COVID 19 PANDEMIC: STRATEGIES FOR CROWDED OPDS.

Here are a few suggestions:-

- We should never allow more than 5-10 people at any given time waiting for their turn in the OPD halls. Patients need to sit in the OPD at their allotted time slot given by the receptionist.
- Discourage healthy patients from coming to the clinic for routine check-up/ immunizations for the next 2 weeks.
- Among the mildly sick patients allot a different time & a separate place to sit for patients with features of a respiratory (flu-like) illness (patient identification & triaging).
- Encourage your patients to call up over the phone for any mild respiratory illness. Many can be treated with simple remedies...( hopefully we'll be protected from medicolegal issues of phone consultations).
- Limit the number of persons who accompany the patients to the OPD clinics. No senior citizens to accompany patients to the OPD.
- No medical representatives to visit doctors for two weeks.
- No visitors for the inpatients.
- Avoid crowding at near-by canteens/ pharmacies while waiting.
- Patients to wash their hands with soap and water before entering the OPD hall. Patients with a cold, cough to wear a mask, having posters of hand hygiene, cough etiquette, corona disease, and warning about asymptomatic carriers, pasted at appropriate places in the hall.
- Encourage cashless transactions. People at cash counters to frequently scrub hands with sanitizers/ sterilium.
- Having a person standing at the entrance spraying sanitiser/ spirit over the hands of all who come to the OPD.
- Focus on cleaning in OPD (Use 1% hypochlorite solution freshly prepared) - Every 4 hrs: railings, doorknobs, surfaces (reception desk, doctors table) - Floor every 24hrs - Stethoscope and thermometer (prefer axillary) between every patient.
- All doctors in OPD and front desk receptionists, nurses to wear a mask.
- Doctors, nurses change dress when going home, clean fomites (Mobile phones, stethoscope) before going home).
- Having a well-ventilated OPD waiting hall.
- OPD timings avoid overcrowding.