EXAMINATION OF EYELIDS BY CASE FINDERS

The potential risk of transmission of COVID-19, either from a case finder to a person being examined, or the other way around, has required some changes in case finding for trichiasis. The case finder must be properly wearing a face mask. If the person is being examined does not have a face mask, they should be requested to put a piece of cloth over their nose and mouth. In addition, the case finder should avoid touching the person being examined. To achieve case finding in this environment, the case finder needs to follow a series of steps, as follows:

* Use a torchlight for examination. Ensure that the torch has a very bright light
* Examine the patient in a shaded, outside area.
* Ensure you are level or slightly below the patient, never above the patient.
* Ask the patient to look straight ahead. Shine the torch from the side. First, look straight ahead, then look from the side, examining the upper eyelid margin and the eyelashes to see if any eyelashes are touching the eyeball.
* Ask the patient to look up (looking up with his/her eyes, not with his/her head). Shine your torchlight from below unto the eyelid margin. Again, look straight ahead, then look from the side, examining for any eyelashes that are touching the eyeball.
* Ask the patient to slightly lift the eyelid by gently pulling on the upper eyelid skinfold using their little finger (preferably). Examine for presence of eyelashes rubbing on the eyeball while still shining the torchlight from below.
* Remember to ask if the patient has been pulling out their eyelashes. If they are pulling out their eyelashes be sure to check for any short eyelashes touching the eyeball.