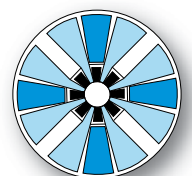


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# Infection Prevention and Control

Staff Working Together



Infection Prevention Society

*Inform • Promote • Sustain*

[www.ips.uk.net](http://www.ips.uk.net)

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The project to identify the core competences for Infection prevention and control was carried out for England, Northern Ireland, Scotland and Wales and supported by the government health departments, and chaired by Ros Moore, Chief Nursing Officer for Scotland, on behalf of the UK Chief Nursing Officers.

This work has been undertaken in collaboration with The Infection Prevention Society, which exists to inform, promote and sustain expert infection prevention policy and practice in the pursuit of patient and staff safety across any setting where care is delivered. This is done by engaging and mobilising the users of healthcare, practitioners, managers, researchers, educationalists and policy makers to actively translate evidence into practice and service improvement.

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Skills for Health, the Sector Skills Council for health, helps ensure there is a skilled and flexible workforce available to provide high quality healthcare throughout the UK. Key roles include profiling and understanding the UK workforce, identifying and addressing skills gaps and shortages, improving productivity and performance, developing national workforce competences, and considering the availability and relevance of education and training.

[www.skillsforhealth.org.uk](http://www.skillsforhealth.org.uk)

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# Introduction

The focus on reducing healthcare associated infections and enhancing infection prevention and control practice is a priority for all health and social care organisations. Infection prevention and control is fundamental in improving the safety and quality of care provided to patients and is everyone's responsibility.

The Department of Health commissioned Skills for Health (SfH) in partnership with the Infection Prevention Society (IPS) to identify the core competences (National Occupational Standards<sup>1</sup>) relevant to effective infection prevention and control required by all staff regardless of role or grade (covering all levels of the Career Framework for Health<sup>2</sup>) but who were not infection prevention and control practitioners. This work has engaged key stakeholders from all four countries in the UK and follows on a project that identified the competences needed for Infection, prevention and control Practitioners (IPS 2011)

The framework of NOS identified can be used to ensure all staff have the right knowledge and skills to help prevent and control the spread of infections. They can be used to:

- support appraisal
- underpin the NHS Knowledge and Skills Framework where relevant
- articulate the training and education required by all members of staff in relation to infection prevention and control.
- develop appropriate policies and procedures in the work place.

N.B. The infection, prevention and control framework of National Occupational Standards identified within this document is also relevant to those working in health and social care settings.

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<sup>1</sup> *National Occupational Standards (NOS) describe performance as the outcomes of a person's work. They focus on what the person needs to be able to do, as well as what they must know and understand to work effectively. They are designed to allow people to assess and be assessed against them.*

<sup>2</sup> *The Career Framework for Health provides a common language and currency to support education, training and assessment of practice for everyone working in a healthcare environment by identifying the attributes of practitioners at different levels of the Career framework and using National Occupational Standards to encapsulate knowledge and skills required by posts .A job may be described in terms of its Career framework level, which will capture the level of responsibility and decision making required in the job for example, and a number of National Occupational Standards which will capture the activities undertaken as part of that job.*

# Background

The focus on reducing healthcare associated infections continues throughout the United Kingdom. The prevention, management and control of healthcare associated infection is a priority area for each of the four UK governments. It requires action by all organisations involved with health and social care. The introduction of patient safety improvement programmes across the UK has highlighted the role of healthcare-associated infections as incidents that have an adverse effect on public safety and quality of care. It is vital that all staff have the necessary knowledge, understanding and skills in order to continue to improve the overall safety and quality of patient care.

The Career Framework for Health is used to describe a job in terms of the level of responsibility and decision making required and identifies a number of National Occupational Standards which describe the specific activities undertaken as part of that job (Appendix 1).

National Occupational Standards are identified in relation to the requirements of the patients' pathways and fit practice to the needs of the patient and service. In any list of National Occupational Standards (NOS) relating to a particular job there will be a number of NOS relevant to the requirements of that job, depending on the service, pathway and context in which the worker is working. This project seeks to identify and recommend a number of NOS relating to activities that will support effective infection prevention and control, and that should be present and form a subset within the list of NOS relating to any job in a health care setting. (Figure 1).



# Project Aims

The aim of the project was to:

- clarify the responsibilities, expectations and contribution (in relation to infection prevention and control) of all health care staff with direct and non-direct patient and client facing responsibilities in terms of National Occupational Standards
- improve the quality of services through the prevention and control of healthcare associated infection
- improve patient satisfaction through the prevention and control of healthcare associated infection
- inform education and training, and facilitate learning
- link with the outcome competences for practitioners in infection prevention and control (IPS 2011).

The end products of the project are:

- Identification of the generic National Occupational Standards at all levels of the Career framework for all health and care staff.
- Outline a framework that has core competence (NOS) profiles for non - clinical and clinical health care staff, both those in direct and non-direct contact with patients, clients and service users, across all areas of the Career framework.



# Staff Groups Identified in Relation to Competence Requirement

For ease of use, the competences, which are National Occupational Standards, identified for infection prevention and control have been mapped against 4 key staff groups. These groups were agreed following consultation with key stakeholders:

## **Non Direct Staff**

Staff in non direct roles are people who do not have any face to face contact with patients or service users. They may walk through, and may use facilities in areas which patients and service users also use. The identified list of National Occupational Standards (NOS) in the table below are the core requirements to support infection prevention and control for staff with no “face to face” contact with patients and service users and who do not have a “hands on” role. They may be providing clinical advice from a distance, and may be providing a service that supports the delivery of care.

## **Direct Staff**

Examples of people in this role are in direct “face to face” contact with patients and service users but do not have a health and care role. These staff require competence in additional NOS to meet the infection prevention and control demands in their jobs.

## **Health and Care Direct Staff**

Examples of people in this role are in direct “face to face” contact with patients and service users and have a health and care role, and require competence in further additional NOS.

## **Health and Care, Non Direct Staff**

Examples of people are staff who do not have “face to face” contact with patients or service users, but who do have a clinical role. They may walk through and use areas also used by patients and service users. The list of NOS associated with these roles has been adjusted accordingly.

### ***Please note:***

***Clinical*** is defined as relating to the bedside of a person, the course of a person’s disease, or the direct observation and treatment of the person. In this context, the person may be a patient, service user or resident. This could take place in either a health or a social care setting.

# Infection, Prevention and Control

## Competences Identified for Each Staff Group

When describing the competences (NOS) identified for each of the staff groups, we refer to 'core' and 'generic' competences. Core competences are NOS which are central to a role, the innermost or most essential part, whilst generic competences are NOS which apply to all health and care roles.

### **National Occupational Standards that are generic and core to all jobs in Health and Care settings:**

- Communicate effectively in a healthcare environment Ref: GEN97 KSF: Core 1
- Maintain health, safety and security practices within a health setting Ref: GEN96 KSF: Core 3
- Perform hand hygiene to prevent the spread of infection Ref: IPC2 KSF: Core 3 L1
- Contribute to the effectiveness of teams Ref: HSC241 KSF: Core5 L2
- Act within the limits of your competence and authority Ref: GEN63 KSF: Core 5 L2

### **Additional NOS core to Direct staff, Direct Health and Care staff, and Non Direct Health and Care staff:**

- Ensure personal fitness for work Ref: GEN1 KSF: Core 3 L1
- Prepare and dress for work in healthcare settings Ref: GEN2 KSF: Core 3 L1
- Clean and remove spillages of blood and other body fluids Ref: IPC3 KSF: Core 3 L1
- Use personal protective equipment to prevent the spread of infection  
Ref: IPC6 KSF: Core 3 L1
- Safely dispose of healthcare waste, including sharps, to prevent the spread of infection  
Ref: IPC7 KSF: Core 3 L1

### **Additional NOS required by Direct and Direct Health and care staff:**

- Clean and store care equipment to minimise the risks of spreading infection  
Ref: IPC4 KSF: Core 3 L1

