

ROUTINE PRACTICES PROTOCOL

Preamble

The primary goal of Infection Prevention and Control programs is to reduce the risk of acquiring a healthcare-associated infection (HAI) to a minimum level; zero risk is not possible in every circumstance but should nevertheless be the ultimate goal. The consequences of cross-transmission of microorganisms (germs) must be balanced against the consequences (adverse effects and cost) of precautions taken.

Routine Practices are the foundation for preventing the transmission of microorganisms during care in all healthcare settings. It is a comprehensive set of Infection Prevention and Control (IP&C) measures developed for use in the routine care of **ALL PERSONS at ALL TIMES in ALL HEALTHCARE SETTINGS (acute, long-term, or community care)**. Routine Practices aim to minimize or prevent healthcare-associated infections in everyone in the healthcare setting including the patient/resident/client (P/R/C), all staff, visitors, Designated Caregivers, contractors, and so on. Following Routine Practices can reduce the transmission of microorganisms in all healthcare settings.

All staff (physicians, nurses, allied health staff, support staff, students, volunteers and others) are responsible for complying with Routine Practices and for tactfully calling infractions to the attention of those whom have missed an opportunity. P/R/Cs and all visitors have a responsibility to follow Routine Practices. Teaching those receiving care and visitors the basic principles of Routine Practices (e.g., hand hygiene, use of personal protective equipment) is the responsibility of all staff. **No one is exempt from following Routine Practices.**

Consistent use of Routine Practices is expected for the care of all persons at all times in all healthcare setting: in hospital, long term, or community care. **It is important to follow Routine Practices at all times for all P/R/C in all healthcare settings** as microorganisms can be transmitted from both symptomatic and asymptomatic people.