

For the opening of Covid-19 hotels

Press release from the National Academy of Medicine

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The Covid-19 epidemic, which killed more than 10,000 people in France in 10 weeks, has not yet reached a stabilized plateau phase after three weeks of containment.

Despite they are effective, the barrier measures (social distancing, hand washing) accompanying the containment procedures must be further reinforced, in particular by the compulsory wearing of a spray-suppression mask in public spaces [1], in order to reduce the reproduction rate of Covid-19 infection to a value below 1. All of these measures should be maintained during the post-containment phase.

There is considerable evidence that transmission of Sars CoV-2 occurs in the majority of cases in family households. A Chinese survey of 344 cluster episodes totalling 1308 cases studied in Guangdong and Sichuan provinces showed that most of these episodes (78% and 85% respectively) occurred within families [2].

The current recommendations for Covid-19 patients with a simple or moderate form of the infection are strict confinement at home and the observation of barrier measures to avoid contamination of the patient's environment "until recovery". Experience has shown that it is extremely difficult to adhere to these guidelines for the necessary time in a small home space, when many people live there, or have risk factors. These difficulties favour the occurrence of secondary cases in the patient's environment. The same risk of intra-domiciliary transmission exists around a convalescent after hospitalization for Covid-19.

In order to reduce the risk of intra-domiciliary transmission which would contribute to the maintenance of the epidemic, the National Academy of Medicine recommends that hotel establishments (or other similar places of residence) be made available to Regional Health Agencies to accommodate, until clinical recovery and negativation of viral detection tests, patients with simple or moderate forms of Covid-19, or convalescents of this disease leaving hospital, on a voluntary basis. This provision would not apply where the characteristics of the patient's home and environment allow for effective containment.

[1] Academy Press Release: "Covid-19 Pandemic: Enhanced barrier measures during containment and in the exit phase of containment".

[2] WHO. Report of the WHO-China Joint Mission on Coronavirus Disease 2019 (COVID-19)