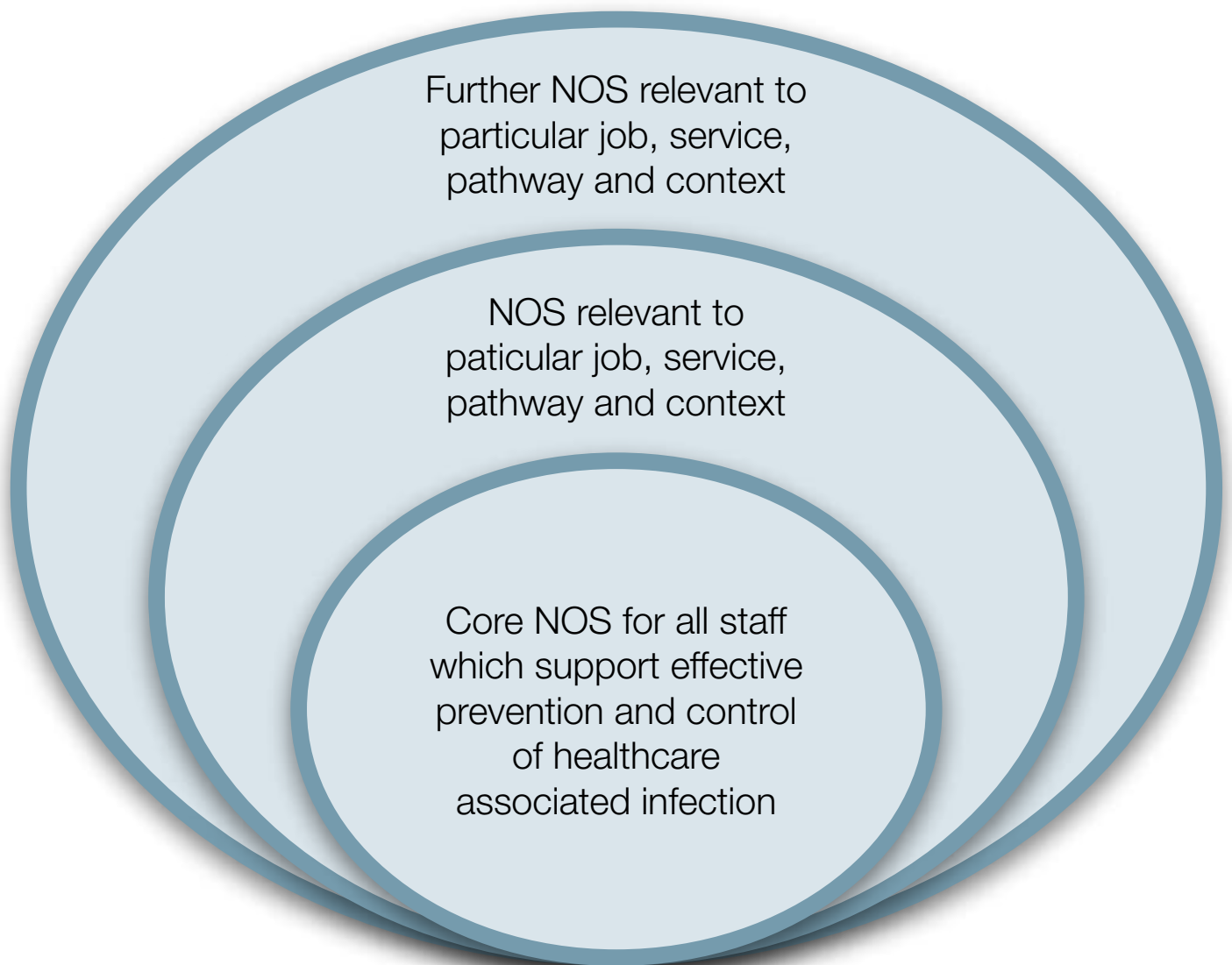
### **Additional NOS for Health and Care staff in a Direct role:**

- Minimise the risks of exposure to blood-borne infections while providing care  
Ref: IPC5 KSF: Core 3 L1
- Minimise the risks of spreading infection when removing used linen  
Ref: IPC9 KSF: Core 3 L1
- Minimise the risks of spreading infection when storing and using clean linen  
Ref: IPC12 KSF: Core 3 L1
- Table 1: Framework of Generic and Core National Occupational Standards for all staff to support Infection Prevention and Control.

NB Full text of all the NOS listed above can be found in Appendices 2 or accessed electronically via the SfH competence application tools <https://tools.skillsforhealth.org.uk/>



**Figure 1: Core National Occupational Standards**



Within the number of National Occupational Standards (NOS) relating to a particular job there will be a number of NOS relating to activities for effective infection prevention and control common to all jobs in a health care setting.

There are also NOS relevant to the requirements of that job, depending on the service, pathway and context in which the worker is working.

**Figure 2: Showing which NOS apply to which staff groups**

National Occupational Standard	Direct Health and Care Staff	Direct Staff	Non Direct Health and Care Staff	Non Direct Staff
Communicate effectively in a healthcare environment (Ref: GEN97 KSF: Core 1)	X	X	X	X
Maintain health, safety and security practices within a health setting (Ref: GEN96 KSF: Core 3)	X	X	X	X
Perform hand hygiene to prevent the spread of infection (Ref: IPC2 KSF: Core 3 L1)	X	X	X	X
Contribute to the effectiveness of teams (Ref: HSC241 KSF: Core 5 L2)	X	X	X	X
Act within the limits of your competence and authority (Ref: GEN63 KSF: Core 5 L2)	X	X	X	X
Ensure personal fitness for work (Ref: GEN1 KSF: Core 3 L1)	X	X	X	
Prepare and dress for work in healthcare settings (Ref: GEN2 KSF: Core 3 L1)	X	X	X	
Clean and remove spillages of blood and other body fluids (Ref: IPC3 KSF: Core 3 L1)	X	X	X	
Use personal protective equipment to prevent the spread of infection (Ref: IPC6 KSF: Core 3 L1)	X	X	X	
Safely dispose of healthcare waste, including sharps, to prevent the spread of infection (Ref: IPC7 KSF: Core 3 L1)	X	X	X	
Clean and store care equipment to minimise the risks of spreading infection (Ref: IPC4 KSF: Core 3 L1)	X	X		
Minimise the risks of exposure to blood-borne infections while providing care (Ref: IPC5 KSF: Core 3 L1)	X			
Minimise the risks of spreading infection when removing used linen (Ref: IPC9 KSF: Core 3 L1)	X			
Minimise the risks of spreading infection when storing and using clean linen (Ref: IPC12 KSF: Core 3 L1)	X			

# Recommended Uses of the Infection, Prevention and Control NOS Framework

The framework of competences (NOS) can be used:

- to inform appraisal and underpin training and education for all staff
- to support better quality of care provision by embedding the appropriate NOS in corporate policies and governance frameworks
- be used to commission or purchase bite size units of learning that are relevant to infection, prevention and control as defined in the identified NOS. Appendices 3 shows how an infection prevention control NOS can be effectively used in a context.
- as a common currency when discussing infection, prevention and control requirements across statutory, independent and voluntary sector staff groups
- as part of an infection, prevention and control audit framework.

## Next Steps

Organisations involved in the delivery of Health and Care are asked to use the Infection, prevention and control framework of NOS in practice, to ensure all staff are appropriately trained and assessed in their roles in delivering effective infection, prevention and control.

### **For information:**

The Strategy and Quality groups supporting this programme of work recommended that the current suite of Infection, prevention and control NOS should be reviewed and updated in the light of advances in practice. Skills for Health has recently commenced this programme of work which is due for completion by January 2012. For further information on the review of these National Occupational Standards and their use in practice visit [www.skillsforhealth.org.uk](http://www.skillsforhealth.org.uk)

# Appendix 1: Summary of Attributes and Definitions for Career Framework Levels

These summaries have been distilled from the Career Framework Descriptors used in the process of levelling jobs onto the Career Framework since 2006. They are used when describing Nationally Transferable Roles, and describe the level of autonomy and responsibility and the kind of decision making required by a job. They provide additional, essential information about a job, alongside National Occupational Standards. The definitions of the more specific job titles have been informed by publications and work from the Department of Health and Professional bodies.

Each summary is applicable to all jobs across the health sector at a given level including clinical, administration, management etc. The examples may be applied to both clinical and non clinical roles.

## **Career Framework Level 8**

People at level 8 of the career framework require highly specialised knowledge, some of which is at the forefront of knowledge in a field of work, which they use as the basis for original thinking and/or research.

