

Australasian Health Facility Guidelines

Part D - Infection Prevention and Control D.0006 - Glossary of Terms

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Australasian Health Facility Guidelines

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06 GLOSSARY OF TERMS

06.01 Definitions

For the benefit of the project team, the following commonly used terms are described below:

- healthcare associated infection (HAI): any infections that occur during or after a health care encounter that was not present, or incubating, on admission or related to a previous health care encounter (Krieger et al. 2002);
- MRSA: Methicillin resistant Staphylococcus aureus;
- cohorting: accommodation of patients with the same infectious condition together in the same area; and
- immunosuppressed / compromised: suppression of the normal immune system response potentially resulting in a person becoming more susceptible to infection.

See also Krieger, J.K. et al., 2002, The Seattle-King County healthy homes project: implementation of a comprehensive approach to improving indoor environmental quality for low-income children with asthma.

06.02 Immunocompromised Patients

Highly immunocompromised patients, such as those receiving allogeneic bone marrow transplants have the greatest risk of infection from airborne or waterborne microorganisms such as Aspergillus. Specific engineering parameters may be required. Refer to:

- CDC, 2003, Guidelines for Environmental Infection Control in Health-Care Facilities; and
- Standards Australia, 2003, HB 260:2003 Hospital Acquired Infections - Engineering Down the Risk.

06.03 Standard and Additional Precautions

The use of standard precautions is the primary strategy for minimising the transmission of healthcare-associated infections. Standard precautions include:

- personal hygiene;
- effective hand hygiene before and after patient contact;
- the use of PPE and barriers that may include gloves, gowns, plastic aprons, masks, eye shields or goggles, and waterproof dressings if required; appropriate handling and disposal of sharps and other contaminated or infectious waste; and
- aseptic technique.

Additional standard precautions are designed for patients known or suspected to be infected with pathogens for which transmission based precautions beyond standard precautions are needed to interrupt transmission in healthcare settings. Transmission based precautions are also designed to protect immuno-compromised patients from contracting HAIs while in protective isolation.

06.04 Personal Protective Equipment (PPE)

In the context of infection control PPE refers to a variety of infection control barriers and respirators used alone, or in combination, to protect mucous membranes, skin, and clothing from contact with recognised and unrecognised sources of infectious agents in healthcare settings. The type of personal protective equipment used will vary based on the level of precautions required.

PPE includes:

- gowns;

- plastic aprons;
- masks and respirators;
- gloves;
- eye protection;
- head coverings; and
- over-shoes.

PPE bays should be provided outside all isolation rooms - including Class S. A PPE bay may be shared between two or more rooms.

For more details see Standard Components: Room Data Sheets and Room Layout Sheets.

06.05 References

- CDC, 2003, Guidelines for Environmental Infection Control in Health-Care Facilities, U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), Atlanta, GA.
- Krieger, J.K. et al., 2002, The Seattle-King County healthy homes project: implementation of a comprehensive approach to improving indoor environmental quality for low-income children with asthma, Environmental Health Perspectives, vol. 110, pp. 311 - 322, Environmental Health Perspectives, Washington, DC.
- Standards Australia, 2003, HB 260:2003 Hospital Acquired Infections - Engineering Down the Risk, Standards Australia, Sydney, Australia.