

IPC Bulletin for Staff providing Domiciliary Care

Issue No. 30 - February 2022

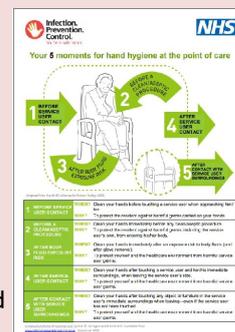
Standard infection control precautions (SICPs)

'Hand hygiene' and 'Patient placement and assessment for infection risk'

This is the first of a series of bimonthly bulletins discussing the SICPs which form the basis of infection prevention and control measures necessary to reduce the risk of transmission of microorganisms from both recognised and unrecognised sources of infection. Each bulletin will provide an introduction to 2 of the 10 SICPs. As it is often not possible to tell who has or is carrying an infection, it is essential that all staff apply safe systems of working at every opportunity. The SICPs are recommended for all staff, in all domiciliary care settings, at all times, for all service users, whether infection is known to be present or not. More information on each of the SICPs can be found at www.infectionpreventioncontrol.co.uk/resources/sicps-and-tbps-policy-for-domiciliary-care-staff/. The SICPs are also covered in more detail in the 'Preventing Infection Workbook: Guidance for Domiciliary Care staff'.

Hand hygiene

- Hand hygiene is one of the most important procedures for preventing the spread of infection.
- All staff should have training on hand hygiene, it is best practice that this is provided on a regular basis, e.g. annually. It is essential that everyone takes responsibility to ensure that the care provided is carried out in a safe manner.
- Service users should be encouraged to wash hands or use skin wipes after using the toilet and before eating and drinking.
- It is best practice to be 'Bare Below the Elbows' to facilitate effective hand hygiene when delivering direct care.
- The use of liquid soap, warm running water and paper towels, is sufficient in most circumstances.
- Alcohol based handrubs are a suitable alternative unless hands are visibly dirty or soiled, or when caring for service users with vomiting and/or diarrhoea, or *Clostridioides difficile*.
- Staff should know when to wash their hands, e.g. using the 'Your 5 moments for hand hygiene'.
- Hand hygiene is important **before** putting on and **after** removal of each item of personal protective equipment, e.g. pair of gloves, apron, or domestic gloves.
- It is recommended that, for assurance purposes, annual audits to assess the standard of staff hand hygiene are carried out. A 'Hand hygiene Audit Tool for Domiciliary Care' is available to download at www.infectionpreventioncontrol.co.uk/resources/hand-hygiene-audit-tool-for-domiciliary-care/.



Patient placement and assessment for infection risk

- Where personal care is provided by a domiciliary care agency to an individual person in their own home, it is unlikely that the agency will be responsible for this SCIP. However, this will apply if it provides personal care to a group of service users in a supported living service or sheltered housing complex and takes an active role in liaising with or contacting healthcare professionals on behalf of service users.
- Prior to a service user's transfer to and/or from another health or social care provider, an assessment for infection risk must be undertaken. This ensures both the appropriate placement of the service user and that appropriate precautions are taken.
- Transfer documentation, e.g. an [Inter-Health and Social Care Infection Control Transfer Form](#) or patient passport, must be completed for all transfers, internal or external and whether the service user presents an infection risk or not.

Visit our website to find lots of IPC resources, many of which are free to download at www.infectionpreventioncontrol.co.uk
Call us on 01423 557340



**Queen's Nursing Institute
IPC Champions Network**
The next event is Thursday 31st March, 2-4pm via Zoom, network members can register at www.eventbrite.co.uk/e/infection-prevention-and-control-ipc-network-meeting-tickets-242743330837