

1.14 INFECTION CONTROL POLICY AND PROCEDURE

Purpose and Scope

The purpose of this policy and procedure is to ensure that Partner In Your Care minimises the risk of the spread of infectious diseases in its work environments.

This policy and procedure applies to all staff and meets relevant legislation, regulations and standards as set out in Schedule 1, Legislative References. It should be read in conjunction with Partner In Your Care's *Work Health and Safety Policy and Procedure*.

Documents relevant to this policy and procedure:

- *Work Health and Safety Policy and Procedure*
- *Risk Register*
- *Workplace Incident Management Policy and Procedure*
- *Participant Incident Management Policy and Procedure*
- *COVID-19 (Coronavirus) Pandemic Policy & Procedure*

Definitions

Infectious diseases - also known as communicable diseases; caused by organisms such as bacteria, viruses, fungi and parasites. These micro-organisms are able to invade and reproduce in the human body, and then cause harmful effects. In healthcare settings, the main modes for transmission of infectious agents are contact (including blood borne), droplet and airborne.

Policy

Partner In Your Care staff have a duty of care and must take all reasonable steps to safeguard participants, other staff and stakeholders from infection.

Procedures

Any staff member with any infectious disease, including the flu and COVID-19, is required to stay away from the workplace until such time they are cleared by a doctor. A medical certificate is required to be presented with the staff member's timesheet for payment of sick days.

Notifiable diseases are diseases that must be reported to the Health Department by health practitioners. Any staff member that has a notifiable disease must not attend work until such time as they are cleared by their doctor. A list of notifiable diseases can be found at: <http://www.health.gov.au/casedefinitions>

Standard Precautions

Standard precautions must be implemented when cleaning surfaces and facilities. Staff must wear suitable gloves and other protective clothing appropriate for the task. Protective eyewear must be worn where splashing is likely to occur.

Toilets, sinks, washbasins, baths, shower areas, and surrounding areas should be cleaned regularly or as required. Cleaning methods for these items should avoid generation of

aerosols. Although environmental surfaces play a minor role in the transmission of infections, a regular cleaning and maintenance schedule is necessary to maintain a safe environment.

Surfaces should be cleaned on a regular basis using only cleaning procedures that minimise dispersal of micro-organisms into the air.

Floors should be cleaned daily or as necessary with a vacuum cleaner. Alternatively, damp dusting or cleaning with a dust-retaining mop is acceptable.

Routine surface cleaning should be undertaken as follows:

- clean and dry work surfaces before and after usage or when visibly soiled;
- spills should be dealt with immediately;
- use detergent and warm water for routine cleaning;
- where surface disinfection is required, use in accordance with manufacturer's instructions;
- clean and dry surfaces before and after applying disinfectants;
- empty buckets after use, wash with detergent and warm water and store dry; and
- mops should be cleaned in detergent and warm water then stored dry.

Standard precautions to protect against infectious diseases include:

- wash hands for 30 seconds before and after contact with participants, eating, using gloves and after using the toilet, contact with used equipment and contact with body substances or equipment, materials (including linen) or contaminated surfaces;
- wear disposable latex gloves when handling food or any item which may be contaminated by bodily fluids;
- cover cuts or scratches with waterproof, breathable dressing;
- wear personal protective equipment (PPE) such as protective eyewear, an apron, enclosed footwear and/or a face mask if splashing or direct contact with body fluids is likely;
- use sharps containers at point of use if sharps are being used. Do not re-sheath sharps; and
- clean up spills with water and bleach.

Anyone with signs and symptoms of a respiratory infection, regardless of the cause, should follow or be instructed to follow respiratory hygiene and cough etiquette as follows:

- cover the nose/mouth with disposable single-use tissues when coughing, sneezing, wiping and blowing noses;
- use tissues to contain respiratory secretions;
- dispose of tissues in the nearest waste receptacle or bin after use;
- if no tissues are available, cough or sneeze into the inner elbow rather than the hand;
- practice hand hygiene after contact with respiratory secretions and contaminated objects/materials; and
- keep contaminated hands away from the mucous membranes of the eyes and nose.

Person-centered Approach to Infection Control

A person-centred approach to providing support includes putting participants at the centre of infection prevention and control and enabling them to participate in their care process.

To support a two-way approach to infection prevention and control and encourage participant participation, Partner In Your Care will:

- take participants' perspectives into account when developing policies and programs;
- familiarise participants with its infection prevention and control strategies;
- encourage participants to disclose their health or risk status if there is a potential risk or source of infection;
- provide opportunities for participants to identify and communicate risks and encourage them to use feedback procedures through the service's feedback, compliments and complaints processes;
- provide educational materials about infection prevention and control using a variety of media (e.g. posters, printed material, educational videos) in a variety of accessible formats; and
- inform participants about the protocols for protecting their privacy and confidentiality.

Reporting

Incidents relating to infection control or infectious diseases should be reported in accordance with Partner In Your Care's Incident Management policies and procedures.

Monitoring and Review

This policy and procedure will be reviewed at least annually by the Management Team. Reviews will incorporate staff, participant and other stakeholder feedback.

Partner In Your Care's *Continuous Improvement Register* will be used to record identified improvements and monitor the progress of their implementation. Where relevant, this information will be fed into Partner In Your Care's service planning and delivery processes.

Endorsement Date: 12/11/2018	Reviewed Date: 10/09/2019	Reviewed Date: 01/06/2021	Reviewed Date: 21/11/2022	Reviewed Date:
Reviewed by / Rob Nelson Signature: 	Reviewed by / Rob Nelson Signature: 	Reviewed by/ Bianca Yee Signature: 	Reviewed by/ Bianca Yee Signature: 	
<i>This policy and procedure will be reviewed at least annually and changes endorsed by the Management Team.</i>				