

Unit 60: Supporting Infection Prevention and Control in Social Care

Level:	3
Unit type:	Optional (Group B2)
Credit value:	2
Guided learning hours:	18

Unit introduction

The purpose of this unit is to provide the learner with the knowledge, understanding and skills required to support infection prevention and control in social care.

Individuals receive care in a range of different social care settings. Most are already vulnerable due to their age, disability or existing medical conditions. A serious infection can complicate their care and may be life threatening. Therefore, it is essential that carers working in these settings possess the necessary knowledge and skills to prevent and control the spread of infection.

This unit covers how infection prevention and control policies are implemented in care settings and how different factors can affect how they are applied; how to support others in infection prevention and control practices; minimise the risk and spread of infection when using equipment; respond appropriately to an outbreak of infection; and correct reporting and recording procedures relating to infection prevention and control within the care setting.

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 how infection prevention and control policies and guidelines can be applied within different settings	1.1 Explain how infection prevention policies and guidelines can be applied in own work setting 1.2 Identify differences in the ways in which infection prevention and control policies and guidance are implemented in a range of work settings
2 Be able to support infection prevention and control practices in the work setting	2.1 Minimise risk of infection to self and others in the work setting 2.2 Support individuals to take steps to minimise spread of infection 2.3 Carry out hand hygiene following work setting policies and guidelines 2.4 Support others to understand their responsibilities for infection prevention and control in the work setting 2.5 Provide guidance to others about infection prevention and control practices in the work setting 2.6 Explain the functions of external bodies in supporting infection prevention and control in the work setting 2.7 Maintain own understanding of information to support effective infection prevention and control practice
3 Be able to minimise the risk and spread of infection when using equipment	3.1 Ensure equipment is stored and maintained in ways that minimise the spread of infection 3.2 Use agreed cleaning schedules for equipment in own work setting 3.3 Explain why particular devices need special handling to minimise the spread of infection

Learning outcomes		Assessment criteria	
4	Understand how to respond to outbreaks of infection in the work setting	4.1	Explain how to work with others to identify infection outbreaks in own work setting
		4.2	Explain how to work with others to implement policies and procedures following an infection outbreak
		4.3	Describe how to provide information about outbreaks of infection in accessible formats to individuals and others
		4.4	Describe ways to ensure that care for the individual is provided in the most appropriate place
		4.5	Describe situations where additional guidance may need to be accessed to manage infection prevention and control incidents
5	Be able to follow correct recording and reporting procedures regarding infection prevention and control	5.1	Describe the process for sharing information about infections and suspected infections within own work setting
		5.2	Describe processes for reporting accidents and incidents relating to infection prevention and control within own work setting
		5.3	Complete records for infection prevention and control in line with policies and guidelines

Unit content

What needs to be learned

Learning outcome 1: Understand how infection prevention and control policies and guidelines can be applied within different settings

Applying infection prevention and control policies and guidelines in work setting

- Complying with relevant legislation and regulatory bodies' codes of practice.
- Establishing management systems to ensure safe practice:
 - implementing organisational policies and procedures
 - auditing effectiveness of policies and procedures
- Appoint lead employee with overall responsibility and accountability for infection prevention and control.
- Carry out risk assessment to prevent, detect and control the spread of infection.
- Take appropriate and proportionate action to identified risk (providing appropriate personal protective equipment (PPE) as required).
- Providing relevant information, instruction and training to all staff (directly or indirectly providing individual care).

Factors affecting implementation policies and guidance in different work settings

- Types of care setting (community, including the 'home', residential care homes, day centres, etc.).
- Vulnerable service user group (very young or elderly, immunosuppressed).
- Type of treatment or care required (high risk of cross-infection).
- Outbreak of serious infection (requiring isolation nursing).
- Requiring special training (HIV and AIDS).

Learning outcome 2: Be able to support infection prevention and control practices in the work setting

Others

- May include: individual, family, friends, carers, visitors, health and social care professionals.

Minimise risk of infection to self and others in the work setting

- Follow correct procedures, applying standard precautions to ensure safe practice (e.g. hand hygiene, managing blood and body fluids, collecting specimens).
- Practise regular hand hygiene (hand washing, use alcohol gels and antiseptics).
- Use appropriate PPE that is provided (e.g. disposable aprons, gloves).

