

# Environmental Cleaning and Disinfection Template

Date Revised: \_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_

Date Effective: \_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_

Authorization: \_\_\_\_\_

Committee

## **Define the Infection Prevention and Control (IPC) Practice**

**Cleaning** refers to the removal of visible soil from surfaces through the physical action of scrubbing with a surfactant or detergent and water. This step is important to reduce the volume of organisms on a surface and remove foreign material that could interfere with disinfection.

**Low-level disinfection** refers to the use of an agent that destroys all vegetative bacteria, except tubercle bacilli, and most viruses including Hepatitis B Virus, or HBV, and Human Immunodeficiency Virus, or HIV. These agents are not effective against bacterial spores. Examples of low-level disinfectants include hospital disinfectants registered with the Environmental Protection Agency, or EPA, with a HBV and HIV label claim. Low-level disinfection is generally appropriate for most environmental surfaces.

**Intermediate-level disinfection** refers to the use of an agent that kills a wider range of pathogens than a low-level disinfectant but does not kill bacterial spores. EPA-registered hospital disinfectants with a tuberculocidal claim are intermediate-level disinfectants. Given the broader spectrum of activity, intermediate-level disinfection should be considered for environmental surfaces that are visibly contaminated with blood. However, a low-level disinfectant with a label claim against HBV and HIV could also be used.

## **Purpose (provides background to explain the rationale for the policy/procedure)**

Environmental surfaces can be a source of pathogens in nursing homes. If environmental surfaces are not properly cleaned and disinfected, pathogens from the surface can be transferred to residents and staff. Proper cleaning and disinfection of environmental surfaces is necessary to break the chain of infection.

## **Responsibility (defines who is responsible for following this policy/procedure)**

In most facilities, Environmental Services (EVS) or Housekeeping staff may be primarily responsible for following environmental cleaning and disinfection policies and procedures. However, if other staff including nurses or consultants are expected to perform cleaning and disinfection of environmental surfaces, this should be specified.

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## Policy Content Considerations

- Inventory of all environmental cleaning and disinfection products.
  - Select EPA-registered disinfectants labeled for use in healthcare settings.
  - Consider label claims of selected products and compatibility with different surfaces in the facility.
- Frequency with which cleaning and disinfection of environmental surfaces in different locations in the facility should be performed (e.g., immediately if surfaces are visibly soiled; daily for high-touch surfaces in resident rooms).
- Locations in the facility where carpeting and upholstered furnishings are and are not allowed.
- Proper storage and maintenance of cleaning and disinfection products and equipment.
- Process for maintaining adequate supplies of cleaning and disinfection products.

## Procedure Content Considerations (Outline the steps/supplies for performing the practice)

- Outline the steps and process for environmental cleaning and disinfection.
  - Working from clean to dirty; working from top to bottom.
  - Establish workflow processes for routine and terminal room cleaning.
- Identify supplies necessary for cleaning and disinfection of environmental surface.
  - Reference the manufacturers' instructions for proper selection and use of cleaning and disinfection products.
  - Include instructions for how the disinfectant is prepared (e.g., if any mixing or dilution is required and the appropriate contact time).
  - Specify measures staff should take to minimize contamination of cleaning equipment.
- Specify which products should be used under which circumstances. Select disinfectants that are EPA-registered and labeled for use in healthcare settings.
  - Identify appropriate products for routine cleaning of different surfaces or areas within the facility based on compatibility and disinfectant kill claims.
  - Ensure the products used to clean and disinfect surfaces in rooms of residents placed in Transmission-Based Precautions are effective against the pathogen of concern. The selected EPA-registered disinfectant webpage organizes EPA-registered disinfectants into lists based upon the efficacy against common pathogens included on their label.
    - Use a disinfectant from List G when cleaning and disinfecting surfaces potentially contaminated with norovirus.
    - Use a disinfectant from List K agent, which is effective against *Clostridioides difficile*, to disinfect surfaces in a room of a resident with *C. difficile* infection during an outbreak or if rates in the facility are high. A List K agent could also be considered for routine use,

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particularly for terminal cleaning, in rooms of residents with *C. difficile* infection.

- Identify appropriate personal protective equipment (PPE) required to prevent exposures to blood and body fluids and address staff safety considerations during handling of cleaners and disinfectants.
- Address steps for cleaning and disinfecting spills of blood or body fluids.

## **Guidelines, Standards, and Resources for Policy/ Procedure Development**

Policies and procedures addressing environmental cleaning and disinfection should be developed using evidence-based guidelines or national standards, such as resources from the CDC, EPA and OSHA. In addition, it is also important to use the manufacturer's instructions for the cleaning and disinfection products used in your facility. These resources include, but are not limited to:

- CDC, Guidelines for Environmental Infection Control in Health-Care Facilities (2003):  
<https://www.cdc.gov/infectioncontrol/guidelines/environmental/index.html>
- CDC, Guideline for Isolation Precautions (2007):  
<https://www.cdc.gov/infectioncontrol/guidelines/isolation/index.html>
- EPA, Selected Disinfectants:  
<https://www.epa.gov/pesticide-registration/selected-epa-registered-disinfectants>
- Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) Bloodborne Pathogens Standard:  
<https://www.osha.gov/SLTC/bloodbornepathogens/index.html>
- Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) Guidance for Cleaning Industry Worker Safety Considerations:  
<https://www.osha.gov/SLTC/cleaningindustry/index.html>