They are leaders with considerable responsibility, and the ability to research and analyse complex processes. They have responsibility for service improvement or development. They may have considerable management responsibilities and be accountable for service delivery or have a leading education or commissioning role.

For example:

### ***Consultant Practitioner, Career Framework Level 8***

The consultant practitioner is an expert practitioner with a high level of responsibility for the development and delivery of services. There is a strong element of research within the role. They will carry out research, and may have overall responsibility for the coordination of R&D programmes as well as ensuring that current research findings are used by all staff to inform their practice. The consultant practitioners will lead by example in developing highly innovative solutions to problems based on original research and inquiry. They will apply a highly developed theoretical and practical knowledge over a wide range of clinical, scientific, technical and /or management functions.

## **Career Framework Level 7**

People at level 7 of the career framework have a critical awareness of knowledge issues in the field and at the interface between different fields. They are innovative, and have a responsibility for developing and changing practice and/or services in a complex and unpredictable environment.

For example:

### ***Advanced Practitioner, Career Framework Level 7***

Advanced practitioners are experienced professionals who have developed their skills and theoretical knowledge to a very high standard, performing a highly complex role and continuously developing their practice within a defined field and/or having management responsibilities for a section/small department. They will have their own caseload or work area responsibilities.



## **Career Framework Level 6**

People at level 6 require a critical understanding of detailed theoretical and practical knowledge, are specialist and / or have management and leadership responsibilities. They demonstrate initiative and are creative in finding solutions to problems. They have some responsibility for team performance and service development and they consistently undertake self development.

For example:

### ***Specialist or Senior Practitioner, Career Framework Level 6***

Specialist practitioners have developed a high level of knowledge and skill in a specific area of practice. They have a depth of knowledge and understanding which enables them to perform at a high level of practice, take a leadership role, use and develop evidence to inform their practice, and deal with complex, unpredictable environments. They will have their own caseload or work area responsibilities.

## **Career Framework level 5**

People at level 5 will have a comprehensive, specialised, factual and theoretical knowledge within a field of work and an awareness of the boundaries of that knowledge.

They are able to use knowledge to solve problems creatively, make judgements which require analysis and interpretation, and actively contribute to service and self development. They may have responsibility for supervision of staff or training.

For example:

### ***Practitioner***

Practitioners have a broad knowledge base in a particular field of practice which enables them to work with a considerable degree of autonomy. They may have line management responsibilities but will not be responsible for service delivery. They actively use research findings to enhance and underpin their practice. A practitioner is competent in their area of practice and will seek opportunities to improve the service they offer.

## **Career Framework Level 4**

People at level 4 require factual and theoretical knowledge in broad contexts within a field of work.

Work is guided by standard operating procedures, protocols or systems of work, but the worker makes judgements, plans activities, contributes to service development and demonstrates self development. They may have responsibility for supervision of some staff.

For example:

### ***Assistant/Associate Practitioner***

Assistant practitioners have a required level of knowledge and skill enabling them to undertake tasks that may otherwise have been undertaken by a practitioner. They will have developed specific technical skills and have a high degree of technical proficiency. They will exercise a degree of autonomy and undertake well defined tasks requiring limited judgement. They may have line management responsibility for others.

## **Career Framework Level 3**

People at level 3 require knowledge of facts, principles, processes and general concepts in a field of work.

They may carry out a wider range of duties than the person working at level 2, and will have more responsibility, with guidance and supervision available when needed. They will contribute to service development, and are responsible for self development.

For example:

### ***Senior Healthcare Assistants/Technicians***

Senior healthcare assistants or technicians support the work of practitioners at all levels and may work as part of a team. They demonstrate an ability to carry out tasks, solving straightforward problems and making some judgements, with guidance and supervision available. They have skills in specific focussed aspects of service delivery.

## **Career Framework Level 2**

People at level 2 require basic factual knowledge of a field of work.

They may carry out clinical, technical, scientific or administrative duties according to established protocols or procedures, or systems of work.

For example:

### **Support Worker**

Support workers work to agreed protocols and procedures. They are able to solve routine problems and make straightforward judgements. They have general skills across a range of aspects of service delivery and work under close supervision.

Review Date: 01.09.2011

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# Appendix 2: National Occupational Standards in Full

## GEN97 Communicate effectively in a healthcare environment

### Overview

This standard is about communicating effectively with individuals in a healthcare environment. You will be expected to communicate effectively with a number of people in a variety of situations. You will be expected to use your initiative and follow organisational procedures in times of crisis.

Users of this standard will need to ensure that practice reflects up to date information and policies.

Version No 1

### Knowledge and Understanding

You will need to know and understand:

1. the importance of responding promptly and appropriately
2. the importance of:
  - a. focusing on the individual
  - b. space and positioning when communicating
  - c. body language and eye contact when communicating
  - d. giving individuals sufficient time to communicate
  - e. using the individual's preferred means of communication and language
  - f. checking that you and the individuals understand each other
  - g. adapting your communications to aid understanding
  - h. active listening
3. the difficulties that can arise as a result of specific situations in your area of work and how and where to seek advice when faced with situations outside your sphere of competence
4. methods of working with, and resolving conflicts or barriers that you are likely to encounter when communicating with individuals
5. methods and ways of communicating that:
  - a. support equality and diversity
  - b. support the rights of people to communicate in their preferred method, media and language
  - c. are effective when dealing with, and challenging discrimination when communicating with individuals
6. the principles of confidentiality, security and sharing of information for the environment in which you work
7. the most effective and efficient way to communicate with others in times of need or emergency
8. how your communication skills reflects on you, your organisation and/or workplace

## **Performance Criteria**

You must be able to do the following:

1. acknowledge and respond to communication promptly
2. communicate clearly and coherently taking into account the needs of individuals
3. select the most appropriate method of communication for the individuals
4. ensure that the environment for communication is as conducive as possible for effective communication
5. adapt your communication style to suit the situation
6. identify any communication barriers with the individuals and take the appropriate action
7. clarify points and check that you and others understand what is being communicated
8. actively listen and respond appropriately to any questions and concerns raised during communications
9. establish lines of communication which enable you to communicate with individuals in other locations in times of need or emergency
10. maintain confidentiality of information where appropriate to do so

## **Additional Information**

This National Occupational Standard was developed by Skills for Health.

This National Occupational Standard links with the following dimension within the NHS Knowledge and Skills Framework (October 2004).

Dimension: Core 1 Communication

*GEN97 Communicate effectively in a healthcare environment*

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## **GEN96 Maintain health, safety and security practices within a health setting**

### **Overview**

This standard relates to the continuous and consistent attention of each individual maintaining their health, safety and security practices within a health setting to protect themselves and others during all work activities. It also covers personal security and access to working environments. This standard does not cover the personal security of patient information data

Users of this standard will need to ensure that practice reflects up to date information and policies.

Version No 1

### **Knowledge and Understanding**

You will need to know and understand:

1. work within your own level of competence, authority, responsibility and knowledge base in relation to health, safety and security in the workplace
2. the range of personal and access security arrangements within your work area
3. rights of access and entry to the working environment and the importance of challenging unauthorised access and how to do this
4. the range of health and safety measures, infection prevention control and the relevant personal protective controls and containment, their importance and their applicability for the range of procedures within your working environment and level of responsibility
5. the range of hazards and the relevant risk assessment methods, the types of corrective action relevant to activities within your work practice
6. how to obtain and the application of risk assessments within your work practice and level of responsibility
7. the importance of checking resources are operational and safe to use within your work practice and how to do so
8. the type and range of defects associated with the resources within your work practice
9. safe systems of work and methods for using the resources relevant to your work activities ; their appropriate decontamination, disposal or storage requirements
10. the range of methods of waste disposal including any hazardous material disposal relevant to your work practice and the implications of non-compliance
11. the importance of dealing with spillages and breakages in the workplace and how to do so
12. the procedures for reporting adverse or unexpected events in the workplace
13. the relevant range of health, safety and security records and when and how to complete them
14. safe lifting and handling techniques relevant to your work area

15. the importance of maintaining tidy and clean work areas and how it can contribute to health, safety, security and infection prevention and control measures
16. the range of cleaning, disinfection agents or decontamination procedures appropriate to your work area and activities and how and when to apply them
17. the current national legislation, guidelines, local policies and protocols which affect your work practice