What needs to be learned

- Promote general cleanliness (e.g. personal, environmental, materials, equipment, isolation nursing).
- Follow procedures when handling and disposing of sharps (to avoid injuries).
- Have required immunisation (recommended by occupational health).
- Promote food hygiene (when preparing or serving food).
- Use PPE when handling laundry (soiled clothing and bed linen).
- Promote effective communication and training for those who deliver direct and indirect care to individuals (e.g. practical hand washing, use of hand sanitisers at point of care).

Supporting individuals to take steps to minimise spread of infection

- Promote and supervise implementation of standard precautions (following organisational policies and procedures).
- Provide information, instruction and training as necessary.
- Supply appropriate PPE in care setting (gloves, aprons, etc.).
- Encourage 'hand hygiene' – ensure soap (including liquid soap), disposable towels, alcohol rubs, etc. are always available and accessible to others.
- Ensure clinical and other waste is disposed of correctly.

Hand hygiene following work setting policies and guidelines

- Follow established hand washing procedures for hand hygiene (pre-procedure, during procedure, post-procedure).
- Use hand sanitisers (alcohol rubs) at point of care.
- Wash hands in between delivering care to individuals.
- Practise good personal hygiene (e.g. after using the toilet).

Supporting others in understanding their responsibilities in the care setting

- Communicate importance of complying with legislation, organisational policies and procedures to promote safety (e.g. promptly report and record any concerns).
- Encourage adherence to risk assessments and care plan when delivering individual care.
- Actively promote precautionary measures to prevent cross-infection (standard precautions – hand washing, using PPE, e.g. aprons, gloves).
- Be a role model demonstrating good practice (following policies and procedures).

Provide guidance to others in the work setting

- Provide relevant information to others about infection prevention and control.
- Take active role in the education of others (e.g. individuals, colleagues, carers).
- Deliver appropriate instruction and training, when necessary.

What needs to be learned

External bodies supporting infection prevention and control in care settings

- Public Health England (PHE) (takes lead in providing surveillance, epidemiology and expertise in management).
- Local authority (key role in investigating and managing outbreak of infection).
- Emergency services (e.g. ambulance service – appropriate response and extra resources).
- Other government agencies (e.g. Food Standards Agency has responsibility for public health in relation to food).
- Specialist advice:
 - PHE Field Epidemiologist Service (FES) Consultant (provides advice about epidemiological aspect – spread of an outbreak)
 - Lead Public Health/PHE Microbiologist or NHS Consultant Microbiologist (provides relevant microbiological information – about any required precautions).

Maintain own understanding of infection prevention and control practice

- Following current codes of practice (Health and Social Care Act 2008: code of practice on the prevention and control of infections and related guidance).
- Personal study reading updated evidenced-based practice (e.g. NICE Clinical Guideline (CG139): healthcare-associated infections: prevention and control in primary and community care (updated 2017).
- Attending all training provided by employer to ensure best practice.

Learning outcome 3: Be able to minimise the risk and spread of infection when using equipment

Storing and maintaining equipment in ways that minimise the spread of infection

- Use reusable invasive sterile equipment that has been decontaminated and appropriately packaged, as applicable.
- Decontaminate reusable non-invasive equipment, including rinsing and drying before it is stored clean and dry:
 - before each use
 - at predefined intervals following cleaning protocols
 - before inspection, servicing and repair.
- Ensure equipment sent to a third party (e.g. for inspection, service and repair) has been effectively decontaminated (with status certificate, if required).

Using agreed cleaning schedules for equipment in own work setting

- Be able to define the following:

What needs to be learned

- cleaning – using water and detergent
- disinfection – uses chemicals or heat to reduce number of viable organisms
- sterilisation – ensures equipment is free of viable organisms, including bacteria.
- Follow workplace decontamination protocols at regular predefined intervals, to include:
 - responsible person
 - frequency
 - method of environmental decontamination
 - maintain appropriate records.
- Ensure reusable non-invasive equipment that comes into contact with individuals is decontaminated between each use (e.g. beds, commodes, hoists).
- Use evidence-based methods (techniques) and cleaning solutions to ensure effective decontamination (as identified in decontamination protocols).

Reusable devices needing special handling to minimise the spread of infection

- Ensure reusable medical devices that are used once are sent to be decontaminated in one of three ways, as appropriate:
 - sterile – at the point of use
 - sterilised – having been through a sterilisation process
 - clean – free of visible contamination.
- Send contaminated items to appropriate facilities with a controlled environment designed and equipped for that specific purpose.
- Provide or arrange appropriate training to staff, so they are competent at cleaning and decontamination procedures if it is part of their job role.

