

# Infection Prevention and Control Policy

## Purpose and Scope

This policy sets out how we should manage infection and infectious diseases within SOS Homecare. It applies to all employees in all our branches.

All employees may be at risk of infection, or of spreading infection, especially if their role brings them into contact with blood or bodily fluids like urine, faeces, vomit or sputum. Such substances may contain micro-organisms such as bacteria and viruses which can be spread if staff do not take adequate precautions. Also at risk of spreading infection are those involved in food preparation and handling. It is therefore important that strict hygiene precautions are observed.

## Responsibilities

The Directors are responsible for developing, monitoring and reviewing the infection control strategy for the organisation / scheme. This should include the safe handling and disposal of clinical waste, spillages, provision of protective clothing and hand washing.

The Directors should ensure that a review of infection control strategy is undertaken at least once every year to ensure:

- The continuing suitability and effectiveness of the strategy.
- That any issues arising from the review are addressed in the strategy for the following year.
- That any new infection trends nationally, or existing common infectious-disease patterns locally, are identified and preventative action taken.

The manager is responsible for ensuring that in cases where a service user has been diagnosed as having an infectious disease, a full record is made in the Service users Care Plan, and regular updates are made in the Service user's daily log book.

The manager should ensure that the delivery of care to service users who have an infectious disease is not only appropriate to the risk but is also sensitive, discreet and does not leave the service user feeling either isolated or victimised.

The manager should ensure that staff participate in appropriate awareness training and guidance as part of their induction and ongoing personal development.

The manager is responsible for ensuring that an up-to-date list is maintained of infectious diseases which are required to be reported to Public Health England. PHE and the Department of Health have published The Health Protection Legislation (England) Guidance 2010 which details exactly what needs to be reported.

Where in the opinion of a GP there is an outbreak of infectious disease the Care Quality Commission and Public Health England, must be informed immediately.

## **Policy**

In order to restrict and reduce the risk of infection in the workplace, the Company will:

- have systems in place that assess the risk of and prevent, detect and control the risk of infection
- ensure sufficient resources are available to secure effective prevention and control of infection
- ensure employees, contractors and other persons who directly or indirectly provide work are provided with suitable information, instruction, training and supervision in the precautions to follow
- audits are carried out to ensure policies and procedures are being implemented
- a suitable and sufficient risk assessment is carried out with respect to prevention and control of infection
- ensure an appropriate standard of cleanliness and hygiene is maintained throughout the premises and that the premises are maintained in good physical repair and condition
- ensure appropriate standards of cleanliness and hygiene are maintained in relation to equipment
- ensure that a suitable cleaning schedule is in place and followed
- ensure there is suitable and sufficient hand washing facilities and antimicrobial hand rubs where appropriate
- ensure suitable information on infections is provided to visitors, including the importance of hand washing by visitors
- ensure information regarding infection is passed on to any other person, as necessary
- ensure individuals who develop an infection are identified promptly and that they receive the appropriate treatment and care
- inform the local health protection unit of any outbreaks or serious incidents relating to infection
- ensure all staff co-operate with our control of infection procedures
- provide regular suitable training, including induction training to all staff on the prevention and control of infection
- keep a record of all training and updates to staff
- ensure prevention and control of infection responsibilities are outlined in employees in job descriptions
- stagger start and finish times so that fewer people are together at once
- cancel non-essential training sessions
- deal with clients/customers by phone and email
- if face to face meetings must take place, ensure that facilities are suitable to minimise the spread of infection e.g. allowing a distance of more than one metre between participants

- offer appropriate vaccines to employees and keep a record of relevant immunisations

## **Clinical Waste**

Staff employed by SOS Homecare may be required to deal with clinical waste as part of their job and should be properly trained to understand the associated risks and safe disposal.

Clinical waste may be classed as:

- Human tissue including blood. This also includes soiled dressings and other soiled waste.
- Syringes, needles and other sharps, including glass ampoules
- Microbiological cultures - not usually present in Care Organisation / schemes.
- Some pharmaceutical products or chemical wastes which are not returned via the pharmacy.
- Disposable items used for the collection or disposal of urine, faeces or other bodily secretions. This includes incontinence pads, stoma bags and urine containers.

The manager should ensure that staff have access to a 'sharps bin'. Staff should make the manager aware if there is a shortage of this within the Service User's property.

A record of measures taken by staff should be kept in the service users care plan and risk assessment.

## **Spillages**

Whenever a spillage occurs in the organisation / scheme, staff must ensure that they wear the appropriate protective clothing such as disposable gloves and aprons. All required protective clothing should be made freely available by the organisation for use by any member of staff.

Dry or semi-dry waste should be transferred to a suitable clinical waste bag or bin.

Wet waste should be soaked up using paper towels or disposable sponges and then transferred to a suitable clinical waste bag or bin.

The area of the spill should be thoroughly washed using a suitable disinfectant and / or detergent. The area should then be dried using either paper towels or an approved water-extraction appliance.

## **Protective Clothing**

The manager is responsible for identifying the nature of protective clothing that may be required in the organisation / scheme.

The manager should ensure that a supply of all the required protective clothing is available in the organisation / scheme to staff who are on duty.

The use of protective clothing should be unrestricted and without charge to either staff or service users.

The suppliers of protective clothing should be reviewed periodically by the manager for their continuing suitability and value for money.

## **Handwashing**

The manager should ensure that suitable and effective guidance is available within the organisation / scheme regarding the washing of hands in order to minimise risks associated with cross-infection.

All staff should receive training in how to wash hands in order to minimise the risk of cross-infection both before and after carrying out personal care tasks or handling clinical waste.

## **Notifiable Infectious Diseases**

The manager is responsible for identifying and maintaining a list of infectious diseases that are required to be reported to the Care Quality Commission. The list should include:

- Hepatitis - types A, B and C.
- HIV - whether this has or has not developed into AIDS.
- Tuberculosis.
- MRSA.
- Scabies.

The Company will apply the below infection outbreak procedure to control the risk of infectious diseases in the workplace:

- strongly recommend that employees follow any Government guidance published on self-isolation/quarantine
- encourage staff to report symptoms of infectious diseases
- ensure staff who have infectious disease symptoms do not come to work and, in the case of diarrhoea and vomiting, they stay away for at least 48 hours after the symptoms have stopped
- where required, ensure notifiable outbreaks are reported to the relevant authority eg HSE
- co-operate with any investigation by a relevant authority and comply with any investigation findings
- keep the number of employees dealing with affected persons to a minimum and do not allow these employees to be involved with food handling

- prioritise cleaning, paying particular attention to the cleaning and disinfecting of toilets, handles, support handrails, taps and wash basins
- ensure staff pay strict attention to infection control procedures, in particular to the washing of hands and the wearing of protective clothing if required
- provide and use antibacterial hand wash in all hand washing areas and in the rooms of outbreak
- inform visitors of the outbreak and discourage unnecessary visits
- receive external advice, if necessary.

## Version Control

<b>Date first approved</b>	
<b>Date of last review</b>	
<b>Review Frequency</b>	Annual
<b>Date of next review</b>	

<b>Version</b>	<b>Comments</b>	<b>Date</b>
1	First issue	