

IPC10.2012 Minimise the risk of spreading infection when transporting clean and used linen

OVERVIEW

This standard concerns the transportation of both clean and used linen, which should be undertaken as entirely separate operations using trolleys or vehicles specifically designated for each task to minimise the risk of transmitting infection. It applies in all health and social care environments, including community and domiciliary settings, and ambulance care settings. This standard does not cover the transportation of radioactive linen or linen from patients with known infectious diseases, where additional precautions will be required. 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 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 materials
- 4.the chain of infection
- 5.how to access facilities for hand hygiene
- 6.effective techniques for maintaining hand hygiene
- 7.how to access first aid provision
- 8.the appropriate personal protective equipment to use when transporting linen
- 9.how to safely put on, remove and dispose of personal protective equipment
- 10.the different colour-coded bags and waste receptacles available and the correct use of each
- 11.how to handle segregated bagged linen safely at points of collection and delivery
- 12.how to transport clean and used linen correctly to prevent contamination
- 13.your own role and responsibilities, and the responsibilities of others
- 14.how to complete the relevant documentation required in your area of activity
- 15.how to report adverse events, accidents and incidents
- 16.how and when to report issues that are within and outside your scope of practice

PERFORMANCE CRITERIA

You must be able to:

- 1.perform effective hand hygiene and use personal protective equipment in accordance with the local and national policy/procedures
- 2.ensure linen receptacles that have not been filled or secured correctly in line with local policy are not collected or transported
- 3.collect correctly contained and secured used linen from designated areas in accordance with the agreed schedule and using correct moving and handling techniques
- 4.transport the contained used linen to the collection point or directly to the laundry, securely and without opening, using a trolley or vehicle specifically designated for the collection of used linen
- 5.ensure any trolleys or vehicles 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
- 6.remove personal protective equipment discarding any single use equipment in an appropriate waste receptacle, cleaning or disinfecting any re-usable equipment ready for re-use
- 7.perform effective hand hygiene in accordance with local and national policies
- 8.collect and transport clean linen avoiding cross contamination with used linen using a trolley or vehicle specifically designated for the delivery of clean linen
- 9.where an exposure occurs while transporting used or clean linen:
 - 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

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