



## INFECTION PREVENTION & CONTROL COMMUNICATION FORM

### MANAGEMENT OF SHARED READING MATERIALS IN COMMUNITY HEALTH SERVICES WAITING ROOMS

#### **PART 1: ISSUE & RECOMMENDATIONS**

***Issue:***

Should shared reading materials in Community Health Services public waiting rooms be removed in efforts to control the transmission of organisms?

***Recommendations:***

1. Magazine and other reading materials may be provided in Community Health Services waiting rooms. If they become visibly soiled or damaged they must be discarded.
2. If there is an outbreak of a Severe Respiratory Illness or emerging illness the reading materials must be removed. Infection Prevention and Control will also indicate other times when reading materials should be removed.
3. All areas with waiting rooms shall have the following:
  - a) A process in place to ensure any patient with draining wounds or incontinence is moved out of the waiting room and into an exam room to await their appointment.
  - b) A hand hygiene station in the waiting room. *A hand hygiene station shall consist of either an alcohol based hand rub dispenser or an accessible sink with soap, paper towels and a waste receptacle.*
  - c) Measures in place to minimize the spread of respiratory organisms:
    - Respiratory etiquette signage.
    - Procedure masks available for patients to wear if they are unable to perform respiratory etiquette (cover their cough).
    - A process to triage patients with respiratory symptoms so they can be show directly into an exam room (instead of staying in the waiting room and potentially exposing others) **OR**
    - A designated waiting room solely for patients with respiratory symptoms.

#### **PART 2: BACKGROUND: DISCUSSION OF ISSUE, OPTIONS AND ANALYSIS & REFERENCES**

***Discussion of Issue:***

The risk of antibiotic resistant organism transmission from items such as magazines in waiting rooms has not been recognized in published Infection Prevention and Control guidelines.

***Options and Analysis:***

1. An article published in the British Journal of General Practice suggests there are low levels of bacteria on magazines, and concludes these items can routinely be used in waiting rooms.
2. A review article published in the Canadian Medical Association Journal suggests transmission of antibiotic resistant bacteria in ambulatory care is infrequent. Emphasized prevention measures include:
  - b. Accessibility of hand hygiene products for patients on arrival and exit.
  - c. Timely movement of patients with draining wounds or incontinence from waiting rooms to exam rooms.
  - d. Routine cleaning of the environment and equipment, including furniture.
3. The Canadian Committee on Antibiotic Resistance recommends routine cleaning of equipment with an



emphasis on triaging patients with respiratory symptoms, posting respiratory etiquette signage, and ensuring access to hand hygiene products on arrival to and exit from the area/facility.

**References:**

1. Charnock C. (2005, January 1). Swabbing of waiting room magazines reveals only low levels of bacterial contamination. *British Journal of General Practice*, 55, 37–39. Available at: <http://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC1266241/>.
2. **Infection Prevention and Control Best Practices for Long Term Care, Home and Community Care including Health Care Offices and Ambulatory Clinics. (2010, July 28). Public Health Agency of Canada. Retrieved November 13, 2013 from:** <http://www.phac-aspc.gc.ca/amr-ram/ipcbp-pepci/infection-eng.php#basic>.
3. Matlow, A. & Morris, S. (2009, May 12). Control of antibiotic-resistant bacteria in the office and clinic. *Canadian Medical Association Journal* vol 180 no 10, 1021-1024. Available at: <http://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC2679832/>.
4. Moore, D. (2008, May). Infection control in paediatric office settings. *Pediatrics and Child Health*, 13 (5), 408 – 419. Available at: <http://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC2532878/#b42-pch13408>.
5. Routine practices and additional precautions for preventing transmission of infections in Healthcare facilities. (2012, April). Public Health Agency of Canada. Available at: <http://www.gov.mb.ca/health/publichealth/cdc/docs/ipc/rpap.pdf>.

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Communication Form Contact:

*Chantelle Riddle-Yarycky Community Infection Prevention and Control Professional*