

IPC8.2012 Minimise the risk of spreading infection when transporting and storing health and care related waste

OVERVIEW

This standard concerns the transportation of healthcare waste, including sharps, from the place of storage either on-site or off-site to a place of final destruction. This standard applies to all health and social care environments, including in the community and domiciliary settings and ambulance vehicles/stations. Healthcare waste is produced as a result of healthcare activities and includes potentially hazardous substances that may cause infection to any person coming into contact with them. You should follow the national regulations and policies, including descriptions of types of waste that apply to your country. 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 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 substances
4. the chain of infection
5. how to access facilities for hand hygiene
6. effective techniques for maintaining hand hygiene
7. the personal protective equipment to use for activities within your job role
8. how to safely put on, remove and dispose of personal protective equipment
9. how to handle and dispose of sharps safely
10. how to segregate different types of waste safely using the colour-coded bags and waste receptacles available and the correct use of each
11. how to clean, with or without disinfection following leakages or spills
12. principles of secure storage of healthcare waste
13. your own role and responsibilities, and the responsibilities of others
14. how to complete the records required in your area of activity
15. how to report adverse events, accidents and incidents

PERFORMANCE CRITERIA

You must be able to do the following:

- 1.use appropriate personal protective equipment when you are handling, transporting or storing healthcare waste in accordance with local and national policies/procedures
- 2.ensure all waste receptacles are fit for purpose and in accordance with current legislation
- 3.handle all waste receptacles with care to minimise the risks of breaking or tearing, and:
 - 1.hold them away from your body to avoid contamination or injury
 - 2.handle bags by the neck only
 - 3.any use correct moving and handling techniques
 - 4.use appropriate trolleys, vehicles and equipment specifically designed for transporting waste, where it is available
- 4.ensure receptacles are securely sealed, and correctly labeled, documented, colour-coded or tagged for the category and origin of the waste they contain, using recognised codes in accordance with local policy
- 5.remove receptacles from the health or social care environment in accordance with local health and safety policies/procedures
- 6.if any spillages of waste occur take action to make the area safe and clean/disinfect immediately in accordance with local and national policy/procedures
- 7.transport the receptacles to a designated area in accordance with current legislation, without opening them, avoiding contact with clean surfaces
- 8.segregate waste in storage following local and national policies, and store all waste receptacles in an upright position
- 9.ensure any trolleys or vehicles you have used to transport the waste are cleaned, with or without disinfection after use and check that they are in good working order before re-use, isolating and reporting any that are not
- 10.remove personal protective equipment used when transporting and storing waste, discarding any single use equipment in an appropriate waste receptacle, clean or disinfect any re-usable equipment ready for re-use
- 11.perform effective hand hygiene in accordance with local and national policies
- 12.ensure waste is not left accessible to unauthorised persons or pests
- 13.report any adverse events, incidents or accidents concerning the storage and/or transportation of healthcare waste immediately, following local procedures

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

The 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