### **Performance Criteria**

You must be able to do the following:

1. work within your level of competence, responsibility and accountability
2. challenge and confirm right of entry of people to the working environment and take prompt and appropriate action in response to any security problems or issues
3. check the risk assessments to identify the hazards and associated risks relevant to your work activities and whenever new protocols, procedures, techniques or equipment are introduced into your work practice
4. undertake a risk assessment if one has not been completed or refer to colleagues if this is outside your area of authority
5. ensure appropriate personal protective equipment and /or any security protection is worn relevant to the workplace environment and activity
6. follow any manufacturers' instructions and the risk assessment guidelines to ensure identified hazards are controlled within your work practices
7. check all resources are fully operational and any materials are within their expiry date and take appropriate action if any resources are not fit for use
8. apply the safe lifting and handling techniques required for your work activities
9. dispose of any waste or hazardous materials in accordance with specified local procedures and policies
10. maintain a tidy and clean work area during and following the work activity
11. ensure any resources are stored safely in an appropriate location and environment
12. promptly report any incidents or risks to health, safety and security to relevant personnel and complete the required health and safety records clearly and accurately in a timely manner
13. maintain full, accurate and legible records of information collected in line with current legislation, guidelines, local policies and protocols

### **Additional Information**

This National Occupational Standard was developed by Skills for Health.

This standard links with the following dimension within the NHS Knowledge and Skills Framework (October 2004):

Dimension: Core 3: Health, safety and security

This standard has replaced GEN3.

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## IPC2 Perform hand hygiene to prevent the spread of infection

### Overview

This standard concerns carrying out hand hygiene to ensure that potentially harmful microorganisms do not spread infections. The standard applies to people working in all health and social care settings, including community and domiciliary settings and ambulance vehicles. Hands are the most common way in which microorganisms are transferred to people susceptible to infection. Hand hygiene is the single most important practice in reducing the spread of infectious agents, particularly bacteria, during the delivery of care. Everyone has a personal responsibility to undertake adequate hand hygiene.

Users of this standard will need to ensure that practice reflects up to date information and policies.

Version No 1

### Knowledge and Understanding

You will need to know and understand:

1. Relevant standard infection control precautions legislation and policies
2. Health and safety regulations covering your area of work
3. COSHH regulations concerning hazardous substances
4. The chain of infection
5. How to access facilities for hand hygiene
6. The situations requiring hand hygiene, the solutions required to achieve hand hygiene and when they are appropriate, and approved techniques for performing hand hygiene
7. Your own role and responsibilities and the responsibilities of others
8. How and when to report issues that are outside your own job role

### Performance Criteria

You must be able to do the following:

1. continually assess the need to perform hand hygiene to prevent the spread of infection
2. remove wrist and hand jewellery, including wristwatches, which harbour microorganisms, before providing care
3. where you wish to wear plain rings, such as wedding bands, move them when you are carrying out hand hygiene, in order to reach all microorganisms
4. use either liquid soap or approved alcohol-based hand rub products
5. where you use soap, wash your hands to achieve hand hygiene, ensuring that you:
  - a. wet your hands under running water before applying soap

- b. cover all areas of the hand during washing
  - c. rinse well under running water
  - d. dry your hands thoroughly with soft disposable towels
  - e. avoid contamination of your hands between hand hygiene and contact with the patient/client
6. where alcohol-based hand rub products are available or the only option for hand hygiene:
    - a. ensure that it is appropriate to use them
    - b. follow the manufacturer's instructions on quantity, application and usage
    - c. allow your hands to air dry fully and naturally (without using towels) before contact with the patient/client
  7. keep your fingernails short and clean, and do not use nail polish or artificial fingernails when providing care to others
  8. before each working shift, assess your hands for cuts, cracks and breaks in the skin that could harbour microorganisms
  9. cover any cuts and abrasions with a waterproof dressing, change the dressing when it appears soiled, and keep the area clean to reduce the risk of infection
  10. use hand cream to maintain the skin of your hands at appropriate times
  11. report any skin problems to your line manager, Occupational Health or your GP so that appropriate treatment can be undertaken
  12. should you encounter problems with the facilities and supplies for hand hygiene, that you are unable to remedy, inform the person responsible for them and ask them to take action

### **Additional Information**

This National Occupational Standard was developed by Skills for Health.

This standard links with the following dimension within the NHS Knowledge and Skills Framework (October 2004):

Dimension: Core 3 Health, safety and security

*IPC2 Perform hand hygiene to prevent the spread of infection*

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## **HSC241 Contribute to the effectiveness of teams**

### **Elements of Competence**

HSC241a Agree and carry out your role and responsibilities within the team

HSC241b Participate effectively as a team member

### **About this unit**

For this unit you need to be able to participate effectively as a member of a team.

### **Scope**

The scope is here to give you guidance on possible areas to be covered in this unit. The terms in this section give you a list of options linked with items in the performance criteria. You need to provide evidence for any option related to your work area.

### **Team: work team, a multi disciplinary team, broader multi agency team.**

Your knowledge and understanding will be specifically related to legal requirements and codes of practice applicable to your job, your work activities, the job you are doing, e.g. domiciliary, residential care, hospital settings, and the individuals you are working with.

### **Values underpinning the whole of the unit**

The values underpinning this unit have been derived from the key purpose statement<sup>2</sup>, the statement of expectations from carers and people accessing services, relevant service standards and codes of practice for health, social or care in the four UK countries. They can be found in the principles of care unit HSC24. To achieve this unit you must demonstrate that you have applied the principles of care outlined in unit HSC24 in your practice and through your knowledge.

### **Key Words and Concepts**

This section provides explanations and definitions of the key words and concepts used in this unit. In occupational standards it is quite common to find words or phrases used which you will be familiar with, but which, in the detail of the standards, may be used in a very particular way. You should read this section carefully before you begin working with the standards and refer to it if you are unsure about anything in the unit.

1. The term 'unit' is used in this report to refer to each separate standard within the NOS suite
2. The key purpose identified for those working in health, social or care settings is "to provide an integrated, ethical and inclusive service, which meets agreed needs and outcomes of people requiring health and/or social care"

Final version approved August 2009

**Behaviour** Actions and communications by a person

**Others** Other people within and outside your organisation that are necessary for you to fulfil your job role

**Rights** The rights that individuals have to:

- a. be respected
- b. be treated equally and not be discriminated against
- c. be treated as an individual
- d. be treated in a dignified way
- e. privacy
- f. be protected from danger and harm
- g. be supported and cared for in a way they choose
- h. access information about themselves
- i. communicate using their preferred methods of communication and language

**Team** A group of people working together for a specific purpose

## **HSC241a Agree and carry out your role and responsibilities within the team**

### **Performance Criteria**

You need to,

1. review information and seek advice about the team, its objectives and its purpose
2. work with others within the team to identify, agree and clarify:
  - a. your role and responsibilities
  - b. the roles and responsibilities of others
  - c. how your role and responsibilities contribute to the overall objectives and purpose of the team
  - d. how you can and should contribute to team activities, objectives and purposes
3. carry out your agreed role and responsibilities within the team
4. evaluate and use feedback from others constructively, to enable you to carry out your role and responsibilities within the team more effectively
5. agree, seek support and take responsibility for any development and learning that will enable you to carry out your role and responsibilities within the team more effectively



## HSC241b Participate effectively as a team member

### Performance Criteria

You need to:

1. inform other members of the team of your activities
2. ensure your behaviour to others in the team supports the effective functioning of the team
3. accept and use suggestions and information offered by others constructively to improve your practice within the team
4. offer supportive and constructive assistance to team members
5. complete your commitments to other team members effectively and according to overall work priorities
6. when you cannot complete any commitments with timescales specified immediately inform appropriate team members
7. present suggestions and offer ideas and information to benefit team members and improve team working
8. deal with differences of opinion and conflicts constructively and in ways which respects other team members' points of view
9. where you experience problems in working effectively with other team members, seek appropriate advice and guidance

### Knowledge Specification for the whole of this unit

Competent practice is a combination of the application of skills and knowledge informed by values and ethics. You must show that you abide by Codes of Practice and use your knowledge and skills in your every day work. Therefore, when using this specification it is important to read the knowledge requirements in relation to expectations and requirements of your job role.

