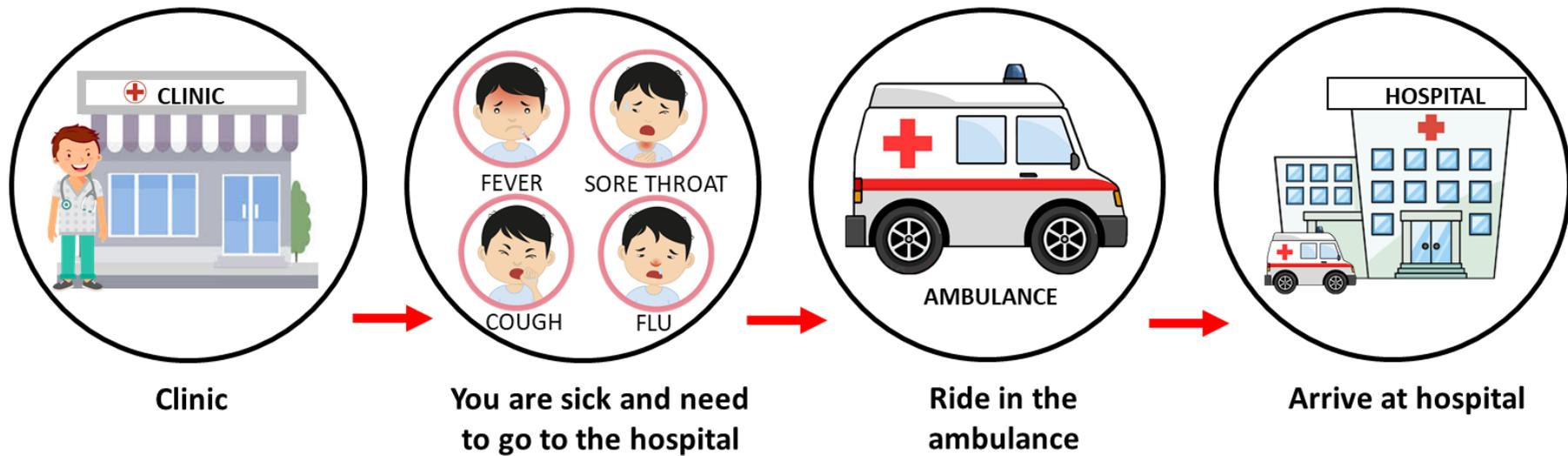
**Step 5:**



**Squeeze All The Muscles In Your Body**

Count to 10, then relax.

## VISUAL SCHEDULE FOR JOURNEY FROM CLINIC TO EMERGENCY



## SOCIAL STORY: FROM CLINIC TO HOSPITAL



I saw the doctor at the clinic today.



FLU



COUGH



FEVER



SORE THROAT

My doctor says I need to go to the hospital as I am sick.



An ambulance will take me there.



I go to the ambulance with Mummy/Daddy. There are so many sounds in this space! Mummy/Daddy is with me so I feel safe.



I am now at the hospital to see the doctor for my health



I can stay brave and strong!

## ABOUT ME

My name is \_\_\_\_\_.

I am \_\_\_\_\_ years old. I am a boy / girl.



“Hi Doctor/Nurse!  
When you come in,  
please tell me your  
name, who you are and  
what you are doing.”

I communicate through...

Sentences

Pictures

Words

Others: \_\_\_\_\_

Gestures

I like: 😊	I don't like: ☹️

I feel scared/upset when...

I feel better when...

I might need help with...

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## Helping the individual to understand what is going to happen/is happening

VISUAL SCHEDULE FOR EMERGENCY VISIT (For individuals with lower language ability or communication using pictures)

SOCIAL STORY: EMERGENCY VISIT (For individuals who can read or understand a simple story)

