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Bwrdd Iechyd Prifysgol
Bae Abertawe
Swansea Bay University
Health Board



Meeting Date	02 December 2019	Agenda Item	2.13
Report Title	Revised Health Board standard for personal protective equipment for decontamination of endoscopes		
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Report Sponsor	Lisa Hinton, Assistant Director of Nursing for Infection Prevention & Control		
Presented by	Joanne Walters, Matron, Quality Improvement Infection Prevention.		
Freedom of Information	Open		
Purpose of the Report	This report provides the Health and Safety committee with the revised Health Board standard for personal protective equipment requirements for decontamination areas across Swansea Bay University Health Board.		
Key Issues	The Health Board is responsible for ensuring staff have access to appropriate personal protective equipment to reduce the risks associated with that task. A number of actions have already been completed and are detailed within the report.		
Specific Action Required <i>(please choose one only)</i>	Information	Discussion	Assurance
	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Recommendations	<p>Members are asked to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Note the revised Health Board's standard for personal protective equipment requirements for decontamination, which has been received by the Infection & control committee and the Health Board's Quality & Safety committee in October 2019. 		

Revised Health Board standard for personal protective equipment for decontamination of endoscopes

1. INTRODUCTION

Swansea Bay University Health Board has a responsibility to ensure that the safety and welfare of patients, relatives and healthcare workers is actively promoted and protected. Assurance that risks are identified, monitored and where possible, reduced or prevented is required. To meet Health and Care Standards (2015), Standard 2.1 and 2.4, the Health Board must ensure risk management and Health and Safety are embedded within all healthcare settings and are monitored to ensure continuous improvement. Also, the Health Board must ensure that staff are protected from exposure to infections that can be acquired and transmitted at work.

The use of personal protective equipment (PPE) has been proven to reduce the risks of transmission of microorganisms between patients, healthcare workers, the environment and equipment. Employers have duties concerning the provision and use of personal protective equipment at work and although there is no direct legislative requirement to wear an apron/ gown for the purposes of the prevention and control of infection, the legal duties as set out in Health and Safety at Work Act (1974) legislate that employers (i.e. Swansea Bay Health Board) must provide PPE which affords adequate protection against the risks associated with the task being undertaken. Employees (i.e. health and social care workers) have a responsibility to comply by ensuring that suitable PPE is worn correctly for the task being carried out.

2. BACKGROUND

Welsh Government (WG) commission biannual All Wales endoscopy decontamination surveys. These surveys/audits provide a measure of reassurance that all the processes involved in decontamination of flexible endoscopes and non-lumen probes comply with regulatory requirements and accord with guidance developed to help ensure patient safety. The audits took place across Wales during the third quarter 2018/19.

As part of these audits, the criteria set out in the Health and Care Standards (2015) are also monitored. During the recent audits, it was highlighted that there were variable, and in some areas, unacceptable practices relating to PPE usage throughout the Health Board. The report has recommended the Health Board ensure there is a standard use of PPE in all departments across the organisation to reduce variations in practice and standardise processes.

It is recommended that, during procedures when contact of clothing/ exposed skin with blood/body fluids, secretions or excretions is anticipated, long-sleeve gowns and gloves should be worn. If the activity is likely to generate splashes or sprays of blood/body fluids, secretions or excretions, visors should also be worn.

Consideration has been given to the concerns from staff involved in the decontamination process regarding the heat in the decontamination areas and the request to continue with the current PPE (gloves, armlets, aprons and visor). The following has been undertaken to ensure an informed and balanced decision has been made:

- An All Wales benchmarking exercise has been carried out to ascertain the level of PPE worn by healthcare workers in decontamination throughout Wales. It has been found that the majority of endoscopy units, HSDUs and silo decontamination areas use long-sleeve gowns, gloves, and visors for the manual decontamination of endoscopes.
- The advice from the Assistant Director of Health and Safety has been sought to consider concerns regarding the temperatures in the decontamination areas.
- A thorough review of PPE, Health and safety and menopausal guidance and policies, has been undertaken.

Following this above, it has been assessed that during the manual cleaning of endoscopes of all types, there is a risk of contamination of clothing/exposed skin and an extensive risk of splash. Therefore, the PPE required is long-sleeve waterproof gowns, visors and gloves. The correct procedure for applying and removing this PPE can be found in [Appendix 6 of the National Infection Prevention and Control Manual](#).