You need to show that you know, understand and can apply in practice:

### Values

1. legal and organisational requirements on equality, diversity, discrimination and rights when working in teams

Legislation and organisational policy and procedures

2. codes of practice and conduct, and standards and guidance relevant to your own and the roles, responsibilities, accountability and duties of others when working in teams to support individuals
3. current local, UK legislation and organisational requirements, procedures and practices for:
  - a. accessing records
  - b. recording, reporting, confidentiality and sharing information, including data protection
  - c. team working

4. how to access up to date copies of the organisation's workplace policies, procedures and systems, and practice and service standards related to team working

### **Theory and practice**

5. principles that underpin effective team working
6. individuals' styles of interaction and how these can affect team working
7. barriers to developing relationships within the team and how these can be overcome
8. problems which may be encountered when relating to and interacting with other team members and how these can best be handled
9. your own strengths and weaknesses as an individual worker and as a team member
10. development and learning opportunities available to support you in team working and activities

## GEN63 Act within the limits of your competence and authority

### Overview

This standard covers recognising the boundaries of your role and responsibilities and working within your level of competence in accordance with legislation, protocols and guidelines. It is applicable for all staff.

Users of this standard will need to ensure that practice reflects up to date information and policies.

Version No 1

### Knowledge and Understanding

You will need to know and understand:

1. the boundaries of your role and responsibilities and those of your colleagues
2. the reasons for working within the limits of your competence and authority
3. the importance of personally promoting and demonstrating good practice
4. the legislation, protocols and guidelines effecting your work
5. the organisational systems and requirements relevant to your role
6. the sources of information that can be accessed to maintain an awareness of research and developments in your area of work
7. the difference between direct and indirect supervision and autonomous practice, and which combination is most applicable in different circumstances
8. the risks to quality and safety arising from:
  - a. working outside the boundaries of competence and authority
  - b. not keeping up to date with best practice
  - c. poor communication
  - d. insufficient support
  - e. lack of resources
  - f. poor individual or team compliance with legislation, protocols, and guidelines
  - g. and/or organisational systems and requirements
9. reporting and minimising risks
10. the principle of meeting the organisations needs, and how this should enable you to recognise your own limitations and when you should seek support from others
11. the processes by which improvements to protocols/guidelines and organisational systems/requirements should be reported
12. the procedure for accessing training, learning and development needs for yourself and/or others within your organisation

13. the actions that can be taken to ensure a current, clear and accurate understanding of roles and responsibilities is maintained, and how this affects the way you work as an individual or part of a team

### **Performance Criteria**

You must be able to do the following:

1. adhere to legislation, protocols and guidelines relevant to your role and field of practice
2. work within organisational systems and requirements as appropriate to your role
3. recognise the boundary of your role and responsibility and seek supervision when situations are beyond your competence and authority
4. maintain competence within your role and field of practice
5. use relevant research based protocols and guidelines as evidence to inform your practice
6. promote and demonstrate good practice as an individual and as a team member at all times
7. identify and manage potential and actual risks to the quality and safety of practice
8. evaluate and reflect on the quality of your work and make continuing improvements

### **Additional Information**

This National Occupational Standard was developed by Skills for Health.

This standard links with the following dimension within the NHS Knowledge and Skills Framework (October 2004):

Dimension: Core 5 Quality

This standard replaced EC\_30.

*GEN63 Act within the limits of your competence and authority*

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# GEN1 Ensure personal fitness for work

## Overview

This standard covers your responsibility to make sure you are fit for work in clinical/therapeutic areas and focuses on preventing cross infection from a personal point of view.

Users of this standard will need to ensure that practice reflects up to date information and policies.

Version No 1

## Knowledge and Understanding

You will need to know and understand:

1. the current European and national legislation, national guidelines and local policies and protocols which affect your work practice in relation to ensuring personal fitness for work, including:
  - a. health and safety
  - b. moving and handling
2. your responsibilities and accountability in relation to the current European and national legislation, national guidelines and local policies and protocols
3. how to access your local policies and procedures relating to:
  - a. health and safety
  - b. moving and handling
4. the importance of:
  - a. being fit for work
  - b. maintaining high standards of personal hygiene at all times
5. the causes of infection and cross-infection
6. the application of standard precautions for infection control and other relevant health and safety issues
7. procedures for reporting:
  - a. the need to be absent from work for any reason
  - b. any episodes of any contagious illness you may have or in the people you
  - c. live with to the appropriate person

## **Performance Criteria**

You must be able to do the following:

1. make sure that you are fit for work
2. report any personal episodes of illness and infection which could compromise your work to the person in charge of your shift
3. report any episodes of illness or infection in close social contacts which could compromise your work to the person in charge of your shift
4. visit your General Practitioner or Occupational Health Service when situations occur that may compromise work
5. keep your manager fully informed of the need to be away from work
6. maintain a clean and healthy personal status
7. promptly resolve problems of personal hygiene before risk of cross infection can occur
8. ensure that all necessary health promotion schemes such as vaccination for work and social activities are taken up as advised by the Occupational Health Department
9. comply with national regulations related to viral antigen testing before starting and during employment when involved in exposure prone procedures

## **Additional Information**

This National Occupational Standard was developed by Skills for Health.

This standard links with the following dimension within the NHS Knowledge and Skills Framework (October 2004):

Dimension: Core 3 Health, Safety and Security

*GEN1 Ensure personal fitness for work*

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## GEN2 Prepare and dress for work in healthcare settings

### Overview

This standard covers the control of cross-infection by correctly preparing and dressing appropriately for work in healthcare areas. This includes effective hand washing/cleansing.

Users of this standard will need to ensure that practice reflects up to date information and policies.

Version No 1

### Knowledge and Understanding

You will need to know and understand:

1. organisational policies and protocols in accordance with Clinical/Corporate Governance as affect your work practice in relation to preparing and dressing for work
2. your responsibilities and accountability in relation to the current European and National legislation, national guidelines and local policies and protocols and Clinical/Corporate Governance
3. the duty to report any acts or omissions in care that could be detrimental to yourself, other individuals or your employer
4. the importance of applying standard precautions to preparing and dressing for work and the potential consequences of poor practice
5. the importance of maintaining high standards of personal hygiene at all times
6. the personal (outdoor) clothing and other personal fashion items that should be removed for work in a clinical/controlled environment, and the reasons for this
7. the causes of infection and cross-infection
8. the application of standard precautions for infection control and other relevant health and safety issues
9. the links between individual presentation, professional appearance and reduction of individuals' anxiety
10. the policy on the use of makeup or the wearing of jewellery and covering facial and head hair where this is required
11. protective clothing and:
  - a. the reasons why particular materials are used for personal protective clothing
  - b. the types of protective clothing available, and their suitability in different situations
  - c. the reasons why personal protective clothing must be clean and undamaged when being worn
  - d. how the correct use of personal protective clothing contributes to infection control and how this links to standard precautions
  - e. the importance of wearing personal protective clothing which is comfortable
  - f. the reasons why personal protective clothing should not be worn outside the designated working area
  - g. situations in which additional protective clothing should be worn
12. protective equipment and:
  - a. the circumstances in which additional protective equipment is needed
  - b. the types of additional protective equipment available

- c. the suitability of different types of additional protective equipment for different situations
  - d. the importance of wearing adequate and appropriate additional protective equipment
  - e. where and how to dispose of used, dirty and damaged clothing (both re-usable and single-use)
13. the importance of effective hand washing
  14. methods of cleaning hands and other areas of skin, and the times at which skin cleaning is necessary
  15. procedures for reporting problems with personal protective clothing and additional protective equipment (e.g. shortfalls in stock, dirty or damaged items)
  16. the importance of immediately reporting any issues which are outside your own sphere of competence without delay to the relevant member of staff

### **Performance Criteria**

You must be able to do the following:

1. apply standard precautions for infection prevention and control and other appropriate health and safety measures
2. remove personal clothing and fashion items that should not be worn in the workplace and store them in an appropriate safe place
3. check that all personal protective equipment is clean, in a good state of repair and fits comfortably
4. wear the correct personal protective equipment for your role and the procedure you are undertaking in line with organisational policy
5. where required, cover any cuts and grazes securely with an appropriate dressing
6. maintain a clean, neat and tidy appearance at all times
7. change your personal protective equipment as soon as practicably possible if it becomes unsuitable for use
8. remove your personal protective equipment safely in a way that minimises the risk of cross-infection and put it in the appropriate place for re-processing or disposal as necessary
9. report any shortfalls in personal protective equipment stocks promptly to the appropriate person
10. prevent contamination of personal protective equipment by only wearing it in the designated working area, and changing into personal clothing when you finish work
11. wear additional protective equipment when there is the risk of or presence of aerosol blood, body fluids or radiation in line with organisational policy
12. wear synthetic non-powdered unsterile gloves, and plastic apron when cleaning and when handling blood, body fluids, specimens and toxic or corrosive substances in line with mandatory risk assessments
13. wash and dry your hands effectively, or use an appropriate alcoholic skin decontamination fluid when arriving on duty and then before and after each activity/patient contact

### **Additional Information**

This National Occupational Standard was developed by Skills for Health.

