



## Community Infection Prevention and Control Policy for General Practice

(also suitable for adoption by other healthcare providers, e.g. Dental Practice, Podiatry)

# SICPs and TBPs (Standard infection control precautions and transmission based precautions)

SICPs and TBPs

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Signed: .....

Job Title: .....

Date Adopted: .....

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## SICPs and TBPs

# SICPs AND TBPs (STANDARD INFECTION CONTROL PRECAUTIONS AND TRANSMISSION BASED PRECAUTIONS)

## 1. Introduction

There are a number of 'Standard infection control precautions' (SICPs) referred to by NHS England and NHS Improvement.

All staff in all situations involving the care of patients or contact with their environment must use standard infection control precautions (SICPs). SICPs may be insufficient to prevent cross transmission of specific infectious agents. Therefore, additional transmission based precautions (TBPs) are required to be used by staff when caring for patients with a confirmed or suspected infection or colonisation.

SICPs and TBPs underpin routine safe practice and break the chain of infection which protects patients and staff. There is often no way of knowing who is infected, so by applying SICPs and TBPs to all people at all times, best practice becomes second nature and the risk of infection is minimised.

**When caring for patients in relation to COVID-19 or any other new emerging infections, staff should refer to national infection prevention and control guidance.**

## 2. Hand hygiene

Hand hygiene is the single most important way to prevent the spread of infection. Good hand hygiene should be undertaken by all staff and patients.

Refer to the 'Hand hygiene Policy for General Practice'.

## 3. Patient placement and assessment for infection risk

Prior to a patients transfer to another health or social care facility, an assessment for infection risk must be undertaken. This ensures appropriate placement of the patient.

Refer to the 'Patient placement and assessment for infection risk Policy for General Practice'.

#### 4. Personal protective equipment

Before undertaking any task, staff should assess any likely exposure to infectious patients, blood and/or body fluids, non-intact skin or mucous membranes or substances hazardous to health, e.g. cleaning/disinfecting products, and wear personal protective equipment (PPE) that protects adequately against the risks associated with the exposure.

Refer to the 'Personal protective equipment Policy for General Practice'.

#### 5. Respiratory and cough hygiene

Respiratory and cough hygiene can help reduce the risk of spreading respiratory infections, protecting patients, visitors and staff.

Staff should adopt good respiratory and cough hygiene practices themselves and promote them to patients.

Refer to the 'Respiratory and cough hygiene Policy for General Practice'.

#### 6. Safe disposal of waste

All staff are responsible for the safe management and disposal of waste.

Refer to the 'Safe disposal of waste Policy for General Practice'.

#### 7. Safe management of blood and body fluids

All spillages of blood and body fluids must be dealt with promptly.

Refer to the 'Safe management of blood and body fluids Policy for General Practice'.

#### 8. Safe management of care equipment

Cleaning, disinfection and sterilisation is known as decontamination. Safe decontamination of care equipment after use on a patient is an essential part of routine infection control to prevent the spread of infection.

Refer to the 'Safe management of care equipment Policy for General Practice'.

### 9. Safe management of linen (including uniforms and workwear)

The use of linen such as blankets, pillowcases, fabric hand towels, in General Practice is not recommended as it is not practical to launder items between each patient. Best practice is to use disposable paper products, e.g. paper towels, couch roll.

All fabric blinds, curtains and screens should be visibly clean with no blood, bodily substances, dust, dirt, debris stains or spillages.

Refer to the 'Safe management of linen (including uniforms and workwear) Policy for General Practice'.

### 10. Safe management of sharps and inoculation injuries

This is referred to as 'Occupational safety/managing prevention of exposure (including sharps)' by NHS England and NHS Improvement.

Sharps are items that could cause cuts or puncture wounds and include needles and sharp instruments. It is the responsibility of the user to dispose of sharps safely into a sharps container.

Refer to the 'Safe management of sharps and inoculation injuries Policy for General Practice'.

### 11. Safe management of the care environment

*The Health and Social Care Act 2008: Code of Practice on the prevention and control of infections and related guidance* requires that registered providers of health and social care 'Provide and maintain a clean and appropriate environment in managed premises that facilitates the prevention and control of infections'.

Refer to the 'Safe management of the care environment Policy for General Practice'.

## 12. Transmission based precautions

SICPs may be insufficient to prevent transmission of specific infections. Therefore, additional TBPs may need to be taken by staff when caring for patients with a confirmed or suspected infection or colonisation. Decisions on the need for TBPs must be based on the:

- Confirmed or suspected infectious agent
- Severity of the illness caused
- Transmission route of the infectious agent
- Procedures undertaken

TBPs are categorised by the route of transmission of the infection (some infections can be transmitted by more than one route). Application of TBPs may differ depending on the confirmed or suspected infection.

### Contact precautions

These are utilised to prevent and control infections which are spread via direct contact with the patient, or indirectly from the patient's immediate care environment and care equipment. This is the most common route of infection transmission.

### Droplet precautions

These are utilised to prevent and control infections which are spread over short distances (at least 3 feet or 1 metre) via droplets (greater than 5  $\mu\text{m}$ , i.e. 0.005 mm) from the respiratory tract of one individual directly onto a mucosal surface, e.g. eyes, nose, mouth, of another individual. Droplets can penetrate the respiratory system to above the alveolar level.

### Airborne precautions

These are utilised to prevent and control infections which are spread without necessarily having close patient contact via aerosols (less than or equal to 5  $\mu\text{m}$ , i.e. 0.005 mm) from the respiratory tract of one individual directly onto a mucosal surface, e.g. eyes, nose, mouth, of another individual. Aerosols can travel deeper in to the respiratory system than droplets, to the endpoint (alveoli).

## 13. Infection Prevention and Control resources, education and training

The Community Infection Prevention and Control (IPC) Team have produced a wide range of innovative educational and IPC resources designed to assist General Practice in achieving compliance with *The Health and Social Care Act 2008: Code of Practice on the prevention and control of infections and related guidance* and CQC registration requirements.

These resources are either free to download from the website or available at a minimal cost covering administration and printing:

- 25 IPC Policy documents for General Practice
- 'Preventing Infection Workbook: Guidance for General Practice'
- 'IPC CQC inspection preparation Pack for General Practice'
- IPC audit tools, posters, leaflets and factsheets
- 'IPC Bulletin for General Practice Staff'

In addition, we hold educational study events in North Yorkshire and York and can arrange bespoke training packages and 'Mock IPC CQC Inspections'. Prices vary depending on your requirements and location.

Further information on these high quality evidence-based resources is available at [www.infectionpreventioncontrol.co.uk](http://www.infectionpreventioncontrol.co.uk).

## 14. References

Department of Health (2015) *The Health and Social Care Act 2008: Code of Practice on the prevention and control of infections and related guidance*

NHS England and NHS Improvement (March 2019) *Standard infection control precautions: national hand hygiene and personal protective equipment policy*

NHS Scotland (2012) *National Infection Prevention and Control Manual*