

<b>Policy Title:</b>	Cleaning & Disinfecting the Physical Environment	
<b>Applies To:</b>	All Nova Scotia Health Team Members	
<b>Related Procedures:</b>	See <a href="#">Related Documents</a>	
<b>Approved:</b>	<b>Effective:</b>	<b>Next Review:</b>
January 27, 2023	February 7, 2023	January 27, 2027
<b>Sponsor:</b>	Senior Director, Facilities Management and Support	
<b>Approval Authority:</b>	VP, Stewardship and Accountability; CFO Executive Leadership Team	
<b>Number:</b> ENV-CD-001	<b>Manual:</b>	Environmental Services & Housekeeping

## PURPOSE

This policy provides direction to Nova Scotia Health Team Members for keeping the physical Health Care Environment Clean and Disinfected, which is essential to the safety and comfort of everyone visiting or working in Nova Scotia Health Facilities.

## PRINCIPLES AND VALUES

**People Centred Care & Safety:** Cleaning and Disinfecting the Health Care Environment is necessary to ensure the safety of patients, visitors, and Nova Scotia Health Team Members. It reduces Physical Environmental Hazards, the amount and number of infectious Pathogens that may be present and reduces the risk of infection by minimizing the transfer of Microorganisms from one person/object to another.

**Evidence-Informed Practices:** Nova Scotia Health promotes a “pride in ownership” culture that holds all Team Members accountable for maintaining Clean and safe Facilities. Through attention and adherence to Cleaning and Disinfecting best practices, we strive to increase the confidence and trust amongst Nova Scotians and ourselves.

## POLICY STATEMENTS

1. Nova Scotia Health uses best practices for Cleaning and Disinfection to promote the safety and comfort of patients, families, visitors, and Nova Scotia Health Team Members in all our Facilities.
2. Nova Scotia Health Environmental Services, in collaboration with Infection Prevention & Control (IPAC) and other relevant services/departments, is responsible for the creation

and maintenance of operational guidelines and procedural documents detailing how, when, and the role(s) responsible to Clean and Disinfect the physical environment.

2.1. Cleaning and Disinfection frequency for each area is determined by best practice documents from [The Provincial Infectious Disease Advisory Committees \(PIDAC\)](#), along with guidance from Nova Scotia Health's IPAC Department. Frequency of Cleaning and Disinfecting considers the following:

- Patients with Additional Precautions (including antibiotic resistant organisms);
- High touch vs low touch surfaces;
- Type of activity taking place in the area and any risks associated with that activity;
- Vulnerability of patients staying in the area; and,
- Probability of contamination based on the amount of bodily fluid in the area.

3. All Nova Scotia Health spaces must be monitored and maintained at a minimum of Hotel Clean in non-clinical areas and Hospital Clean in clinical areas, on a routine and/or scheduled basis, to ensure the overall cleanliness of Facilities.

4. All Environmental Services Team Members must be appropriately trained and educated on best practice standards for Cleaning and Disinfection according to Nova Scotia Health's IPAC guidelines, [Accreditation Canada standards](#), and [The Provincial Infectious Disease Advisory Committees \(PIDAC\) documentation](#).

4.1. Team Members' skill and compliance are routinely assessed through audit.

4.2. Program, department, and unit managers must have processes in place to securely maintain assessment and competency records for each Team Member.

4.3. Team Members must verify work is completed up to standard by including a signature, date and time, and the Cleaner and/or Disinfectant used.

5. Nova Scotia Health Facilities Support Services managers determine Environmental Services staffing levels, in consultation with IPAC, based on the following factors:

- Facility type
- Building type
- Occupancy
- Room/space type
- IPAC recommendations
- Equipment
- Training
- Legislative requirements
- Team Member's role

- 5.1. Environmental Services staffing levels must be re-evaluated in special circumstances (e.g., [outbreak](#), flood, Public Health emergency, etc.).
6. Cleaning must be completed prior to Disinfection.
  - 6.1. When Cleaning and Disinfecting the physical environment, all Nova Scotia Health Team Members must follow routine practices, Additional Precautions, hand hygiene, and wear appropriate Personal Protective Equipment.
    - 6.1.1. Standard techniques must be followed (e.g., begin with cleanest and finish with most soiled, clean high to low) as documented in the Environmental Services operational job aids.
  - 6.2. Cleaning processes are guided by the [PIDAC: Best Practices for Environmental Cleaning for Prevention and Control of Infections](#), with reference to Accreditation Canada Standards, and other PIDAC documentation and relevant Nova Scotia Health procedures, as applicable.
7. All Nova Scotia Health Team Members must contribute to the Cleaning and Disinfection of the physical environment.
8. All Nova Scotia Health Team Members must report any visible soiling and/or neglect in Cleaning and any Facilities, surfaces, or areas in disrepair to the appropriate Environmental Services Team Member and/or their manager or immediate supervisor.
9. All surfaces and equipment must be Cleaned and Disinfected with approved hospital grade chemicals that have a Drug Identification Number (DIN) provided by Health Canada, unless otherwise directed by IPAC or Additional Precautions signage.
10. Patients and families are routinely surveyed to help identify opportunities for improvement and areas of concern that may require additional attention.
11. Contracted Services must adhere to this policy and any accompanying procedures.