This standard links with the following dimension within the NHS Knowledge and Skills Framework (October 2004):

Dimension: Core 3 Health, safety and security

*GEN2 Prepare and dress for work in healthcare settings*

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## **IPC3 Clean and remove spillages of blood and other body fluids**

### **Overview**

This standard concerns the safe and effective cleaning and removal of spillages of blood and other body fluids to minimise the risk of infection to health and social care staff, patients/clients and visitors. The standard applies in all health and social care settings, including community and domiciliary settings and ambulance vehicles.

Exposure to blood and other body fluids poses a potential risk of infection from bacteria and viruses. All staff working in health and social care should receive training in how to deal with spillages but it should be clear who is primarily responsible for cleaning blood and body fluid spillages within each area or care setting.

Users of this standard will need to ensure that practice reflects up to date information and policies.

Version No 1

### **Knowledge and Understanding**

You will need to know and understand:

1. Relevant standard infection control precautions legislation and policies
2. Health and safety regulations covering your area of work
3. COSHH regulations concerning hazardous substances
4. The chain of infection
5. How to access facilities for hand hygiene
6. The different types of spillage and local policies on the appropriate cleaning and disinfection processes to follow
7. The uses, dilutions, methods of application, storage and disposal of detergents and disinfectants used to clean spillages
8. Techniques for maintaining hand hygiene
9. The appropriate personal protective equipment to use when cleaning spillages
10. How to safely put on, remove and dispose of personal protective equipment
11. How to segregate different categories of waste
12. The different colour-coded bags and waste containers available and the correct use of each
13. How to distinguish between single-use, single-patient use and reusable equipment and how to dispose of them, and launder/clean or store them, safely
14. Your own role and responsibilities, and the responsibilities of others
15. How to complete the records required in your area of activity
16. How to report adverse events, accidents and incidents
17. How and when to report issues that are outside your job role

## Performance Criteria

You must be able to do the following:

1. take precautions and apply safe working practices to minimise the risk of exposure to blood and other body fluids
2. act immediately to deal with spillages of blood or other body fluids by placing warning signs and a physical barrier as appropriate
3. assess the spillage and gather the cleaning equipment and personal protective equipment you will need to tackle it
4. put on the personal protective equipment needed to minimise the risk of exposure to infection, before dealing with the spillage
5. if the spillage is large, apply disposable paper towels or granules to contain and absorb it, discarding them in the appropriate waste bin, avoiding splashing
6. follow the methods set out in local policies for cleaning and removing spillages of different types of body fluids
7. dispose of spent or unused cleaning solutions in a designated area
8. discard disposable cleaning equipment and disposable personal protective equipment immediately in the appropriate waste bin, and clean and dry non-disposable equipment ready for re-use
9. return disinfectants to safe storage, following Control of Substances Hazardous to Health regulations, health and safety policies and the manufacturer's instructions
10. remove warning signs and re-instate the area
11. perform hand hygiene in accordance with standard infection control precautions
12. if you are adversely exposed to blood or body fluids while cleaning the spillage, immediately seek first aid from a qualified person, and report the incident in accordance with the local policy
13. report the spillage in accordance with the local policy for adverse event reporting

## Additional Information

This National Occupational Standard was developed by Skills for Health.

This standard links with the following dimension within the NHS Knowledge and Skills Framework (October 2004):

Dimension: Core 3 Health, safety and security

*IPC3 Clean and remove spillages of blood and other body fluids*

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# IPC6 Use personal protective equipment to prevent the spread of infection

## Overview

Personal protective equipment (PPE) is an essential health and safety measure to protect healthcare workers and their patients/clients. In this standard, personal protective equipment refers to gloves, aprons, gowns, overalls, masks, goggles and face shields used to minimise the risks of infection. The standard applies to all health and social care settings, including community and domiciliary settings, and ambulance vehicles. A risk assessment is required in order to decide which PPE is appropriate for a particular activity, and local policies will specify the PPE that healthcare workers should use.

Users of this standard will need to ensure that practice reflects up to date information and policies.

Version No 1

## Knowledge and Understanding

You will need to know and understand:

1. Relevant standard infection control precautions legislation and policies
2. Health and safety regulations covering your area of work
3. The COSHH regulations concerning hazardous substances
4. The chain of infection
5. How to access facilities for hand hygiene
6. Techniques for maintaining hand hygiene
7. The appropriate personal protective equipment to use for the procedures you carry out
8. Latex allergy and local policy on provision of latex-free gloves
9. How to safely put on, remove and dispose of personal protective equipment
10. Your own role and responsibilities, and the responsibilities of others
11. How and when to report issues that are outside your job role

## Performance Criteria

You must be able to do the following:

1. consider the risks of acquiring and spreading infection before and during each activity you undertake, including considering potential contamination of the environment in which you are working
2. use appropriate personal protective equipment for the activity you are undertaking
3. perform hand hygiene before putting on, and immediately after removing, personal protective equipment
4. use all items of personal protective equipment according to the manufacturer's instructions, and any relevant national/local policies
5. before you use them, check all items of personal protective equipment for cleanliness and damage, and ensure they fit correctly
6. remove and replace any item of personal protective equipment if it becomes torn, punctured or otherwise damaged, as soon as you can safely do so
7. change items of personal protective equipment between patients/clients and, where appropriate, between different activities with the same patient/client
8. remove items of personal protective equipment immediately after use, before touching any clean areas, items, or surfaces, or touching people, and
  - a. dispose of single use items safely, according to national/local policy
  - b. follow national/local policy for decontamination of re-usable items prior to storage
9. should you encounter problems with the facilities and supplies for personal protective equipment, that you are unable to remedy, inform the person responsible for them and ask them to take action

## Additional Information

This National Occupational Standard was developed by Skills for Health.

This standard links with the following dimension within the NHS Knowledge and Skills Framework (October 2004):

Dimension: Core 3 Health, safety and security

*IPC6 Use personal protective equipment to prevent the spread of infection*

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## **IPC7 Safely dispose of healthcare waste, including sharps, to prevent the spread of infection**

### **Overview**

This standard concerns disposing of healthcare waste, including sharps, in such a way that you minimise the risks of acquiring and spreading infections. The standard applies to activities that take place in any health and social care setting, including community and domiciliary settings, and ambulance vehicles. Healthcare waste is produced as a result of healthcare activities and includes potentially hazardous substances that may cause infection to any person coming into contact with them. Different types of hazardous waste are categorised under European legislation, but the implementation of the Hazardous Waste Directive and the European Waste Catalogue may differ in England, Northern Ireland, Scotland and Wales, and you should follow the national policies, including descriptions of types of waste, that apply to your country.

Users of this standard will need to ensure that practice reflects up to date information and policies.

