

Section 2: **Routine Practices**

Policy number: **3.4**

Subject: **Control of the Environment**

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Revised:

1 PURPOSE

- 1.1 Controlling the environment includes measures that are built into the infrastructure of the health care setting that have been shown to reduce the risk of infection to staff and clients, such as appropriate placement of clients, hand washing sinks and point-of-care alcohol-based hand rub. It also includes cleaning practices of client care equipment and engineering controls such as point-of-care sharps containers, safety engineered medical devices, and barriers in reception areas.

2 POLICY

- 2.1 The physical environment of a health care setting can harbor many microorganisms that are capable of causing infection in susceptible individuals. Staff must ensure that all environmental controls within the health care setting are in place and that cleaning of equipment and the health care environment is being performed according to best practices to provide for a safe and sanitary environment.

3 PROCEDURE

- 3.1 Controlling the environment includes considerations such as:
- 3.1.1 Client placement while in the clinic setting
 - 3.1.2 Client equipment that is in good repair
 - 3.1.3 Effective cleaning practices for equipment and the environment
- 3.2 Engineering controls, such as point-of-care ABHR and sharps containers are the preferred controls as they do not depend on individual health care provider compliance.
- 3.3 Client Placement: For clients who have symptoms of an acute respiratory infection (ARI) (Refer to Policy 3.2: Risk Assessment Including Acute Respiratory Infection)
- 3.3.1 The client should be provided a procedure mask to wear, and instructed on hand hygiene and respiratory etiquette
 - 3.3.2 If masks are not available or not tolerated, clients should be encouraged to use another method to cover their mouth and nose when coughing or sneezing.

- 3.3.3 Move client out of the waiting area to a separate area or room as soon as possible
 - 3.3.4 Maintain a spatial separation of at least 2 metres between the coughing client and others in the room. If there is more than one client receiving care in a clinic room setting, a privacy curtain, if available, should be drawn between beds
 - 3.3.5 If there is a suspicion that the infection is transmitted via the airborne route, the client must be moved into a separate room and if warranted transferred to a health facility preferably with a negative pressure single room
 - 3.3.6 Staff caring for a client with suspected airborne transmitted infections must wear a fit tested and seal checked N95 respirator as per Respiratory Protection Plan. (Refer to FNIHB-OR Respiratory Protection Plan) (Refer to Section 4.0: Additional Precautions).
- 3.4 Cleaning of the Environment: The physical environment of a health care facility can harbor many microorganisms that are capable of causing infection in susceptible individuals. Maintaining a clean and safe healthcare environment is an essential component of IPAC and is integral to the safety of clients.
- 3.4.1 Refer to Section 8.0: Environmental Cleaning Principles of Cleaning and Disinfection Environmental Surfaces
 - 3.4.2 Refer to *FNIHB-OR – Environmental Cleaning Procedure Manual*
- 3.5 Cleaning of Equipment: Health care facilities must have cleaning and disinfection practices in place to ensure adequate disinfection of contaminated surfaces. Any equipment used on more than one client must be appropriately cleaned and disinfected according to the type of equipment.
- 3.5.1 Refer to Section 9.0 Cleaning, Disinfection and Sterilization of Medical Equipment/Medical Devices
 - 3.5.2 Refer to *FNIHB - OR – Environmental Cleaning Procedure Manual*
- 3.6 Handling of Waste Including Sharps:
- 3.6.1 Only safety engineered medical devices will be used.
 - 3.6.2 No recapping needles or scalpels
 - 3.6.3 Place used devices into a sharps container by the person who used the device
 - 3.6.4 Do not fill the sharps container beyond the fill level.
 - 3.6.5 Refer to Section 8.0: Environmental Cleaning Principles of Cleaning and Disinfection Environmental Surfaces
 - 3.6.6 Refer to *FNIHB OR – Environmental Cleaning Procedure Manual*

3.7 Handling of Linen:

3.7.1 Refer to Section 8.0: Cleaning and Disinfection of the Environment

3.7.2 Refer to *FNIHB- OR – Environmental Cleaning Procedure Manual*

3.8 Hand Hygiene Equipment:

3.8.1 ABHR should be available for use at the point-of-care for health care providers

3.8.2 Hand washing sinks for health care providers and visitors should be placed at convenient locations so that staff do not need to travel a long distance to reach the sink

3.8.3 Refer to Policy 2.1: Hand Hygiene, Policy 2.2: Hand Care Protection Program, Policy 2.3: Placement of Hand Hygiene Products

4 REFERENCES

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