COLLEGE OF PHYSICIANS AND SURGEONS OF BRITISH COLUMBIA

PROFESSIONAL GUIDELINE

Infection Prevention and Control (IPAC) in Physician's Offices

Effective:	May 1, 2011
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Related topic(s):	Disclosure of Adverse or Harmful Events; Primary Care Provision in Walk-in, Urgent Care and Multi-licensee Clinics

A **professional guideline** reflects a recommended course of action established based on the values, principles and duties of the medical profession. Licensees may exercise reasonable discretion in their decision-making based on the guidance provided.

Preamble

This document is a professional guideline of the Board of the College of Physicians and Surgeons of British Columbia (CPSBC).

CPSBC's position

Ensuring the use of safe and effective infection prevention and control measures is an important component of medical care. Knowledge of clinical infection control practices is forever changing with the emergence of new pathogens and the re-emergence of other well-known infectious and communicable diseases.

CPSBC provides current research and reference materials to serve as a foundation for licensees in developing office-based infection prevention and control best practices for the prevention and transmission of infectious agents across the continuum of patient care.

While the principles of infection control (prevention, transmission, and control) do not change, clinical practices may evolve as a result of new evidence, standards, directives and guidelines being developed by provincial, national and international organizations. Understanding the characteristics of each link in the infection process provides licensees with methods to support vulnerable patients, prevent the spread of infection, and the awareness of and importance in methods of self-protection.

Guiding principles of infection prevention and control

- Knowing how to apply infection control guidelines in your specific practice
- Implementing health and safety programs for infection surveillance, treatment for contact, screening and immunization
- Advocating for best practices in implementing infection prevention measures
- Educating and modeling infection prevention and control for others
- Ensuring ongoing quality assurance of office practices through monitoring practices and changing practice accordingly to e.g. outbreaks, health alerts
- Applying "routine practices" at all times and additional precautions as necessary to prevent the transmission of infectious diseases
- Hand hygiene for patient and provider safety
- Personal protective equipment
- Appropriate handling, cleaning and disposal of materials, equipment and sharps
- Medical device reprocessing

Resources

CPSBC strongly encourages licensees to become familiar with the following resources and guidelines.

For general infection prevention measures:

1. Ontario Agency for Health Protection and Promotion (Public Health Ontario), Provincial Infectious Diseases Advisory Committee. Infection prevention and Control for Clinical Office Practice [Internet].
2. PICNet: Provincial Infection Control Network of British Columbia [Internet]. Vancouver (BC): Provincial Infection Control Network of British Columbia [cited 2021 April 6].

For reprocessing of reusable medical devices and equipment:

1. British Columbia Ministry of Health. Best practice guidelines for the cleaning, disinfection and sterilization of critical and semi-critical medical devices in BC health authorities [Internet]. Victoria (BC): Ministry of Health; 2011 [cited 2021 April 6].