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Policy Area Infection Prevention  
Applicability UNC Medical Center

## Patient Equipment

### I. Description

Describes the infection prevention guidelines for cleaning and disinfecting used Patient Equipment

### II. Rationale

Shared patient equipment can be a source of healthcare-associated infections (HAI) via either direct or indirect contact. Appropriate cleaning and decontamination of reusable patient care equipment is essential to prevent the transmission of infectious agents.

### III. Policy

#### A. Personnel

1. Personnel shall adhere to the guidelines found in:
  - a. Infection Prevention policy - [Infection Control and Screening Program: Occupational Health Services \(OHS\)](#)
  - b. Infection Prevention policy - [Exposure Control Plan for Bloodborne Pathogens](#)
  - c. Infection Prevention policy - [Hand Hygiene and Use of Antiseptics for Skin Preparation](#)
  - d. Infection Prevention policy - [Tuberculosis Control Plan](#)
  - e. Infection Prevention policy - [Infection Control Guidelines for Adult and Pediatric Inpatient Care](#)

- f. Infection Prevention policy - [Isolation Precautions](#)
- 2. Infection Prevention and control education, which includes OSHA-required Bloodborne Pathogens and Tuberculosis training is provided initially upon employment and completed annually via the Learning Made Simple System (LMS).

## B. Cleaning and Disinfection of Patient Equipment

1. Contaminated equipment returned to the department moves from the "soiled" area, where cleaning and decontamination occurs, to a "clean" area where drying and reassembling occurs. Blood and body fluids that are visible on the surfaces of equipment may interfere with the effectiveness of the disinfection process. For this reason, visibly soiled equipment must first be cleaned with an EPA-registered disinfectant to remove blood and body fluids prior to disinfection.
2. **Products for use:**
  - a. Follow the manufacturer's instructions for cleaning and maintaining noncritical medical equipment (items that come in contact with intact skin only) should be followed. A product must be used for the purpose for which it was designed (e.g., Hibiclens is a hand antiseptic and not indicated for disinfecting equipment).
  - b. Equipment shall be disinfected using an EPA-registered disinfectant per manufacturer's instructions for use.
  - c. If applicable, dilution of cleaning products should be prepared according to manufacturer's recommendations.
3. Use of cloths and EPA-registered disinfectant wipes for disinfection:
  - a. Cloths used for cleaning must not be placed back into the disinfectant solution after using it to wipe a surface.
  - b. When using cloths containing EPA-registered disinfectants (e.g., Oxivir TB, Sani-Cloths), cloths should be changed whenever visibly soiled or when no longer sufficiently wetting surfaces.
4. Portable HEPA units should be available from Patient Equipment for immediate use for patients with airborne infectious diseases. Unused, portable HEPA units should be returned to the Patient Equipment department and not stored in clinical areas unless they are purchased by the clinical area. Units are disinfected between uses. Filters are changed on a routine basis by Medical Engineering.
5. Equipment contaminated with blood or other potentially infectious materials sent out for servicing or repair must first be decontaminated. If any portion of the equipment cannot be decontaminated, a BIOHAZARD label must be placed on the equipment identifying the part that remains contaminated.

## C. Storage of Clean Equipment

1. Clean patient equipment items must be stored in a designated clean storage area or storage room. No soiled carts or supplies may be stored in a designated clean area.
2. Equipment stored on shelves must be at least 8 inches from the floor.

## D. Implementation

Implementation of this policy will be the responsibility of the director of the department or his/her designee.

## IV. References

APIC Text of Infection Control and Epidemiology. 4th edition.

Guidelines for Environmental Infection Control in Health Care Facilities. MMWR. 2003;52RR 10. <https://www.cdc.gov/infectioncontrol/pdf/guidelines/environmental-guidelines-P.pdf>

Rutala, WR, Weber DJ. Guideline for Disinfection and Sterilization in Healthcare Facilities, 2008. Healthcare Infection Control Practices Advisory Committee (HICPAC). <https://www.cdc.gov/infectioncontrol/pdf/guidelines/disinfection-guidelines-H.pdf>

## V. Related Policies

[Infection Prevention policy - Infection Control Guidelines for Adult and Pediatric Inpatient Care](#)

[Infection Prevention Policy: Exposure Control Plan for Bloodborne Pathogens](#)

[Infection Prevention Policy: Hand Hygiene and Use of Antiseptics for Skin Preparation](#)

[Infection Prevention Policy: Infection Control and Screening Program: Occupational Health Service](#)

[Infection Prevention Policy: Isolation Precautions](#)

[Infection Prevention Policy: Tuberculosis Control Plan](#)

## Approval Signatures

Step Description	Approver	Date
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