## Helping the individual to understand testing processes

### NOSE SWAB TEST

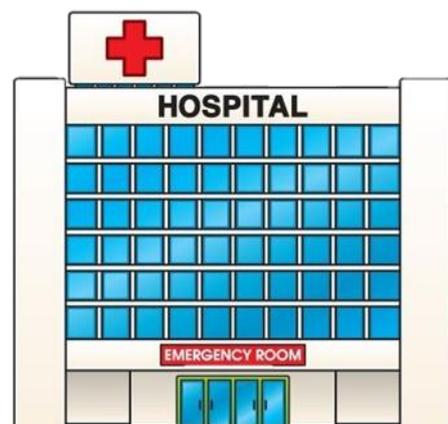
- Visual schedule
- Social story

### BLOOD TEST

- Visual schedule
- Social story

### ADMISSION/STAYING IN THE HOSPITAL

- Visual schedule
- Social story



Testing and Diagnosis at Hospitals/Isolation Centres

## VISUAL SCHEDULE FOR EMERGENCY VISIT



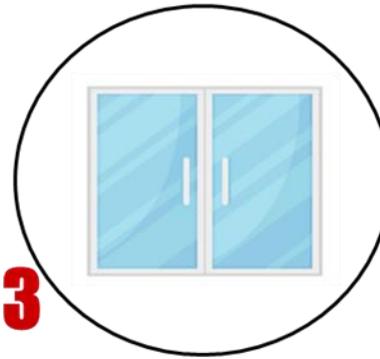
**1**

ENTER THE EMERGENCY  
DEPARTMENT



**2**

REGISTER



**3**

ENTER THE ISOLATION  
WARD



**4**

ENTER THE ISOLATION  
ROOM



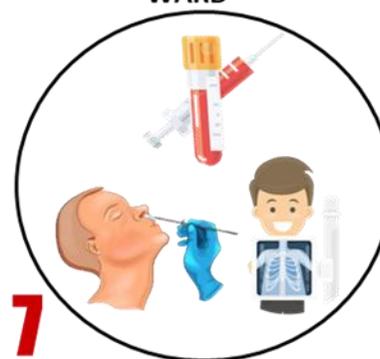
**5**

NURSE WILL CHECK HEART  
BEAT



**6**

EXAMINATION BY DOCTOR



**7**

TESTS



**8**

GO HOME/ADMISSION

## SOCIAL STORY: EMERGENCY VISIT



Mummy/Daddy and I are waiting to see the doctor at the hospital.



There are many sounds and movements around me. My Mummy/Daddy is with me. I will be okay.



The nurse brings us to a room and I can sit on the bed for my health check. I can be calm.



The nurse uses some machines to check me. They feel cold but they do not hurt me.



Check Blood

Check Nose

Check Body

The doctor checks my body to make sure I am alright. The doctor needs to do some tests.

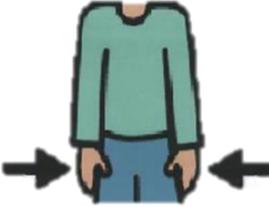
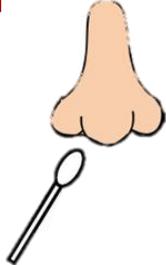


I feel uncomfortable, but I listen to Mummy/Daddy. I stay still, breathe in and breathe out and close my eyes. Soon it will be over!



I can stay brave and strong!

## VISUAL SCHEDULE FOR NOSE SWAB TEST

Doctor	Sit down	Hands on side	Tilt head up	Nose swab	Well done!
<b>1</b> 	<b>2</b> 	<b>3</b> 	<b>4</b> 	<b>5</b> 	<b>6</b> 

## SOCIAL STORY: NOSE SWAB TEST



My doctor needs to check my nose.



Mummy/Daddy is with me so I feel safe. I can be brave and stay strong.



The nurse will help me. I will listen to the nurse.



I close my eyes and tilt my head back.

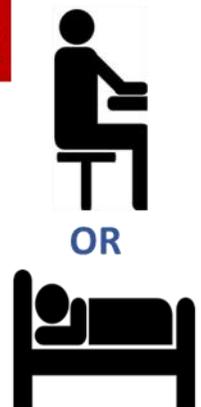
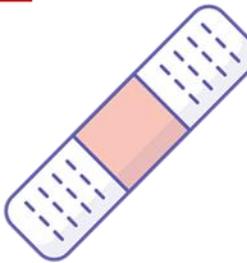


It may feel uncomfortable but Mummy/Daddy is here.



Soon, it will be over!

## VISUAL SCHEDULE FOR BLOOD TEST

Doctor	Sit down / Lie down	Clean hand	Prick	Band aid	Well done!
<b>1</b> 	<b>2</b>  OR	<b>3</b> 	<b>4</b> 	<b>5</b> 	<b>6</b> 

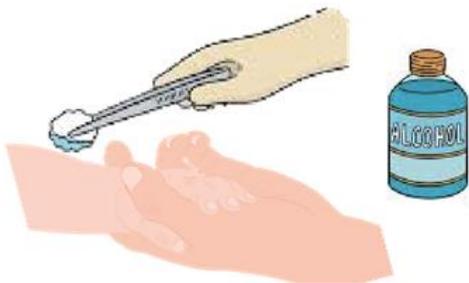
## SOCIAL STORY: BLOOD TEST



My doctor needs to test my blood so he/she can help me get better.



Mummy/Daddy is here to keep me safe.



The doctor cleans my hand. It may feel cold but it does not hurt.



