

Unit 32: The Principles of Infection Prevention and Control

Level:	2
Unit type:	Optional (Group B1)
Credit value:	3
Guided learning hours:	30

Unit introduction

The purpose of this unit is to introduce the learner to national and local policies in relation to infection control; to explain employer and employee responsibilities in this area; to understand how procedures and risk assessment can help to minimise the risk of an outbreak of infection. Learners will also gain an understanding of how to use personal protective equipment (PPE) correctly and the importance of good personal hygiene.

Learning outcomes and assessment criteria

To pass this unit, learners need to demonstrate that they can meet all the learning outcomes for the unit. The assessment criteria determine the standard required to achieve the unit.

Learning outcomes		Assessment criteria	
1	Understand roles and responsibilities in the prevention and control of infections	1.1	Explain employees' roles and responsibilities in relation to the prevention and control of infection
		1.2	Explain employers' responsibilities in relation to the prevention and control of infection
2	Understand legislation and policies relating to prevention and control of infections	2.1	Outline current legislation and regulatory body standards which are relevant to the prevention and control of infection
		2.2	Describe local and organisational policies relevant to the prevention and control of infection

Learning outcomes		Assessment criteria	
3	Understand systems and procedures relating to the prevention and control of infections	3.1	Describe procedures and systems relevant to the prevention and control of infection
		3.2	Explain the potential impact of an outbreak of infection on the individual and the organisation
4	Understand the importance of risk assessment in relation to the prevention and control of infections	4.1	Define the term 'risk'
		4.2	Outline potential risks of infection within the workplace
		4.3	Describe the process of carrying out a risk assessment
		4.4	Explain the importance of carrying out a risk assessment
5	Understand the importance of using personal protective equipment (PPE) in the prevention and control of infections	5.1	Demonstrate correct use of PPE
		5.2	Describe different types of PPE
		5.3	Explain the reasons for use of PPE
		5.4	State current relevant regulations and legislation relating to PPE
		5.5	Describe employees' responsibilities regarding the use of PPE
		5.6	Describe employers' responsibilities regarding the use of PPE
		5.7	Describe the correct practice in the application and removal of PPE
		5.8	Describe the correct procedure for disposal of used PPE
6	Understand the importance of good personal hygiene in the prevention and control of infections	6.1	Describe the key principles of good personal hygiene
		6.2	Demonstrate good hand washing technique
		6.3	Describe the correct sequence for hand washing
		6.4	Explain when and why hand washing should be carried out
		6.5	Describe the types of products that should be used for hand washing

Learning outcomes	Assessment criteria
	6.6 Describe correct procedures that relate to skincare

Unit content

What needs to be learned

Learning outcome 1: Understand roles and responsibilities in the prevention and control of infection

Employees' roles and responsibilities

- Comply with all legislation, organisational policies and procedures to promote safety (to individual, self and others, e.g. visitors).
- Follow risk assessments and care plan when delivering individual care.
- Take precautionary measures to prevent cross-infection (hand washing, using personal protective equipment, e.g. aprons, gloves).
- Promptly report and record any concerns to supervisor.
- Attend all training provided by employer to ensure best practice.

Employers' roles and responsibilities

- Comply with relevant legislation and codes of practice (lead employee with responsibility and accountability).
- Management systems in place to ensure safe practice (implementation of organisational policies and procedures).
- Carry out risk assessment to prevent, detect and control the spread of infection.
- Take appropriate and proportionate action to identified risk (providing personal protective equipment).
- Provide relevant information (policies and procedure) and training to all staff who directly or indirectly provide care.

Learning outcome 2: Understand legislation and policies relating to prevention and control of infections

Health and safety legislation relating to infection prevention and control

- Health and Safety at Work etc. Act 1974.
- Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations 1999.
- The Food Safety and Hygiene (England) Regulations 2013.
- Control of Substances Hazardous to Health (COSHH) Regulations 2002.
- Reporting of Injuries, Diseases and Dangerous Occurrences Regulations (RIDDOR) 2013.
- Hazardous Waste (England and Wales) Regulations 2005.
- Public Health (Infectious Diseases) Regulations 1988.

Regulatory body standards specific to infection prevention and control

What needs to be learned

- The Health and Social Care Act 2008: code of practice on prevention and control of infections and related guidance.
- NICE Quality Standard (QS61) Infection prevention and control (2014).
- NICE Clinical Guideline (CG139) Healthcare-associated infections: prevention and control in primary and community care (updated 2017).
- Care Quality Commission Standards for Infection Prevention Control (IPC).

Key areas in prevention and control of infection in local and organisational policies

- Standard precautions (underpin the prevention and control of infection).
- Hand hygiene (hand washing technique, use of alcohol gels, etc.).
- Use of appropriate personal protective equipment (PPE).
- Cleaning and disinfection.
- Safe use of sharps.
- Waste management.
- Occupational health (immunisation/vaccination).
- Education and training (recorded).