Learning outcome 4: Understand how to respond to outbreaks of infection in the work setting

Others

- May include: individual, family, friends, visitors, carers, health or social care professionals and Infection Control Team (ICT).

Work with others to identify infection outbreaks in own work setting

- Share information for prompt identification (if two or more patients develop the same symptoms at about the same time).
- Obtain specimens from individual, label and send to microbiology laboratory.
- Promptly obtain clinical sample results from microbiology laboratory.
- Immediately inform line manager of results (person in charge) and the Infection Control Team, if appropriate.

Work with others to implement infection outbreak policies and procedures

What needs to be learned

- Inform line manager and ICT if outbreak of infection is suspected (to assess situation and formulate an action plan).
- Immediately relay results to line manager, ICT and external public health agencies (as applicable) if outbreak is 'confirmed' to alert other services.
- Implement all relevant infection control policies without delay (seek additional advice if needed, from appropriate source, about any required precautions).
- Supervise implementation of infection control policies immediately (possibly closing the unit/service to admissions, discharges and transfers).
- Report new cases to line manager, the Infection Control Team and any health protection agencies (e.g. Public Health England) as appropriate.
- Monitor extent and spread of infection, until the last case has been symptom free for 72 hours.

Provide information in accessible formats about outbreaks of infection

- Provide information that is easily read, received and understood by intended individual or group audience (e.g. leaflets, notices, talking to individuals).
- Take account of communication needs of the individual, for example:
 - Braille – tactile reading format for the blind
 - British Sign Language – interpreter for the deaf
 - easy read – written using straightforward words and phrases
 - large print – for persons with sight loss
 - interpreters – transfer meaning from one spoken language to another
 - translator – translates meaning from one written language to another
 - speech-to-text reporter (STTR) – types (word for word) account of what is being said in real time for user to read.

Ways to ensure that care for the individual is provided in the most appropriate place

- Ensure individual is promptly assessed by healthcare professional on arrival for infection risk (and reviewed continually throughout stay).
- Assessment will indicate most appropriate place to treat individual (e.g. virulence of pathogen, nature of infection, need for protection).
- Individuals with higher cross-infection risk will require a placement that facilitates greater 'isolation' from others (e.g. high-security isolation units – Ebola fever).
- 'Isolation' is a protective measure to control infection and prevent spread; there are two categories of isolation:
 - source isolation – prevents infection spreading from source, the individual
 - protective isolation – prevents infection reaching susceptible individuals.

What needs to be learned

- Barrier nursing – special nursing procedures to reduce transmission by physical contact.

Situations where additional guidance sought to manage infection outbreak

- Serious nature of outbreak: microbiological concerns (type – bacterial, viral, etc.): advice about treatment and control measures.
- Serious scale of outbreak: epidemiological distribution (among population): advice about the likelihood of further spread.
- Serious complexity of outbreak: environmental impact (very virulent pathogen): advice about mode of spread (e.g. airborne, food chain).

Learning outcome 5: Be able to follow correct recording and reporting procedures regarding infection prevention and control

Process for sharing information about infections and suspected infections within the care setting

- Comply with all data protection legislation, organisational policies and procedures.
- Share information on a needs-to-know basis.
- Ensure confidentiality of individuals' information (written and verbal).

Processes for reporting accidents and incidents within work setting

- Comply with process in Reporting of Injuries, Diseases and Dangerous Occurrences Regulations (RIDDOR) 2013, including organisational policies or procedures.
- Report to line manager and other relevant healthcare professionals.
- Record accident or incident (e.g. accident/incident book, as appropriate).

Complete records in line with policies and guidelines

- Follow agreed ways of working (policies and procedures).
- Use of correct documentation.
- Complete records accurately providing sufficient detail.
- Maintain confidentiality of records (e.g. storage and sharing).

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.

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

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.

Books

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

Online publications

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
NICE guidance CG139: Healthcare-associated infections: prevention and control in primary and community care
(www.nice.org.uk/guidance/cg139/resources/healthcareassociated-infections-prevention-and-control-in-primary-and-community-care-pdf-35109518767045)
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	The Department of Health & Social Care
www.gov.uk/phe	Public Health England
www.mhra.gov.uk	Medicines & Healthcare Products Regulatory Agency
www.nhs.uk	The 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