## REFERENCES

- Accreditation Canada. (2023). *Health Care Standards*. <https://accreditation.ca/standards/>
- Lexico Dictionaries. (n.d.). *Microorganism: Meaning & definition for UK English*. <https://en.oxforddictionaries.com/definition/microorganism>
- Lexico Dictionaries. (n.d.). *Pathogen: Meaning & definition for UK English*. <https://en.oxforddictionaries.com/definition/pathogen>
- Ontario Agency for Health Protection and Promotion. (2018). *Provincial Infectious Diseases Advisory Committee (PIDAC) documents*. [Environmental Cleaning | Public Health Ontario, PIDAC: Best Practices for Environmental Cleaning for Prevention and Control of Infections | January 2018 \(publichealthontario.ca\)](https://www.ontario.ca/gov/environnemental-cleaning-public-health-ontario-pidac-best-practices-environmental-cleaning-prevention-control-infections-january-2018)
- Canada, Public Health Agency of. (2012, April 3). *Guidance: Infection Prevention and Control Measures for Healthcare Workers in All Healthcare Settings*. <https://www.canada.ca/en/public-health/services/infectious-diseases/nosocomial-occupational-infections/guidance-infection-prevention-control-measures-healthcare-workers-healthcare-settings.html>

## RELATED DOCUMENTS

### Policies

- [NSHA AD-OHS-001 Occupational Health and Safety Rights and Accountabilities](#)
- [NSHA IPC-CD-001 Outbreak Management](#)
- [NSHA IPC-CL-001 Cleaning and Disinfection of Non-Critical Reusable Patient Care Equipment](#)
- [NSHA IC-CP-025 Infection Prevention and Control During Construction, Maintenance and Renovation of Health Care Facilities](#)
- [NSHA IPC-RP-001 Routine Practices and Precautions](#)
- [NSHA IPC-RP-020 Hand Hygiene](#)

### Procedures

- [ENV-CD-001.01 Patient Room Cleaning — Routine](#)
- [ENV-CD-001.02 Patient Room Cleaning — Discharge/Transfer](#)
- [ENV-CD-001.03 Patient Room Cleaning — Additional Precautions](#)
- [ENV-CD-001.04 Floor Cleaning](#)
- [ENV-CD-001.05 Bathroom Cleaning](#)
- [ENV-CD-001.06 Medical Device Reprocessing Department Cleaning/Disinfecting](#)

### Appendices

- [Appendix A: Definitions](#)

\* \* \*

*This is a CONTROLLED document for internal use only. Any documents appearing in paper form are not controlled and should be checked against the electronic file version prior to use.*

**Appendix A: Definitions**

<b>Defined term</b>	<b>Definition text</b>
<b>Additional Precautions</b>	Further precautions based on the method of transmission (i.e., contact, droplet, airborne) that are necessary when routine practices alone may not be enough to interrupt transmission of an infectious agent.
<b>Chemicals</b>	Solutions approved by Nova Scotia Health that are used for Cleaning and Disinfection.
<b>Cleaning</b>	The physical removal of foreign material (e.g., dust, soil) and organic material (e.g., blood, secretions, excretions, Microorganisms). Cleaning physically removes, rather than kills, Microorganisms. It is accomplished with water, chemicals, and mechanical action.
<b>Contracted Services</b>	Services provided by another organization or business by documented agreement for the Cleaning & Disinfecting of Nova Scotia Health spaces.
<b>Disinfecting</b>	The process that eliminates Microorganisms (except spores) that is accomplished with the use of liquid Chemicals.
<b>Facilities</b>	Includes, but is not limited to, a building or components of a building (e.g., a wing, a particular treatment area), its indoor spaces, and exterior grounds.
<b>Health Care Environment</b>	People and items which make up the care environment (e.g., objects, medical equipment, Team Members, patients) of a hospital, clinical, or ambulatory setting, outside the immediate environment of the patient.
<b>Hospital Clean</b>	Hotel clean PLUS:  High touch surfaces in patient care areas are Cleaned and Disinfected with hospital grade disinfectant.  Non-critical medical equipment is Cleaned and Disinfected between patients, and Cleaning practices are periodically monitored and audited to provide feedback and education.
<b>Hotel Clean</b>	A measure of cleanliness based on visual appearance that includes dust and dirt removal, waste disposal, and cleaning of windows and surfaces.
<b>Microorganism</b>	A microscopic organism, such as a bacterium, virus, or fungus.

<b>Team Member</b>	Unless specifically limited by a certain policy, refers to all employees, physicians, learners, volunteers, board members, contractors, contract workers, franchise employees, and those with affiliated appointments and other individuals performing activities within Nova Scotia Health.
<b>Pathogen</b>	A bacterium, virus, or other Microorganism that can cause disease (e.g., C difficile (C. diff), Norovirus, Methicillin Resistant Staphylococcus Aureus (MRSA), Vancomycin Resistant Enterococcus (VRE)).
<b>Physical Environmental Hazards</b>	An agent, factor, or circumstance that can cause physical injury, damage, or an adverse health effect (e.g., bacteria, viruses, spills, equipment malfunctions, repetitive tasks.)

## POLICIES BEING REPLACED

CBDHA ENV - 12 - 010 Environmental cleaning and disinfecting standards

CDHA Environmental Cleaning & Disinfection HS 10-010

NSHA AD-PSE-005 Frequency of Cleaning

## VERSION HISTORY

Version:	Effective:	Approved by:	What's changed:
Original	2019-01-07	VP, Stewardship and Accountability; CFO Executive Leadership Team	N/A
Minor revision	2023-02-07	Senior Director, Facilities Management and Support	Minor changes made to reflect current terminology/condensed language, reference to public health emergency, and improved flow.