I may feel a pinch, but I can be brave!

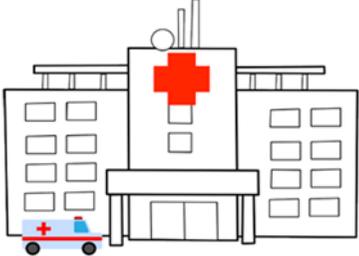
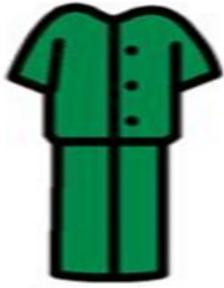


I will try to stay still.

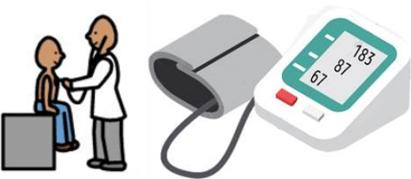


I can stay brave and strong. It will all be over soon!

## VISUAL SCHEDULE FOR ADMISSION/STAYING IN THE HOSPITAL

<p>1</p> 	<p>2</p> 	<p>3</p> 	<p>4</p> 
<p><b>Emergency Room</b></p>	<p><b>Sit on Wheelchair</b></p>	<p><b>Put on Wrist Tag</b></p>	<p><b>Take Lift</b></p>
<p>5</p> 	<p>6</p> 	<p>7</p> 	
<p><b>Enter Ward</b></p>	<p><b>Check Heart Beat</b></p>	<p><b>Change Into Hospital Clothes</b></p>	

# SOCIAL STORY: ADMISSION/STAYING IN THE HOSPITAL

 <p>FLU COUGH FEVER SORE THROAT</p>	<p>I am not feeling well.</p>
	<p>The doctor says I need to stay in the hospital to get well.</p>
	<p>Mummy/Daddy pushes me on a wheelchair to go to my room. I take a lift up to the ward. Mummy/Daddy is with me.</p>
	<p>We enter the ward. It is big and spacious. The nurses will take care of me.</p>
	<p>A nurse uses some machines to check me. They are cold but they do not hurt.</p> <p>I can be brave and strong!</p>
	<p>I wear the tag so that the doctors will know when I am feeling better.</p>
	<p>I get to change into special hospital pyjamas.</p>
	<p>Mummy/Daddy is here with me. I will go home when I feel better. I will be okay.</p>

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**Helping the individual understand the daily routines when staying in the hospital**

VISUAL SCHEDULE

**Helping the individual with lower communication skills express his/her needs**

MY COMMUNICATION BOARD



Daily Management in the Ward

## VISUAL SCHEDULE FOR DAILY ROUTINE WHEN STAYING IN THE HOSPITAL

	Morning
	Breakfast
	Doctor check
	Rest
	Lunch
	Rest
	Doctor check
	Tea
	Rest
	Dinner
	Rest
	Wash up
	Bedtime

## MY COMMUNICATION BOARD

<p><b>Food</b></p> 	<p><b>Milk/Drink</b></p> 	<p><b>Toilet</b></p> 	<p><b>Blanket</b></p> 
<p><b>Mummy/Daddy</b></p> 	<p><b>Phone</b></p> 	<p><b>Toy</b></p> 	<p><b>Pain</b></p> 

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## Helping the individual to understand what is going to happen/is happening

FROM HOME TO EMERGENCY/HOSPITAL

- Visual schedule
- Social story

## Helping the individual to stay calm

RELAXATION EXERCISES TO HELP THE INDIVIDUAL TO REDUCE ANXIETY:

