



AIR-NET- Testing anti-inflammatories for the treatment of bronchiectasis

## Working Practice Guideline: Conducting the 6-minute walk test

### IDENTIFYING A SPACE FOR THE 6MWT

The same space/corridor should be used for each assessment

- The space should have a level floor (i.e. no steps or slopes) and be straight (i.e. no corners).
- The space should have no obstacles (doors, chairs, people etc.)
- Ideally, the walking course should be 20 metres long so that 1 lap is 40 metres.
- The space should be quiet enough for the participant to clearly hear your instructions.
- Any clocks or timers should not be visible to the participant while the test is being conducted.
- You will need to pre-measure the walking distance. The turning points at either end should be marked e.g. with a cone or stationary IV pole. If it's possible to do so, marking intervals (e.g. every 1 metre) will help you count any partially completed laps.
- When initially setting up the area for the 6MWT, be as accurate as possible with your measurements.
- A chair should be available for the participant to rest if they are struggling with the test or for after the test has been completed. Also see safety considerations below.
- There should be easy access to a telephone and appropriate equipment in case of an emergency, e.g. resuscitation trolley, oxygen, BP machine. Please consider the requirements of your patient population and prepare appropriately

### PREPARATION

- If participant regularly uses salbutamol or GTN preparations for exercising, ensure that these are with the patient for the duration of the test.
- The walking test is conducted in an enclosed corridor on a course 20 meters long.
- The corridor will be free of obstacles and distractions.
- It will be divided into marked 1 meter sections, where this is not possible a measuring wheel will be used.
- Chairs will be placed at each end of the course so that the participant may rest when needed.



## PROCEDURE

- Instruct the participant to walk from one end to the other for six minutes. During the six minutes they may rest when and where necessary, but they will be encouraged to exercise to the point of maximum ability. Participants may terminate the walk prior to the 6 minutes only if severe shortness of breath, muscular pain, dizziness or angina symptoms develop. If a patient becomes unwell during the walk details should be entered in the Comments and Progress log and in the patient's medical notes. If the walk is terminated early then it should not be reattempted for that visit.
- Participants will use their usual walking aids.
- Start stopwatch at the same time as saying 'go' to the participant.
- The supervisor will walk with the participant but discourage them from talking during the walk.
- Encourage participant every 30 seconds by saying "You're doing well" or "Keep up the good work" i.e. standardised encouragement.
- Note the number of times the patient completes one 20m section.
- Note the number of times the patient stops.
- At the end of 6 minutes say "stop" to participant.
- Measure the distance covered to the nearest meter and record in the CRF along with the