



Practice Briefs

How do I go about reviewing infection control policies and bringing them up to date?

Policy review can be a daunting task. You have to start somewhere, but you aren't sure how to go about reviewing an Infection Control policy to make sure it is still relevant, and to update it with recent standards or guidelines.

The purpose of a comprehensive review is to take an in depth look at existing policies to: 1) determine if a policy is still needed or if it should be combined with another policy; 2) determine whether the purpose and goal of the policy is still being met; 3) determine if changes are required to improve the effectiveness or clarity of the policy and procedures; and 4) to ensure that appropriate education, monitoring and ongoing review of the policy is occurring.

Follow these steps when reviewing:

- Does the policy achieve its stated purpose?
- Is the policy consistent with Infection Control recommendations and best practice guidelines?
- After reviewing references, have any updated guidelines been published which impact new processes?
- Have there been any restructures that impact on the policy?
- Are there any legal changes that impact on the policy?
- Is the policy being complied with? What evidence is available to substantiate this?
- Are people clear about their roles and responsibilities in the implementation of the policy?
- Are there any barriers to compliance, particularly at an operational level?
- Are the supporting procedures/guidelines consistent with the policy and effective in ensuring compliance? What evidence is available to substantiate this?
- Is the policy consistent with other relevant Facility rules, policies, directives, guidelines and procedures?

Once you have finished your review and have updated the policy, you will need to have the policy approved through your governing board or committee. Date your policy with the approval date and with the next review date, so you will know when the next review is due. You may wish to include who all reviewed the policy, or list their job titles under Accountability. That way, you will know who to include when the next review is due.

Resources:

University of Minnesota, University Policy Library - Comprehensively Reviewing Existing Administrative Policies. <https://policy.umn.edu/operations/upolicy-proc03>. Accessed 3/29/18

UTS Institute for Public Policy and Governance, Policy Framework: Tool 2: Sample Policy Review Questions

ICAP is a cooperative effort of UNMC/Nebraska Medicine and the Nebraska Department of Health and Human Services. "ICAP Practice Briefs" are intended to provide evidence-based guidance on infection prevention issues; check linked references directly for the most current and more detailed information.