- DEEP BREATHING
- HAPPY THOUGHTS
- MUSCLE RELAXATION

## Helping the healthcare workers to understand the individual

ABOUT ME – INFORMATION OF INDIVIDUAL

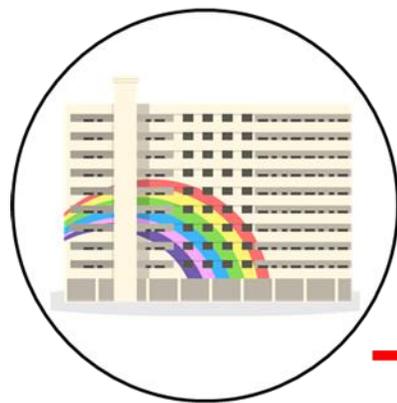
## Supporting the caregivers

CAREGIVER GUIDELINES FOR COVID-19 EMERGENCY



For Caregivers' Use

## VISUAL SCHEDULE FOR JOURNEY FROM HOME TO EMERGENCY



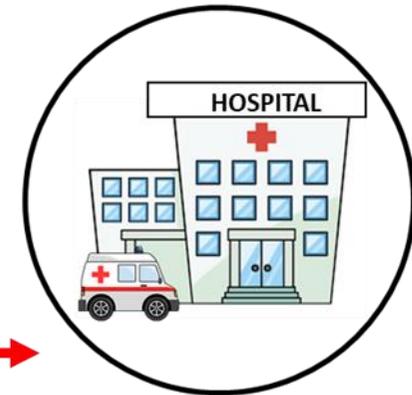
At home



You are sick and  
Mummy/Daddy calls for  
help



Ride in the  
ambulance



Hospital

## SOCIAL STORY: FROM HOME TO HOSPITAL



FLU



COUGH



FEVER



SORE THROAT

I am feeling unwell while I am at home.



My Mummy/Daddy is worried and calls for help.



I go into the ambulance with Mummy/Daddy. There are so many sounds in this space!



Mummy/Daddy is with me so I feel safe. I can be brave and stay strong on the way to the hospital.



I am now at the hospital to see the doctor. The doctor will help me.



I can go home when I am better.

## RELAXATION EXERCISE: DEEP BREATHING

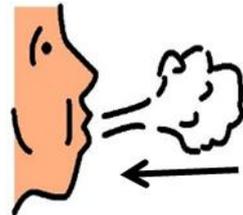
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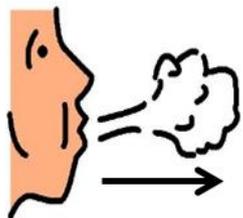
**Step 3:**



**Hold Your Breath**

Count to 4 quietly in your head.

**Step 4:**



**Breathe Out From  
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Count to 4 quietly in your head.

**Step 5: Repeat 5 times**

## RELAXATION EXERCISE: HAPPY THOUGHTS

**Step 1:**



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**Think Happy  
Thoughts**

Think about something you really like.

## RELAXATION EXERCISE: MUSCLE RELAXATION

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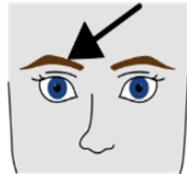
**Step 2:**



**Clench Your Hands  
And Arms**

Count to 10, then relax.

**Step 3:**



**Raise Your Eyebrows  
As High As You Can**

Count to 10, then relax.

**Step 4:**



**Stretch Your Legs And  
Point Your Toes Up**

Count to 10, then relax.

**Step 5:**



**Squeeze All The Muscles In Your Body**

Count to 10, then relax.

## ABOUT ME

My name is \_\_\_\_\_.

I am \_\_\_\_\_ years old. I am a boy / girl.



“Hi Doctor/Nurse!  
When you come in,  
please tell me your  
name, who you are and  
what you are doing.”

I communicate through...

Sentences

Pictures

Words

Others: \_\_\_\_\_

Gestures

I like: 😊	I don't like: ☹️

I feel scared/upset when...

I feel better when...

I might need help with...

## CAREGIVER GUIDELINES FOR COVID-19 EMERGENCY

Dear Caregivers,

You may want to use this with your child:

### 1. Social Story:

- a. From Clinic to Hospital
- b. Emergency Visit
- c. Staying in the Hospital

The stories will help better explain the above procedures to reduce your child's anxiety due to the COVID-19 screening procedures.

### 2. Child Profile Form

Complete the "About Me" form to help doctors and nurses better support your child in the event that he/she has to undergo any screening/admission procedures. Pass it to any healthcare staff after completion.

### 3. Self-care

Your child may feel your anxiety. It is important for you to stay calm.

### 4. Additional resources

For more resources, you may refer to:

[www.superherome.sg/covid19](http://www.superherome.sg/covid19).

### 5. Available hotlines

If you feel the need to talk to someone, you may wish to call up the following hotlines:

Organisation	Hotline
<b>National Care Hotline (24 hours)</b>	6202 6868
<b>Caregivers Alliance Singapore (CAL)</b> (Weekdays 9am to 6pm, excluding public holidays)	West Cluster: 9720 7590 9770 7996  Central Cluster: 9729 8628 9826 7115  East Cluster: 9736 9170
<b>Caregivers Association for Mentally Ill (CAMI)</b>	6782 9371
<b>TOUCH Caregiver Support</b> (Weekdays 9am to 5pm)	6804 6555



The information provided in this publication is meant purely for educational purposes and may not be used as a substitute for medical diagnosis or treatment. You should seek the advice of your doctor or a qualified healthcare provider before starting any treatment or if you have any questions related to your health, physical fitness or medical condition.

Information is correct at the time of printing (May 2020) and subject to revision without prior notice.