Version No 1

### **Knowledge and Understanding**

You will need to know and understand:

1. relevant standard infection control precautions legislation and policies
2. health and safety regulations covering your area of work
3. The COSHH regulations concerning hazardous substances
4. the chain of infection
5. how to access facilities for hand hygiene
6. techniques for maintaining hand hygiene
7. the personal protective equipment to use for activities within your job role
8. how to safely put on, remove and dispose of personal protective equipment
9. how to handle and dispose of sharps safely
10. how to segregate different types of waste
11. the different colour-coded bags and waste containers available and the correct use of each
12. how to distinguish between single-use, single-patient use, and reusable equipment and how to dispose of them, or launder/clean or store them, safely
13. your own role and responsibilities, and the responsibilities of others
14. how to complete the records required in your area of activity
15. how to report adverse events, accidents and incidents
16. how and when to report issues that are outside your job role

## Performance Criteria

You must be able to do the following:

1. Use appropriate personal protective equipment when you are handling used sharps and other healthcare waste in accordance with local policies
2. Encourage patients/clients to dispose of their own waste when they are able to do so safely, and provide them with appropriate receptacles for this
3. Segregate healthcare waste into appropriate streams for safe disposal
4. Refer to the manufacturer's data sheets, COSHH regulations and local policies to ensure safe disposal of items such as bottles containing solutions
5. Dispose of healthcare waste as soon as possible, as close to the point of use as possible, into the appropriate waste container
6. Perform hand hygiene after handling waste, and enable patients/clients who have disposed of their own waste also to perform hand hygiene
7. Ensure the point of origin of the waste is clearly marked on containers by an appropriate tag, tape or label, so that it is clear what they contain, following recognised codes
8. When they are sufficiently full, seal waste containers safely, arrange for them to be removed, and set up fresh containers
9. If any spillages of waste occur, take action to clear them up as soon as possible in accordance with national/local policies
10. Ensure that non-disposable waste containers are kept clean and secure
11. Should you encounter problems with the facilities and supplies for disposing of waste, that you are unable to remedy, inform the person responsible for them and ask them to take action
12. Report any adverse events, incidents or accidents concerning healthcare waste immediately, following local policies

## Additional Information

This National Occupational Standard was developed by Skills for Health, in partnership with the Royal College of Nursing and Health Protection Scotland.

This standard links with the following dimension within the NHS Knowledge and Skills Framework (October 2004):

Dimension: Core 3 Health, safety and security

*IPC7 Safely dispose of healthcare waste, including sharps, to prevent the spread of infection*

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## **IPC4 Clean and store care equipment to minimise the risks of spreading infection**

### **Overview**

This standard concerns the routine cleaning and storage of re-usable non-invasive care equipment, such as stethoscopes, thermometers, X-ray machines, drip stands, beds, trolleys, toys used in children's therapy, to minimise the risks of spreading infection. All staff in health and social care settings should receive training in cleaning the care equipment they use but it should be clear who is responsible for the routine cleaning of equipment within each area or care setting. This standard covers activity in all health and social care settings, including community and domiciliary settings, and ambulance vehicles, but excluding specialised settings, such as laboratories, pharmacies, or operating theatres, where more specialised methods may be required.

Users of this standard will need to ensure that practice reflects up to date information and policies.

Version No 1

### **Knowledge and Understanding**

You will need to know and understand:

1. relevant standard infection control precautions legislation and policies
2. health and safety regulations covering your area of work
3. COSHH regulations concerning hazardous substances
4. the chain of infection
5. how to access facilities for hand hygiene
6. techniques for maintaining hand hygiene
7. equipment cleaning schedules and other occasions when cleaning should be carried out
8. the uses, dilutions, methods of application, storage and disposal of detergents and disinfectants used to clean equipment
9. the appropriate personal protective equipment to use when cleaning equipment
10. how to safely put on, remove and dispose of personal protective equipment
11. how to segregate different categories of waste
12. the different colour-coded bags and waste containers available and the correct use of each
13. how to distinguish between single-use, single-patient use and reusable equipment and how to dispose of them, and launder/clean or store them, safely
14. your individual role and responsibilities and the responsibilities of others
15. how to complete the records required in your area of activity
16. how and when to report issues that are outside your job role

## Performance Criteria

You must be able to do the following:

1. Apply appropriate working practices to maintain a tidy, clutter free environment to limit opportunities for microorganisms to spread and contaminate equipment
2. Undertake cleaning on a routine, scheduled basis, after a patient is discharged or transferred, or as necessary when care equipment is soiled or contaminated, in accordance with infection prevention and control policies
3. Perform hand hygiene before and on completion of the activity in accordance with standard infection control precautions
4. Inspect the care equipment before use, and ensure it is clean
5. Assess what cleaning is required, and choose the appropriate cleaning agent and equipment
6. Gather the cleaning equipment, cleaning agent, and put on the appropriate personal protective equipment before commencing
7. Clean the care equipment according to the type of equipment, manufacturer's instructions, and local policy
8. Assess the state of repair of care equipment during cleaning, remove any equipment immediately that is not fit for use, and report and replace any item that is damaged
9. Ensure care equipment is stored in a clean, designated place in accordance with the manufacturer's instructions and infection prevention and control policies
10. Discard single use, and single-patient use equipment and personal protective equipment in the appropriate waste bin and dispose of spent or unused cleaning solutions in a designated area
11. Return cleaning agents to safe storage, following Control of Substances Hazardous to Health regulations, health and safety guidance and the manufacturer's instructions
12. Ensure equipment used for cleaning is cleaned and stored ready for re-use
13. Should you encounter problems with the facilities and supplies for cleaning care equipment, that you are unable to remedy, inform the person responsible for them and ask them to take action

## Additional Information

This National Occupational Standard was developed by Skills for Health, in partnership with the Royal College of Nursing and Health Protection Scotland.

This standard links with the following dimension within the NHS Knowledge and Skills Framework (October 2004):

Dimension: Core 3 Health, safety and security

*IPC4 Clean and store care equipment to minimise the risks of spreading infection*

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## IPC9 Minimise the risks of spreading infection when removing used linen

### Overview

It has been shown that used linen in healthcare settings can harbour large numbers of microorganisms. 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 settings, including community and domiciliary settings, and ambulance vehicles. This standard does not cover the removal of radioactive linen or linen from patients with known infectious diseases, where additional precautions will be required based on a local assessment of risk and advice from the Infection Control Team.

Users of this standard will need to ensure that practice reflects up to date information and policies.

Version No 1

### Knowledge and Understanding

You will need to know and understand:

1. relevant standard infection control precautions legislation and policies
2. health and safety regulations covering your area of work
3. COSHH regulations concerning hazardous materials
4. the chain of infection
5. how to access facilities for hand hygiene
6. techniques for maintaining hand hygiene
7. the appropriate personal protective equipment to use when handling linen
8. how to safely put on, remove and dispose of personal protective equipment
9. how to segregate and bag different categories of linen
10. the different colour-coded bags and waste containers available and the correct use of each
11. how to distinguish between single-use, single-patient use, and reusable equipment and how to dispose of them, and launder/clean or store them, safely
12. your own role and responsibilities, and the responsibilities of others
13. how to complete the records required in your area of activity
14. how to report adverse events, accidents and incidents
15. how and when to report issues that are outside your job role

## Performance Criteria

You must be able to do the following:

1. Perform hand hygiene, cover any abrasions and cuts and put on personal protective equipment in accordance with the local infection control policy
2. Assemble the equipment and supplies required to safely remove used linen and move the equipment as close as possible to the point of use
3. Where you are removing linen with a patient/client present, explain to them what you are going to do, proceed in such a way as to maintain their dignity and safety throughout, and ensure they are made comfortable at the end of the procedure
4. Ensure that no extraneous items such as patient belongings, used sharps or other clinical equipment are inadvertently discarded with the used linen
5. Remove the used linen, avoiding shaking, 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
6. Place linen which is contaminated with blood or other body fluids into a water soluble bag to prevent further handling and secure it using a neck tie, and place the water soluble bag into a coloured-coded secondary bag, appropriately tagged in accordance with local policy
7. Place filled bags in the designated area for collection and check regularly to ensure used linen is collected in accordance with the agreed schedule
8. Place any disposable personal protective equipment in the appropriate waste bin immediately after use and perform hand hygiene promptly after you have removed your personal protective equipment

## Additional Information

This National Occupational Standard was developed by Skills for Health, in partnership with the Royal College of Nursing and Health Protection Scotland.

This standard links with the following dimension within the NHS Knowledge and Skills Framework (October 2004):

Dimension: Core 3 Health, safety and security

*IPC9 Minimise the risks of spreading infection when removing used linen*

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## **IPC12 Minimise the risks of spreading infection when storing and using clean linen**

### **Overview**

This standard concerns the storage and use of clean linen to minimise the risk of contamination and cross infection. The standard applies in all health and social care settings, where patients/clients may be particularly susceptible to infection.

