Policy Statement

Electronic devices are becoming increasingly important in healthcare delivery. Most electronic devices are at risk of becoming a vehicle for the transmission of microorganisms/infection. Computers and any electronic device can become contaminated with microorganisms that can be transmitted by unwashed hands to patients. All touch surfaces of electronic devices used at or near point of care must be cleaned and disinfected with a hospital grade disinfectant (per manufacturer’s instruction).

Purpose

To provide workers with guideline information on cleaning and disinfection of electronic devices used at ANHH including but not limited to personal devices and accessories that:

- stay with the Health Care Worker (HCW) (e.g. personal mobile devices, walkie-talkie)
- are used for patient teaching (e.g. iPad)
- move from patient to patient in clinical areas (computer/workstation on wheels/med cart)

Best Practice Guidelines

1. Hand Hygiene

   - Electronic devices must be used with clean hands
   - Hand Hygiene should be performed between patient/client contact and accessing the electronic device
   - Patients/clients must wash their hands prior to touching the device
   - Gloves should not be worn when using an electronic device

2. Cleaning and Disinfection Information

   - The user/owner is responsible for routine cleaning and disinfection. Cleaning and disinfection must be done every time the device has the potential to become contaminated.
   - All Staff must ensure cleaning their personal devices at the start of each shift worked and every time the device has had the potential to become contaminated while at work.
   - Electronic devices that stay with the worker (such as but not limited to cell phones, pagers, Palms) must be cleaned by the user at the beginning and at the end of every shift
   - Staff should not carry personal cell phones in the work area unless they are used for work purposes. The cell phone user should keep their personal phones germ free at all times and therefore hand hygiene should be done before and after accessing personal cell phone.
   - Environmental Services shall clean devices in public areas for patient/client/visitor use daily (telephones, computer)
- Devices that cannot be cleaned adequately should not be used in patient rooms or touched by patients. If device cannot be adequately cleaned and will be in a patient room or touched by patients it requires a cleanable cover.
- Hard surfaces should be cleaned with a cloth dampened with an approved cleaner/disinfectant (spray the cloth not the device) or a disposable pre-moistened cloth. Avoid using clothes that are saturated with fluid to prevent damage to internal systems. Surfaces should be allowed to air dry before reuse and as recommended (accu-check machine)
- LCD screens in non-clinical settings can be cleaned with Information system approved screen cleaning products
- Prior to purchase of an electronic device the manufacturer’s guidelines for use, cleaning and disinfection should be reviewed.

The following table is a guide for the frequency of cleaning. The frequency is determined by the risk of cross contamination, the proximity of the device to the point of care and the usual amount of soiling (dust, etc). Ensure cleaning after YOU have used a device.

### Cleaning and Disinfection of IT and Telephone Equipment and Devices

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### Equipment

- Portable systems used at point of care: These devices have multiple users. If these devices are taken into Isolation Precaution room all external surfaces must be disinfected before the device is removed from the room. (ex: ipads, smart phone, wireless laptops, accu-check machine)
  - Consider covering device in a zip-lock bag before taking into precaution room
- Fixed system used at point of care: Example (TV remotes, patient telephone)
  - Daily Discharge
- Portable/fixed systems used near point of care (outside patient rooms)
  - Daily Between shifts after patient discharge
- All other fixed systems located in clinical areas (charting room, Nursing station)
  - Daily
- Systems in non-critical offices
  - Single user
  - Multiple user workstation
  - Walkie-talkie
  - Weekly Between shifts

### Frequency

- Daily
- Weekly
- Between shifts
- Discharge
- Weekly

### By Whom

- User
- Environmental Services for patient rooms
- Environmental Services for patient rooms
- User
- User

### Products

- Examples:
  - Alcohol swabs
  - Cavi-Wipes (not for use on telephone equipment or laptop computers)
  - Virox (can be used on accu-check machine)
  - Accel (for use on Zagg protected ipads)
  - Facility approved low-level disinfectant (specified by manufacturer)
Revision History
New Policy Guidelines
April 2013 to reflect current practices

Risk Management
To increase staff awareness and to ensure electronic devices used in health care pose no risk of infection to patients/clients.

References:


Regina Qu’Appelle Health Region (RQHR) Infection Control Department Policy 2012