

Practice Standard- Infection Control

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Revised: N/A

Definitions

Infection control: Measures implemented by healthcare personnel intended to prevent the spread, transmission and acquisition of infectious agents or pathogens between patients/clients, from healthcare workers to patient/clients and from patients/clients to healthcare workers in the healthcare setting. As a minimum, these measures include proper hand hygiene, appropriate work practices and use of personal protective equipment where required. Infection control measures instituted are based on how an infectious agent is transmitted and include standard, contact, droplet, and airborne precautions.

Internal practice environment: The physical location(s) where kinesiology services are provided to patients/clients. These physical locations can include hospitals, private practice premises, long-term care facilities and patients'/clients' homes where kinesiology services are provided.

External practice environment: The community in which the member's internal practice environment exists. The external practice environment is any locale beyond the internal practice environment and may extend to municipal, provincial, national or international borders, depending on the nature of the infection risk being considered.

Intent

Appropriate infection control is an essential element of clinical practice management based on its critical importance to the health and safety of patients/clients, practitioners and the broader community. Knowledge of clinical infection control measures is continually growing and specific clinical advice continues to evolve. However, the basic principles underlying appropriate infection control practice embedded in professional expectations in this area remain constant. This Standard describes the College's expectations of members as they relate to the incorporation of appropriate infection control measures into their professional practices.

Objective

When providing professional services, members will ensure that they implement current, appropriate and generally accepted infection control measures, policies and procedures.

Description of Standard

A member demonstrates the Standard by:

1. Maintaining current knowledge of evidence-based infection control protocols relevant to his or her professional practice.
2. Adopting appropriate infection control measures in his or her professional practice and monitoring their use and effectiveness to identify problems, outcomes and trends.
3. Ensuring that the infection control measures in his or her professional practices include, as a minimum, requirements for:
 - hand washing;
 - use of protective barriers, where appropriate;
 - cleaning and/or sterilization of equipment and facilities; and
 - managing wastes
4. Ensuring that appropriate infection control prevention policies to promote the use of the infection control measures in his or her practice are developed and implemented.
5. Ensuring that processes to update his or her infection control measures and policies are established based on considerations including:
 - relevant changing environmental risk factors for infection and transmission
 - evolving knowledge
 - trends in practice
6. Applying his or her knowledge, skills and judgment to conduct ongoing assessments of the degree of current risks of infection and transmission to patients/clients, staff, colleagues and other health professionals based on the following considerations:
 - the assessments or treatment interventions planned or conducted;
 - the health conditions of patient/clients being assessed or treated;
 - the degree of infection risk currently present in the internal practice environment;
 - the degree of infection risk currently present in the external practice environment;
 - current best practice in infection control protocols relevant to his or her professional practice; and
 - the health and immunization status of people in the practice environment including himself/herself, colleagues and patients/clients.
7. Implementing contact management protocols into his or her infection control measures when his or her risk assessment process supports it. This may include managing the interactions between patients/clients, staff, colleagues and other health professionals.
8. Ensuring that adequate resources are available to support appropriate infection control measures.
9. Educating patients/clients, staff, colleagues and other health professionals about the need for infection control and the minimum requirements for it.

10. Advocating for best practice in infection control to owners and operators of kinesiology practices and to administrative staff in positions of decision-making authority.

11. Fostering awareness of immunization recommendations for common and/or easily preventable illnesses for patient/clients, staff, colleagues and other health professionals, where appropriate.

Resources

As noted above, the literature on what is considered to be appropriate practice related to infection control measures continually evolves. As such, rather than provide members with practice information that will be outdated as soon as it is published in a College standard, the College is offering the following annotated list of infection control resources. While this list is in no way complete, the use of resources such as these will ensure that members' infection control practice reflects the current evolving environment.

Please note that the website addresses are to the organizations, rather than individual documents.

1. Community and Hospital Infection Control Association (CHICA). CHICA is Canada's association of infection control professionals. Its goal is to prevent infections and improve patient/client care and staff health in hospitals, other health care facilities and the community. It undertakes this by:

- initiating and coordinating effective communication and cooperation among all disciplines united by infection control activities;
- supporting and/or developing effective and rational infection control practices;
- standardizing infection control practices;
- promoting research in areas related to infection control; and
- promoting and facilitating infection control education for both infection control practitioners and other personnel working in hospitals, nursing homes and related institutions

CHICA's website provides an extremely useful set of links and resources on infection control matters. In particular, its resources on antibiotic-resistant organisms, hand hygiene and medical gels will be useful to many members. Its links to an extensive list of evidence based guidelines on infection control issues will also be very useful to members who wish to establish appropriate infection control practices.

See <http://www.chica.org/index.php> for more information.

2. The Association for Professionals in Infection Control and Epidemiology (APIC) is CHICA's counterpart in the U.S. It has a similar mandate and it is also heavily involved in promoting knowledge of appropriate infection control practices through education, research, collaboration, public policy, and practice guidance and credentialing.

APIC's website, which contains a wide variety in infection control related materials such as position statements, standards, and guidelines is another valuable resource for members wishing to incorporate appropriate infection control practices into their activities.

See <http://www.apic.org/> for more information.

3. Public Health Agency of Canada. The Government of Canada's Public Health Agency is an important resource on infection control and other public health matters for all health professionals. The Agency's focus is on increasing the effectiveness of efforts to prevent chronic diseases, like

cancer and heart disease, prevent injuries and respond to public health emergencies and infectious disease outbreaks.

The Agency's website collects a number of important infection control resources into one easily accessible place. Among the useful tools available are the following:

- The Infectious Diseases section which provides current information on a wide variety of infectious diseases in both Canada and elsewhere in the world.
- The Advisories/Warning section which provides current updates on the status of a number of diseases.

The Canada Communicable Disease Report (CCDR). Visitors can sign up to receive e-mail updates on the CCDR or review past issues of the CCDR online. The posted issues include important publications such as:

- Supplement: Hand Washing, Cleaning, Disinfection and Sterilization in Health Care, December 1998;
- Supplement - Infection Control Guidelines. July 1999

See <http://www.phac-aspc.gc.ca/index-eng.php> for more information

4. Ontario Ministry of Health and Long Term-Care (MOHLTC). The MOHLTC is the branch of Ontario's government that is responsible for health in the province. The MOHLTC website is another useful resource for health professionals who need to keep abreast of infection control matters. The section of the website that is most relevant in this context is the Public Health area. This section contains information in areas such as:

- Diseases that are currently a matter of concern (e.g. Clostridium difficile, SARS)
- Hand hygiene
- Reports of the Provincial Infectious Diseases Advisory Committee including Best Practice Manuals,
- Fact Sheets and important health notices.

See <http://www.health.gov.on.ca/en/> for more information.

5. The Centre for Disease Control and Prevention in the United States is another very valuable resource for health professionals interested in infection control matters. The CDC website contains two sections that are particularly relevant in this context:

- The first is the section for Healthcare Providers.
- The second is the section for Public Health Professionals

Both of these sections reference a wide variety of different guidelines and fact sheets pertinent to infection control matters. One that is very useful for practitioners wishing to incorporate appropriate infection controls into their practices is Guidelines for Environmental Infection Control in Health-Care Facilities.

See <http://www.cdc.gov/about/> for more information.