Users of this standard will need to ensure that practice reflects up to date information and policies.

Version No 1

### **Knowledge and Understanding**

You will need to know and understand:

1. relevant standard infection control precautions legislation and policies
2. health and safety regulations covering your area of work
3. the COSHH regulations concerning hazardous materials
4. the chain of infection
5. how to access facilities for hand hygiene
6. techniques for maintaining hand hygiene
7. how to stock, store and use clean linen
8. your own role and responsibilities, and the responsibilities of others
9. how to complete the records required in your area of activity
10. how and when to report issues that are outside your job role

### **Performance Criteria**

You must be able to do the following:

1. Perform hand hygiene and cover any abrasions and cuts before handling clean linen
2. Sort and store any delivery of clean linen in a designated area on shelves away from the floor to prevent contamination by dust or aerosols
3. Randomly check clean linen to ensure it is clean and free of stains, removing and reporting any items that are not fit for use
4. Collect the clean linen required for the task(s) and, if using a linen trolley to transport it to the bedside or location of use, minimise the number of times it is decanted
5. Where you are deploying clean linen with a patient/client present, explain to them what you are going to do, proceed in such a way as to maintain their dignity and safety throughout, and ensure they are made comfortable at the end of the procedure

6. Use the clean linen immediately or directly from the trolley, avoiding holding it against yourself, shaking it, dropping it on the floor or placing it on surfaces that are frequently touched such as lockers or bed tables
7. Maintain an adequate stock of clean linen and report unanticipated high usage to ensure the stock is replenished

### **Additional Information**

This National Occupational Standard was developed by Skills for Health, in partnership with the Royal College of Nursing and Health Protection Scotland.

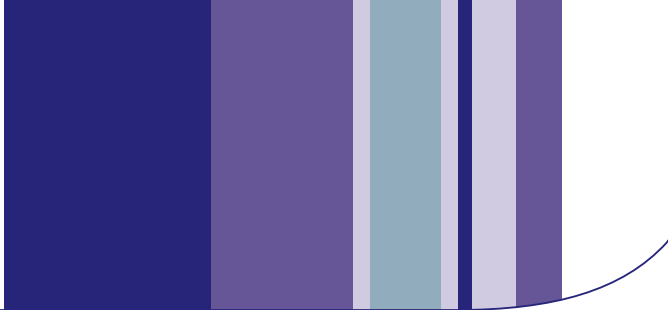
This standard links with the following dimension within the NHS Knowledge and Skills Framework (October 2004):

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*IPC12 Minimise the risks of spreading infection when storing and using clean linen*

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## Appendix 3: Example of National Occupational Standard In Context



The following pages show an example of how a practice setting may use a National Occupational Standard to ensure that the detailed knowledge required in a particular context is included when commissioning or designing education and training, or for use as part of appraisal.

It shows how more detailed information in relation to knowledge required, local competencies in relation to the area of practice, specific protocols, policies and guidelines are underpinned by the National Occupational Standard.

## **NOS - IPC2 Perform hand hygiene to prevent the spread of infection**

### **Overview**

This standard concerns carrying out hand hygiene to ensure that potentially harmful microorganisms do not spread infections. The standard applies to people working in all health and social care settings, including community and domiciliary settings and ambulance vehicles. Hands are the most common way in which microorganisms are transferred to people susceptible to infection. Hand hygiene is the single most important practice in reducing the spread of infectious agents, particularly bacteria, during the delivery of care. Everyone has a personal responsibility to undertake adequate hand hygiene.

Users of this standard will need to ensure that practice reflects up to date information and policies.

Version No 1

### **Knowledge and Understanding**

You will need to know and understand:

1. Relevant standard infection control precautions legislation and policies
2. Health and safety regulations covering your area of work
3. COSHH regulations concerning hazardous substances
4. The chain of infection
5. How to access facilities for hand hygiene
6. The situations requiring hand hygiene, the solutions required to achieve hand hygiene and when they are appropriate, and approved techniques for performing hand hygiene
7. Your own role and responsibilities and the responsibilities of others
8. How and when to report issues that are outside your own job role

### **Performance Criteria**

You must be able to do the following:

1. continually assess the need to perform hand hygiene to prevent the spread of infection

2. remove wrist and hand jewellery, including wristwatches, which harbour microorganisms, before providing care
3. where you wish to wear plain rings, such as wedding bands, move them when you are carrying out hand hygiene, in order to reach all microorganisms
4. use either liquid soap or approved alcohol-based hand rub products
5. where you use soap, wash your hands to achieve hand hygiene, ensuring that you:
  - a. wet your hands under running water before applying soap
  - b. cover all areas of the hand during washing
  - c. rinse well under running water
  - d. dry your hands thoroughly with soft disposable towels
  - e. avoid contamination of your hands between hand hygiene and contact with the patient/client
6. where alcohol-based hand rub products are available or the only option for hand hygiene:
  - a. ensure that it is appropriate to use them
  - b. follow the manufacturer's instructions on quantity, application and usage
  - c. allow your hands to air dry fully and naturally (without using towels) before contact with the patient/client
7. keep your fingernails short and clean, and do not use nail polish or artificial fingernails when providing care to others
8. before each working shift, assess your hands for cuts, cracks and breaks in the skin that could harbour microorganisms
9. cover any cuts and abrasions with a waterproof dressing, change the dressing when it appears soiled, and keep the area clean to reduce the risk of infection
10. use hand cream to maintain the skin of your hands at appropriate times
11. report any skin problems to your line manager, Occupational Health or your GP so that appropriate treatment can be undertaken
12. should you encounter problems with the facilities and supplies for hand hygiene that you are unable to remedy, inform the person responsible for them and ask them to take action.

**Example of how additional information may be used with respect to a particular setting or context in relation to the national occupational standard.**

<b>Non-direct staff</b> For example, Medical secretary, “Back office” staff.	<b>Direct staff</b> For example, Ward clerk, receptionist	<b>Direct Health and care staff</b> For example, Medical and nursing staff	<b>Non direct health and care staff</b> For example, laboratory technician
Your knowledge and understanding in relation to hand hygiene should include:			
<b>Basic microbiology</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• commonly encountered microorganisms</li> <li>• sources and habitat of microorganisms</li> <li>• resident vs. transient microorganisms</li> <li>• routes of transmission</li> </ul>			
<b>Factors relating to a person’s susceptibility to infection</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• the person’s own risk factors (intrinsic)</li> <li>• risks from external sources (extrinsic)</li> </ul>			
<b>Chain of Infection</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• routes and mechanism by which infection spreads</li> <li>• links and elements in chain of infection</li> <li>• strategies for breaking individual links / standard precautions:                             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• personal protective equipment / staff health</li> <li>• cleaning / disinfection / sterilisation</li> <li>• environmental hygiene</li> <li>• safe handling / disposal of used waste &amp; linen</li> <li>• safe handling / disposal of used sharps</li> <li>• food hygiene</li> <li>• patient placement / source isolation</li> <li>• management of invasive devices</li> <li>• hand hygiene</li> </ul> </li> </ul>			
<b>Hand hygiene</b> Agents and their uses: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• liquid soap</li> <li>• antiseptic solution</li> <li>• alcohol hand rub</li> </ul>			
<b>Technique / frequency</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ayliffe / National Patient Safety Agency hand washing technique</li> <li>• World Health Organisation “My 5 moments of hand hygiene”.</li> </ul>			
<b>Policy</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Health and Safety / COSHH</li> <li>• Health and Safety / COSHH</li> <li>• Safety and Quality</li> <li>• Clinical Governance / Risk Management</li> <li>• Guidance on uniform and workwear policies</li> </ul>			

# Project Contributors

## Strategy group

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The Council of Deans have been updated throughout the project with all Strategy Group information.

A virtual Quality Group also supported the project and consisted of the membership of the Infection Prevention Society and other nominations from the Strategy Group. Forty nine responses were received and collated from this group.



# Acknowledgements



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Compiled by Jane Glennon Skills for Health (June 2011)

A decorative horizontal band with a curved top and bottom, containing a series of vertical stripes in various shades of purple, blue, and teal.

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