Due to concerns with the temperatures in some of the decontamination areas and in alignment with the NHS Wales menopause policy (2018), it is proposed that staff may wear theatre scrubs during the decontamination process. This will ensure a thinner uniform is worn underneath the required PPE, so that staff may feel cooler. It will also ensure that uniform that has been worn in the decontamination areas is hospital laundered to further reduce the risks of cross-contamination. It is also recommended that regular hydration breaks are factored in to the working day. Drinks bottles must NOT be taken in to the procedure rooms or decontamination areas. This is to reduce the risks of staff ingesting microorganisms and/or chemical residue.

3. GOVERNANCE AND RISK ISSUES

Employers have duties concerning the provision and use of personal protective equipment at work and although there is no direct legislative requirement to wear an apron/ gown for the purposes of the prevention and control of infection, the legal duties as set out in Health and Safety at Work Act (1974) legislate that employers (i.e. Swansea Bay Health Board) must provide PPE which affords adequate protection against the risks associated with the task being undertaken. Employees (i.e. health and social care workers) have a responsibility to comply by ensuring that suitable PPE is worn correctly for the task being carried out. Failure to comply with these requirements is a risk for the Health Board.

Completed actions

- Immediately following the audits, the importance of the routine use of face protection was reconfirmed to all areas. By **January 2019**, audits of all areas confirmed that staff were using adequate face protection appropriately.
- Following discussions with NHS Wales procurement, order codes for longer length gloves were disseminated to all areas in **October 2019**
- The standardised PPE process which includes the move to long sleeve gowns, has been rolled out. Additionally, a poster showing the Health Board's standard for PPE use in decontamination has been distributed to all areas in **November 2019**

Actions outstanding

- Training and support for all staff by the Decontamination lead in all areas will be completed by **31st of December 2019**. Ongoing support will continue to be provided
- A standardised audit tool, for areas to be able to undertake self-assessment and provide assurance, will be developed and piloted, with a view to Health Board wide implementation by **April 2020**

4. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

Potential financial risk as a consequence of a breach or failure to comply with Control of Substances Hazardous to Health Regulations.

Increased use of Personal Protective Equipment will have an additional cost for those departments that have not previously met the standard. This will vary according to department and staffing establishment.

5. RECOMMENDATION

To ensure the Health Board is upholding its legal duties to protect the safety and wellbeing of its staff, it is recommended that this revised level and standardisation of PPE, becomes the approved standard across the Health Board. This standard is to be implemented in all decontamination areas, at all times, where endoscope decontamination is carried out.

Any derogation to this standard would require an individual risk assessment.

Governance and Assurance		
Link to Enabling Objectives <i>(please choose)</i>	Supporting better health and wellbeing by actively promoting and empowering people to live well in resilient communities	
	Partnerships for Improving Health and Wellbeing	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Co-Production and Health Literacy	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Digitally Enabled Health and Wellbeing	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Deliver better care through excellent health and care services achieving the outcomes that matter most to people	
	Best Value Outcomes and High Quality Care	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Partnerships for Care	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Excellent Staff	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Digitally Enabled Care	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Outstanding Research, Innovation, Education and Learning	<input type="checkbox"/>
Health and Care Standards		
<i>(please choose)</i>	Staying Healthy	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Safe Care	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
	Effective Care	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Dignified Care	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Timely Care	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Individual Care	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Staff and Resources	<input type="checkbox"/>
Quality, Safety and Patient Experience		
To meet Health and Care Standards (2015), Standard 2.1 and 2.4, the Health Board must ensure risk management and Health and Safety are embedded within all healthcare settings and are monitored to ensure continuous improvement. Also, the Health Board must ensure that staff are protected from exposure to infections that can be acquired and transmitted at work.		
Financial Implications		
Potential financial risk as a consequence of a breach or failure to comply with Control of Substances Hazardous to Health Regulations. Increased use of Personal Protective Equipment will have an additional cost for those departments that have not previously met the standard. This will vary according to department and staffing establishment. Each department will need to calculate additional costs for their departments and how this will be funded.		
Legal Implications (including equality and diversity assessment)		
Where appropriate personal protective equipment is not provided, or staff do not wear appropriate personal protective equipment, this may constitute a breach or failure to comply with Control of Substances Hazardous to Health Regulations.		
Staffing Implications		
None identified.		
Long Term Implications (including the impact of the Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015)		
N/A		
Report History	This paper has been presented to the Health Board's Infection Prevention & Control Committee and the Quality & Safety Committee in October 2019.	
Appendices	None.	