

IPC5.2012 Minimise the risk of exposure to blood and body fluids while providing care

OVERVIEW

This standard concerns minimising the risk, to yourself and others, of infection as a result of exposure to blood and other body fluids while providing care. It applies to all health and social care environments, including community and domiciliary settings and ambulance care settings. Injuries from sharps, bites and splashes are common types of incidents reported. Injuries from contaminated sharps pose the greatest risk of acquiring blood borne infections. If you are not exposed to blood or other body fluids or contaminated items of equipment or waste there is no risk of acquiring blood borne infections from patients/service users/staff. Cleaning and disinfecting are the terms that are used in this standard however in some areas the term 'decontamination' is used. 'Decontamination' is an umbrella term which incorporates cleaning, disinfecting and sterilising as appropriate. Users of this standard will need to ensure that practice reflects up to date information and policies. Version 2

KNOWLEDGE AND UNDERSTANDING

You will need to know and understand:

- 1.relevant standard infection prevention and control precautions, national legislation/guidance and local policies/procedures
- 2.health and safety regulations covering your area of work
- 3.regulations and guidance concerning hazardous substances
- 4.the chain of infection
- 5.how to access facilities for hand hygiene
- 6.effective techniques for maintaining hand hygiene
- 7.how to access facilities for first aid
- 8.first aid for inoculation, bites and splash incidents
- 9.the use and range of personal protective equipment for activities within your job role
- 10.the different colour-coded bags and waste receptacles available and the correct use of each including labeling
- 11.how to segregate different types of waste
- 12.how to handle items of equipment contaminated with blood and other body fluids
- 13.how to deal with spillages of blood and other body fluids
- 14.how to handle and dispose of sharps safely
- 15.your own role and responsibilities and the responsibilities of others
- 16.how to report adverse events, accidents and incidents

PERFORMANCE CRITERIA

You must be able to do the following:

- 1.ensure all of your recommended occupational immunisations are up to date
- 2.consider the risks of exposure to blood and/or other body fluids before, during and after each activity you undertake
- 3.perform effective hand hygiene, and select and put on appropriate personal protective equipment for the activity
- 4.before beginning an activity, gather the approved waste receptacles for disposing of:
 - 1.used sharps
 - 2.blood or other body fluids
 - 3.any contaminated waste likely to be used during, or arise from, the activity, and take them to the point of use
- 5.carry out cleaning and disinfecting immediately following a spillage of body fluids as per local and national policy
- 6.handle carefully any sharps to avoid injury, following standard infection prevention and control precautions, in particular:
 - 1.keep handling of sharps to a minimum
 - 2.ensure exposed sharps are not passed directly from hand to hand
 - 3.ensure needles are not re-sheathed or re-capped after use unless approved safety systems are used
 - 4.ensure needles are not bent, broken or disassembled after use
- 7.place used sharps immediately into an approved sharps container, at the point of care, taking care not to overfill the container using the temporary closure mechanisms
- 8.close and lock any approved sharp containers when reaching the fill line in accordance with the manufacturer's instructions
- 9.after disposing of waste within waste receptacles ensuring the lid is secure
- 10.ensure waste containers are correctly labeled in accordance with local policy
- 11.return sharps containers to a safe location, ensuring storage is off the floor and at a safe working level, kept out of the reach of children and vulnerable adults
- 12.remove personal protective equipment discarding single use equipment in an appropriate waste receptacle, clean, with or without disinfection any re-usable equipment ready for re-use
- 13.take precautions to avoid, as far as possible, any exposure during the activity but if an exposure occurs:
 - 1.perform first aid immediately to the exposed area, following national/local guidelines
 - 2.report the incident immediately and seek further advice on the need for further medical care
 - 3.document the incident, following local policies
- 14.should you encounter problems with the facilities and supplies for minimising the risks of exposure to blood and other body fluids that you are unable to remedy, inform the person responsible and ask them to take action
- 15.if you find any sharps or contaminated items that have not been disposed of in the appropriate way, take immediate action to protect others from potential exposure and

report them immediately to an appropriate manager

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

There are additional NOS on the Skills for Health website relating to Decontamination. This standard links with the following dimension within the NHS Knowledge and Skills Framework (October 2004): Dimension: Core 3 Health, safety and security