Learning outcome 3: Understand systems and procedures relating to the prevention and control of infections

Evidence-based procedures and system relevant to the control and spread of infection

- Standard precautions (including aseptic technique procedures).
- Managing outbreaks of communicable infection and isolation procedures.
- Prevention and management of occupational exposure (blood-borne viruses).
- Disinfection and decontamination of reusable medical devices and equipment.
- Environmental cleaning procedures (for clean clinical environment).
- Personal hygiene and dress code procedures (uniform).

Potential impact of an outbreak of infection on the individual and organisation

- Individual:
 - causes ill health (possible fatality)
 - emotional distress
 - isolation
 - stigma.

What needs to be learned

- Organisational:
 - staff sickness absence
 - financial costs incurred (sickness pay)
 - legal action for non-compliance with law
 - fines and compensation costs
 - loss of reputation.

Learning outcome 4: Understand the importance of risk assessment in relation to the prevention and control of infections

Define the term 'risk'

- Risk: likelihood a person will be harmed or suffer adverse health effects.
- Hazard: potential source of harm or adverse health effects to a person.

Potential risks of infection within the workplace

- Carrying out personal care to individuals (washing, toileting, etc.).
- Using shared equipment (hoists, mobility aids, etc.).
- Disposing of clinical waste (exposure to body fluids).
- Unclean shared environments (toilets, bathrooms).
- Handling laundry (soiled clothing and bed linen).

Risk assessment process to identify and control risk

- Identify the hazard (exposure to infectious waste).
- Evaluate the risk (who may be harmed and how).
- Take precautions to reduce/remove risk (use of PPE).
- Review the risk (effectiveness of precautions).
- Report and record outcome (recording findings).

Importance of carrying out risk assessment

- Promote safety within care setting (individuals, employees, others, e.g. visitors).
- Reduce business risks (staff sickness absence, loss of organisation's reputation).
- Legal reasons (criminal proceedings, fines or compensation).
- Moral and ethical reasons (best practices, ethical considerations).

Learning outcome 5: Understand the importance of using personal protective equipment (PPE) in the prevention and control of infections

Correct use of PPE as appropriate

- Pre-procedure: hand washing.

What needs to be learned

- Following recommended procedure: step by step as identified.
- Post-procedure: safe disposal in hazardous waste, wash hands.
- Avoid touching or adjusting (risking of cross-contamination).
- Remove and replace if torn or damaged.
- Do not tamper with PPE.

Different types of PPE worn in care settings

- Uniforms (not worn outside care setting and laundered regularly).
- Disposable aprons (single use, plastic).
- Gowns (maximum protection for skin).
- Disposable gloves (single use, plastic).
- Sterile gloves (latex and latex free).
- Goggles and face shields (facial protection).
- Hats (preparing and serving food).

Reasons for use of PPE to reduce spread of infectious organisms (pathogen)

- PPE must provide adequate protection:
 - aprons – protect clothing (e.g. uniform)
 - gloves – protect hands from exposure to blood/body fluids
 - full gowns – protection during invasive procedures, risk of extensive splashing
 - masks/respirators – protect from infectious airborne organisms/droplets
 - goggles protect the eye from splashing blood/body fluids
 - face shields protect full face from splashing blood/body fluids.

Relevant regulations and legislation relating to PPE

- Health and Safety at Work etc. Act 1974 (section 7 general duties of employees at work).
- Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations 1999:
 - Regulation 3 – risk assessment
 - Regulation 4 – principles of prevention to be applied
 - Regulation 14 – employees' duties.
- Control of Substances Hazardous to Health (COSHH) Regulations 2002:
 - requirement for specific risk assessment and controls.
- Personal Protective Equipment at Work Regulations 1992 and amendments:
 - Regulation 4 – Provision of PPE

What needs to be learned

- Regulation 6 – Assessment of PPE for the task
- Regulation 9 – Information, instruction and training
- Regulation 10 – Use of PPE.

Employee responsibilities regarding the use of PPE

- Take reasonable care of own and others' health/safety, assessing likelihood of exposure.
- Cooperate with employer to ensure health and safety by using PPE.
- Participate in training (using all PPE provided as trained and instructed).
- Use PPE in accordance with manufacturer's instructions.
- Report any concerns or shortcomings in health and safety PPE arrangements.

Employer responsibilities regarding the use of PPE

- Duty to eliminate or reduce risk to employees (undertaking risk assessment).
- Control risks at source, preventing the need for PPE if possible (safe systems).
- Provide suitable PPE for the task, if no other way of protecting employees (hierarchy of control).
- Provide information, instruction and training relating to use of PPE.
- PPE provided free of charge, maintained and stored correctly (to be available when needed).

Correct practice in the application and removal of PPE

- Application:
 - wash and dry hands
 - use correct technique to position and apply
 - avoiding contaminating surface (gloves, apron, etc.)
 - fasten securely (avoid touching or readjusting).
- Removal:
 - avoid touching any other surfaces (cross-contamination)
 - remove PPE before moving on to next patient
 - place in hazardous waste bin (yellow bags incinerated)
 - wash and dry hands.

