

Infection Control – Standard Precautions PC.150

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Regulatory Citation(s): OSHA 29 CFR 1910.1030; 42 CFR 418.60(a)
L-Tag(s): 579

POLICY: Lifesong Hospice and Palliative Care follows accepted standards of practice to prevent the transmission of infections and communicable diseases, including the use of standard and transmission-based precautions

DEFINITIONS:

Standard Precautions - used in the care of all patients receiving care regardless of their diagnosis or presumed infection status. Standard precautions apply to (1) blood; (2) all body fluids, secretions, and excretions except sweat, regardless of whether or not they contain blood; (3) non-intact skin; and (4) mucous membranes.

Transmission-based precautions - apply only to patients with confirmed or suspected infection or colonization with certain microorganisms. They are used in addition to standard precautions. The three types of transmission-based precautions are:

- **Airborne precautions** - used to prevent the spread of pathogens that are transmitted by the airborne route;
- **Droplet precautions** - used to prevent transmission of infectious agents through close respiratory or mucous-membrane contact with large particle droplets generated by coughing, sneezing or talking; and
- **Contact precautions** - used to prevent the transmission of pathogens that are spread by direct or indirect contact with the patient or contaminated surfaces or objects in the patient's environment

PROCEDURE:

1. Hospice staff are required to use standard precautions in the care of all hospice patients, regardless of diagnosis or presumed infection status. Standard precautions include, but are not limited to:
 - a. Hand hygiene before and after patient contact;
 - b. Use of appropriate personal protective equipment, including gloves, masks, gowns, face shields and eye protection;
 - c. Appropriate respiratory hygiene and cough etiquette;
 - d. Safe handling and disposal of needles and other sharp devices; and
 - e. Cleaning and disinfecting contaminated surfaces, equipment and other objects.

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2. The need for transmission-based precautions to be used in addition to standard precautions may be determined at the time of referral or initial assessment, based on the patient's current diagnoses, history and other information obtained prior to and during the admission process.
3. The selection of appropriate precautions is based on the mode of transmission of the infection, the portal of exit from the infected or colonized patient and the portal of entry for the susceptible host (hospice employee or family member / visitor).
4. If a patient has or is suspected to have an infectious disease that requires more than standard precautions to prevent the spread of infection, transmission-based precautions are initiated.
5. Patients may require one or two types of transmission-based precautions depending on the type of infection and potential modes of transmission.
6. The need for transmission-based precautions is documented on the patient's comprehensive assessment and plan of care and communicated to all staff caring for the patient.
7. Direct patient care staff receive in-service training regarding transmission-based precautions and appropriate additional equipment is available as needed (for example, certified N95 respiratory protective devices for use with patients who have or are suspected to have TB).

Centers for Disease Control's Guideline for Isolation Precautions: Preventing Transmission of Infectious Agents in Healthcare Settings available here:

<https://www.cdc.gov/hicpac/2007IP/2007isolationPrecautions.html>

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