

IPC9 Minimise the risk of spreading infection when removing used linen

OVERVIEW

This standard concerns the removal of used and soiled linen in such a way as to minimise the risk of contamination and cross 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 removal of radioactive linen or linen from individuals with known infectious diseases, where additional precautions will be required. Version No 3.

KNOWLEDGE AND UNDERSTANDING

You need to know and understand:

- 1.the current legislation, guidelines, policies, procedures and protocols which are relevant to your work practice and to which you must adhere
- 2.the scope and limitations of your own competence, responsibilities and accountability as it applies to your job role
- 3.how to access and interpret all relevant work instructions and information
- 4.specific procedures for reporting issues which are beyond your competence, responsibilities and accountability
- 5.the duty to report any acts or omissions that could be unsafe/detrimental to you or others
- 6.the hazards and risks which may arise during the execution of your work role and how you can minimise these
- 7.the chain of infection
- 8.how to access facilities for hand hygiene
- 9.how to perform first aid and access first aid resources and support
- 10.effective techniques for maintaining hand hygiene
- 11.the appropriate personal protective equipment to use when handling linen
- 12.how to safely put on, remove and dispose of personal protective equipment
- 13.how to segregate and bag used and soiled categories of linen
- 14.the different colour-coded bags and waste receptacles available and the correct use of each
- 15.how to complete and safely store all relevant documentation in accordance with organisational requirements

PERFORMANCE CRITERIA

You must be able to:

- 1.access and accurately interpret all relevant work instructions and information
- 2.work safely at all times and in accordance with all relevant legislation, guidelines, policies, procedures and protocols
- 3.deal promptly and effectively with any problems within your control and report those which cannot be solved
- 4.identify and minimise hazards and risk in the workplace
- 5.perform effective hand hygiene and put on personal protective equipment in accordance with national and organisational policy/guidance
- 6.assemble the equipment and supplies required to safely remove used linen and move the equipment as close as possible to the point of use
- 7.where you are removing linen with an individual present you explain what you are going to do in a way that is appropriate for their communication needs, pace and level of understanding
- 8.ensure that no extraneous items including individual/service user belongings, used sharps or other clinical equipment are inadvertently discarded with the used linen
- 9.prior to linen removal use paper towels to remove any solid faeces or vomit and discard in correctly colour coded waste receptacle in accordance with organisational policy
- 10.remove the used linen, avoiding shaking, dispersal of any body fluids/skin cells, contact with clothing, the floor or other surfaces, and place each item in the designated receptacle, taking care not to wrap linen together, not to re-handle it and not to over fill the receptacle
- 11.place used and soiled linen into the appropriate colour bags/receptacle ensuring correct storage in accordance with organisational policy
- 12.where an exposure occurs while removing linen:
 - perform first aid immediately to the exposed area, following organisational guidelines
 - report the incident immediately and seek further advice on the need for further medical care
 - document the incident, following organisational policies
- 13.place any disposable personal protective equipment in the appropriate waste receptacle immediately after use and perform effective hand hygiene promptly
- 14.complete and store all relevant documentation in accordance with organisational requirements

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

This National Occupational Standard was developed by Skills for Health. Final version approved March 2021