



Community Infection Prevention and Control Policy for General Practice

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

Safe management of blood and body fluid spillages

Version 3.00
March 2026

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SAFE MANAGEMENT OF BLOOD AND BODY FLUID SPILLAGES

1. Introduction

NHS England states that the guidance in the *National infection prevention and control manual (NIPCM) for England* should be applied by all NHS staff involved in patient care, complementing guidance for General Practice settings. This Policy has been produced in accordance with this recommendation and incorporates the *NIPCM* version as referenced in this Policy with detailed General Practice specific guidance.

This Policy is one of the 'Standard infection control precautions' (SICPs).

Spillages of blood and other body fluids may transmit blood-borne viruses. Spillages must be treated immediately by staff trained to undertake this safely. Responsibilities for the management of blood/body fluid spillages must be clear within each care setting.

Staff who may have contact with blood or blood stained body fluids, or are exposed to sharps or other inoculation risks, should have had the opportunity for hepatitis B vaccination and antibody testing to check for their response.

Always use standard SICPs and, where required, 'Transmission based precautions' (TBPs) refer to the 'SICPs and TBPs Policy for General Practice'.

When caring for patients in relation to any new or emerging infections, staff should refer to the latest infection prevention and control guidance.

2. Dealing with blood and body fluid spillages

Clean up blood and body fluids promptly to reduce the risk of infection to other people.

Appropriate personal protective equipment (PPE) should be worn and standard infection control precautions followed.

Best practice is to use a spillage kit appropriate to the type of spillage, e.g. blood/blood stained body fluids or non-blood body fluids, which should be used following the manufacturer's guidance and within its expiry date.

Where a General Practice approves a product for use in the management of blood and body fluid spillages, it is responsible for ensuring safe systems of work, including the completion of a documented risk assessment approved through local governance procedures. The General Practice must confirm the efficacy and suitability of the product (i.e. that it conforms with the relevant standards and is appropriate for the intended use) with the product manufacturer.

Spillage kits may contain solidifying polymer granules. A National Patient Safety Alert issued in 2019, following a number of deaths and incidents related to patients ingesting the product, advises a risk assessment and procedures in place to ensure supplies are securely stored away from the general public.

- If the spillage kit is unsuitable for use on soft furnishings, untreated wood and carpets, clean the surface using a general purpose neutral detergent and warm water, a carpet or steam cleaner.
- If soft furnishings or other items are heavily contaminated with blood or body fluids that cannot be adequately decontaminated, they should be disposed of appropriately.
- Dispose of waste and PPE in the appropriate waste stream, refer to the 'Safe disposal of waste, including sharps Policy for General Practice'.
- Wash hands with liquid soap and warm running water.
- If a mop and bucket are used, they should be in accordance with the national colour coding, refer to the 'Safe management of the care environment Policy for General Practice'. After use, the mop head should be disposed of immediately as clinical infectious waste and the bucket disinfected appropriately, cleaned and stored upside down to air dry.
- All cloths used must be single use and disposed of after use.

A 'Spillage kits located at Poster' is available to download at www.infectionpreventioncontrol.co.uk/resources/spillage-kits-located-at-poster/.

3. Splashes of blood or body fluids

- Splashes of blood or body fluids to the eyes, nose or mouth must be treated as potential exposure to a blood-borne virus, refer to the 'BBVs Policy for General Practice'.
- For appropriate management of percutaneous exposures (sharps/splash injuries), refer to the 'Safe management of sharps and inoculation injuries Policy for General Practice'.

4. Evidence of good practice

It is recommended that, for assurance purposes, 'Safe management of blood and body fluid spillages' is audited. This can be achieved by completing the 'SICPs Assurance: Annual IPC Audit Tool for General Practice' available to download at www.infectionpreventioncontrol.co.uk/resources/sicps-assurance-annual-ipc-audit-tool-for-general-practice/.

Following completion of the audit, an 'Action plan' should be drawn up and implemented to demonstrate continuous improvement.

5. Infection Prevention and Control resources, education and training

The Community IPC Team have produced a wide range of innovative educational and IPC resources designed to assist your General Practice in achieving compliance with the *Health and Social Care Act 2008: code of practice on the prevention and control of infection 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:

- 27 IPC Policy documents for General Practice
- Preventing Infection Workbook: Guidance for General Practice
- IPC CQC assessment 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.

Further information on these high quality evidence-based resources is available at www.infectionpreventioncontrol.co.uk.

6. References

Department of Health and Social Care (Updated December 2022) *Health and Social Care Act 2008: code of practice on the prevention and control of infections and related guidance*

Health and Safety Executive *How to deal with an exposure incident*

NHS England (Updated 2025) *National infection prevention and control manual (NIPCM) for England*

NHS England (2019) *Risk of death and severe harm from ingesting superabsorbent polymer gel granules* NatPSA/2019/002/NHSPS