

2. Guiding Principles in Infection Prevention and Control

Consistent application of Routine Practices is expected for the care of all patients at all times across all levels of health care.

1. Infection prevention and control strategies are designed to protect patients and health care providers by following infection prevention and control practices at all times and use risk assessment, critical thinking and problem solving in managing clinical situations.
2. Microorganisms may be transmitted from symptomatic and asymptomatic individuals, emphasizing the importance of adhering to Routine Practices at all times for all patients in all health care settings.
3. Health care associated infections (HCAI) cause sickness and account for numbers of deaths. Many of these health care associated infections can be prevented by following infection prevention and control strategies to reduce the transmission of microorganisms in all health care settings.
4. A systematic approach to infection prevention and control requires each health care provider to protect everyone who accesses the health care system, in all of its many forms.
5. A systematic approach requires initial orientation for health care workers at beginning of job in the community health centre as well as ongoing refreshers and updates on prevention and control topics.
6. Individual components of Routine Practices are determined by a risk assessment at all times in all stages of care (e.g. an assessment of the task/ care to be performed, the patient's clinical presentation, the physical state of the environment and the health care setting, and the current state of health of individuals in the community).
7. Patients known or suspected to be infected or colonized with certain microorganisms will require Routine Practices plus Additional Precautions based on the modes of transmission of the microorganisms.



8. Additional Precautions should be used based on clinical presentation, not waiting for the microorganism identification. These precautions should be reviewed based on laboratory results.
9. Application of Additional Precautions may vary between acute care, continuing care, ambulatory care, pre-hospital care and home care settings. Current trends in illness in the community should be considered in the application of Additional Precautions.

References:

Ontario Ministry of Health and Long Term Care Infection Prevention and Control Core Competencies Program (2010)

Routine Practices and Additional Precautions: Preventing the Transmission of Infection in Health Care, Government of Manitoba (2012)