

Infection Prevention and Control Policy

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Policy application	Organisation
Policy category	Client Services
Authorisation	Care Governance Management Committee
Policy issue	31 May 2025
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Applicable legislation	

Policy Overview

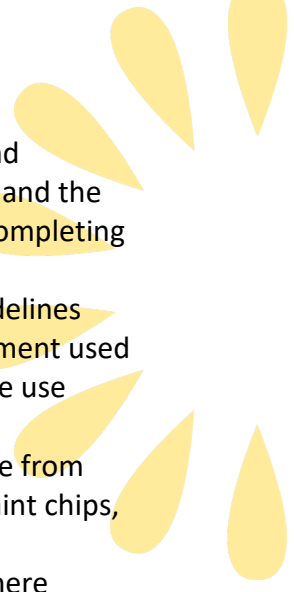
This policy provides an overview of Care Connects commitment to minimising the risk of infection transmission among clients, staff, contractors and visitors. It aligns with the Aged Care Quality Standards, Australian Guidelines for the Prevention and Control of Infection in Healthcare and relevant Work Health and Safety (WHS) legislation.

Policy Statement

Care Connect is committed to developing, maintaining and implementing an effective infection prevention and control program covering all areas of operations based on current health advice, best practice information from industry leaders and ongoing risk assessment. Infection Prevention and Control (IPC) measures are embedded into all aspects of service delivery, clinical care and risk management. It achieves this by:

- maintaining a clinical governance program that oversees infection prevention and control and is based on:
 - current evidence including understanding emerging risks and jurisdictional guidance including endorsed national and state/territory guidelines, legislation and regulation
 - hazard identification
 - risk assessment and control, including where there are risk factors for transmitting or acquiring infection or colonisation with an organism or local, national or global significance, e.g recent travel to/from affected area, health status
 - collecting, analysing and reporting relevant infection related data to the Governing Body which may include:
 - hand hygiene competencies
 - worker immunisation rates

- the number and type of infections including sepsis, urinary infection and respiratory infections
 - wound and skin tear healing rates
 - hospital admissions resulting from infections
- providing regular feedback to staff on issues identified and actions taken
- antimicrobial stewardship to support appropriate antimicrobial usage and to avoid antimicrobial resistance ([Antimicrobial Stewardship Policy](#))
- maintaining a sufficient and appropriately qualified and resourced workforce to fulfil the program requirements including a person responsible for Infection Prevention and Control and adequate and correct personal protective equipment (PPE) when required
- providing guidance on procedures used by the organisation that require aseptic technique and any procedures and/or devices used with their protocols for insertion, monitoring and removal (e.g. urinary catheter, intravenous or subdermal cannula)
- practicing 'bare below elbows' principles to allow for effective hand hygiene in the older people's homes and service delivery facilities, including:
 - that hands and forearms are free of jewellery
 - sleeves are above the elbow
 - skin is intact
 - nails are natural, short and unvarnished (not artificial)
- providing induction, ongoing education and regular competency testing to staff on infection identification, prevention and control policies, procedures and practices including hand hygiene, appropriate PPE use, standard and transmission-based precautions, aseptic techniques, immunisation, cleaning and outbreak management as applicable to their role
- liaising with other relevant health care professionals to ensure everyone follows best practice infection control processes (e.g. podiatrist, physiotherapist) including not attending the older person's home or a service facility if they are unwell and/or they are experiencing symptoms related to possible infection (e.g. diarrhoea, vomiting, fever, sore throat or jaundice, etc) or infected skin lesions
- providing information and expectations on hygiene and infection control to staff, allied and other health professionals and other services supporting the client including encouraging them to report if they are experiencing symptoms related to possible infection (diarrhoea, vomiting, fever, sore throat or jaundice) or infected skin lesions and to stay home if unwell, according to the relevant exclusion period
- promptly identifying clients, staff members and other relevant individuals with a suspected or confirmed infection or at risk of infection and outbreaks in the community and taking appropriate actions to protect older people and worker well-being and maintain service continuity
- encouraging the appropriate use of antimicrobials to control infections in line with current best practice where medication management is being provided (Antimicrobial Stewardship Policy)
- stocking adequate supplies of consumable materials for infection control practices (including during outbreaks) such as PPE, hand hygiene and cleaning products and medical supplies etc
- providing easy access to appropriate facilities to promote effective hand washing with soap and water or cleaning with an alcohol-based hand rub by all people attending the organisation's premises and/or delivering services on behalf of the organisation

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- maintaining the required and risk-based vaccine-preventable diseases screening and recommended immunisations for all workers in line with current Health guidelines and the Australian Immunisation Handbook, assessed risk, retaining records of these and completing reporting as mandated
 - encouraging and supporting clients to maintain their immunisations as per the guidelines
 - maintaining an effective cleaning schedule for service delivery premises and equipment used for service delivery, including reusable medical devices and adequate stock of single use cleaning items
 - ensuring equipment used for, or provided by the service is well maintained and free from damage to reduce likelihood of acting as reservoir for microorganisms (e.g. rust, paint chips, cracks, tears etc)
 - supporting clients to access aids, equipment and devices for their individual use where required and not promoting the sharing of devices or equipment
 - appropriately handling clients food, laundry and waste to minimise the risk of infection, including from one place of service delivery to another.
 - encouraging and supporting clients to maintain a pest free environment by reducing clutter, undertaking effective waste management and where required, managing infestations (e.g. bed bugs, fleas, rodents, cockroaches, etc)
 - conducting regular audits of the infection control program to ensure it is implemented as described and remains effective
 - recording and actioning issues and improvements to infection prevention and control activities through the Plan for Continuous Improvement (PCI).

Roles and Responsibilities

Governing Body - Board of Directors/ Finance, Audit and Risk Committee/ Clinical Advisory Committee/Care Governance Management Committee/Consumer Advisory Panel

- The Governing Body has overall accountability for infection prevention and control under its risk management and clinical governance obligations which it manages through developing policies and ensuring the availability of appropriate human, financial and information technology resources. The Governing Body will identify appropriate systems and processes to monitor, review and continuously improve compliance with this policy.

Management - Executive Leadership Team

- Management is responsible for ensuring this policy and related processes are implemented and that safe, quality clinical care including management of infections is provided. This includes ensuring there are sufficient resources, guidance and support available including access to an appropriately qualified infection prevention and control and/or environmental health advisor.

All Staff and Service Delivery Partners including Volunteers & students

- All staff, contractors, students and volunteers are responsible for understanding and following the requirements of this policy. They are to complete all required education and training and follow all directions to maintain effective infection prevention and control practices.
 - Infection control program manual
 - Immunisation records
 - Education records
 - Handwashing competencies
 - PPE competency records – donning and doffing
 - Client records, including of hospital admissions related to infections
 - Plan for Continuous Improvement
 - Audit records
 - Infection records/reports
 - Complaints and feedback registers
 - Incident reports

Associated Documents

Document ID	Document Name
PR-02-11-65	Infection Prevention and Control Procedure
PO-02-05-05	Care Governance Framework

Reference Documents

Document Name
5 Moments of Hand Hygiene
Australian Guidelines for the Prevention and Control of Infection 2019
The Australian Immunisation Handbook
Guidelines for the Public Health Management of Gastroenteritis Outbreaks
Hand Hygiene Australia
Immunisation
Information for aged care providers about COVID-19 vaccines
Influenza (flu) vaccine
Respiratory syncytial virus (RSV) infection