Correct procedure for disposal of used PPE

- Apply gloves and apron.
- Place used PPE in correct plastic bag (yellow for clinical waste).
- Secure firmly to prevent leakage.
- If waste touches skin or clothes (wash thoroughly without unnecessary delay).

What needs to be learned

- Place in appropriate workplace receptacles (marked biohazardous waste).
- Dispose of gloves and apron as per policy.
- Wash hands thoroughly after procedure.

Learning outcome 6: Understand the importance of good personal hygiene in the prevention and control of infections

Principles of good personal hygiene for work

- Shower/bathe every day (use deodorant/antiperspirant).
- Good oral hygiene and maintain fresh breath.
- Hair kept clean and tidy (if necessary cover or secure in place).
- Shave regularly (keep any facial hair clean and tidy).
- Nails kept clean (don't wear nail polish or artificial nails).
- Cover cuts/abrasions with blue waterproof dressings/plasters.
- Don't wear jewellery or wrist watches (can transport pathogens).
- Uniform washed regularly and fresh smelling.

Hand washing technique

- Pre-procedure:
 - remove rings, bracelet, wrist watch
 - cover cuts and abrasions with waterproof dressing
 - remove nail varnish or false nails.
- During procedure:
 - adhere to evidence-based procedure
 - follow correct sequence (step-by-step).
- Post-procedure:
 - wash and dry hands
 - dispose of single-use towel (foot-operated bin).

Correct sequence for hand washing

- Remove any jewellery, cover cuts, etc.
- Turn water on and wet hands (both hands under tap at 'hand-hot' temperature).
- Apply liquid soap (to all surfaces of hand).
- Rub hands together to form lather.
- Rubbing each hand over the back of the other (palm over hand).
- Interlocking fingers.

What needs to be learned

- Rub between fingers, finger tips and thumbs (of both hands).
- Also rub palms together.
- Rinse soap away with clean water.
- Turn taps off with wrist or elbow (if not lever taps use paper hand towel).
- Dry hands thoroughly (with disposable towel or air dryer).
- Dispose of paper towel.

When and why hands should be washed regularly

- Hands washed regularly to prevent and control cross-infection.
- Before:
 - starting and after finishing work
 - delivering 'hands-on' individual care
 - eating or handling and serving food
 - using PPE.
- After:
 - using the toilet
 - blowing your nose
 - handling waste (waste bags and laundry).

Types of product that should be used for hand washing

- Soap (including liquid soap from dispenser).
- Antiseptic gels (kill pathogens).
- Alcohol rubs.

Correct procedures that relate to skincare

- Regular hand washing can cause dry and cracked hands (portal entry of pathogen).
- Important to apply hand moisturiser (emollient hand cream) regularly.
- Report persistent skin problems to occupational health.

Essential information for tutors and assessors

Essential resources

There are no special resources needed for this unit.

Assessment

This unit is internally assessed. To pass the unit, the evidence that learners present for assessment must demonstrate that they have met the required standard specified in the learning outcomes and assessment criteria.

It is expected that this unit will be assessed in a real or simulated working environment, where evidence is naturally occurring and collected over a period of time.

This unit must be assessed in accordance with the assessment strategy (principles) in *Annexe A* of the associated qualification specification.

Centres are responsible for deciding on the assessment activities that will enable learners to produce valid, sufficient, authentic and appropriate evidence to meet the assessment criteria.

The unit is assessed by a portfolio of evidence. Further information on the requirements for portfolios is included in *Section 4 Assessment requirements*.

Wherever possible, centres should adopt a holistic and integrated approach to assessing the skills units in the qualification. This gives the assessment process greater rigour, minimises repetition and saves time. The focus should be on assessment activities generated through naturally occurring evidence in the workplace rather than on specific tasks. Taken as a whole, the evidence must show that learners meet all learning outcomes and assessment criteria over a period of time. It should be clear in the assessment records where each learning outcome and assessment criterion has been covered and achieved.

Suggested resources

This section lists resource materials that can be used to support the delivery of the qualification.

Textbooks

Department of Health and Social Care: Health and Social Care Act 2008: code of practice on the prevention and control of infections and related guidance

Dougherty L, Lister S and West-Oram A (editors) – The Royal Marsden Manual of Clinical Nursing Procedures, 9th edition (Wiley-Blackwell, 2015) ISBN 9781118746677

NICE guidance CG139: Healthcare-associated infections: prevention and control in primary and community care

SCIE/NICE guide: Helping to prevent infection: A quick guide for care managers and staff in care homes (www.scie.org.uk)

Websites

www.cqc.org.uk

Care Quality Commission

www.dh.gov.uk

Department of Health & Social Care

www.nhs.uk

National Health Service

www.nice.org.uk

National Institute for Health and Care Excellence

www.rcn.org.uk

Royal College of Nursing

www.scie.org.uk

Social Care Institute for Excellence

www.cqc.org.uk

Care Quality Commission