

IPC12.2012 Minimise the risk of spreading infection when storing and using clean linen

OVERVIEW

This standard concerns the storage and use of clean linen to minimise the risk of contamination and cross infection. The standard applies in all health and social care environments, including community and domiciliary settings and ambulance care settings. Users of this standard will need to ensure that practice reflects up to date information and policies. Version No 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 guidelines concerning hazardous materials
4. the chain of infection
5. how to access facilities for hand hygiene
6. effective techniques for maintaining hand hygiene
7. how to stock, store and use clean linen
8. how to maintain a work flow that ensures segregation of clean and used linen
9. your own role and responsibilities, and the responsibilities of others
10. how to complete the relevant documentation required in your area of activity
11. how and when to report issues that are within and outside your scope of practice

PERFORMANCE CRITERIA

You must be able to do the following:

1. perform effective hand hygiene before handling clean linen
2. ensure designated area for storage is dust free and clean
3. sort and store any delivery of clean linen in the designated enclosed area off the floor to prevent contamination by dust or aerosols

- 4.maintain a work flow that ensures segregation of clean and used linen
- 5.randomly check clean linen to ensure it is clean and free of stains, tears or holes, removing and reporting any items that are not fit for use
- 6.collect and transport the clean linen required for the task(s) in accordance with local policy/procedures
- 7.explain to the patient/service user, what you are going to do and proceed in such a way as to maintain their dignity and safety throughout, ensuring they are made comfortable at the end of the procedure
- 8.avoid contaminating clean linen by not holding it against yourself, shaking it, dropping it on the floor or placing it on surfaces that are frequently touched including lockers or bed tables
- 9.maintain an adequate stock of clean linen and report unanticipated high usage to ensure the stock is replenished
- 10.minimise the amount of clean linen placed at the bedside and return any unused linen for laundering if exposed to a contaminated environment or room of an infected patient/service user

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

This National Occupational Standard was developed by Skills for Health. 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