

Infection Prevention and Control Assurance - Standard Operating Procedure 11 (IPC SOP 11)

Cleaning Toys, Games and Play Equipment

Why we have a procedure?

The Health and Social Care Act 2008: Code of Practice for the NHS for the Prevention and Control of Healthcare Associated Infections (*revised January 2015*) stipulates that NHS bodies must, in relation to preventing and controlling the risk of Health Care Associated Infections (HCAI), have in place appropriate core policies/procedures, including procedures for the decontamination of equipment. Implementation of this procedure will contribute to the achievement and compliance with the Act.

What overarching policy the procedure links to?

- This procedure is supported by the Infection Prevention and Control Assurance Policy

Which services of the trust does this apply to? **Where** is it in operation?

Group	Inpatients	Community	Locations
Mental Health Services	✓	✓	all
Learning Disabilities Services	✓	✓	all
Children and Young People Services	x	✓	all

Who does the procedure apply to?

This document applies to all staff employed by or working on behalf of the Black Country Partnership NHS Foundation Trust who use toys and play equipment for use with patients and children as part of their role and job description. This includes all toys in any waiting rooms, family visiting rooms and in-patient areas etc.

The sharing of toys between children/patients/clients can be a potential source of infection as they can become contaminated by dirty hands, dust or bodily fluids and toys have been implicated in outbreaks of infection.

When should the procedure be applied?

When toys are required for use in any clinical environment within Trust premises or premises used by Trust employees.

How to carry out this procedure

Additional Information/ Associated Documents

- Infection Prevention and Control Assurance Policy
- Hand Hygiene Policy

- Infection Prevention and Control Assurance - Standard Operating Procedure 1 (IPC SOP 1) - Standard Infection Control Precautions
- Infection Prevention and Control Assurance - Standard Operating Procedure 7 (IPC SOP 7) - Decontamination (Cleaning, Disinfection and Sterilisation)

Aims

- To provide guidance in order to establish safe and effective procedures to minimise the risks of transmission of micro-organisms when using toys and therapeutic play equipment as part of service delivery.
- To ensure all toys, games and play equipment for use within the Trust are clean, fit for use and stored safely when not in use.
- To ensure toys/games/play equipment are checked regularly for signs of damage and wear and tear.

Definitions

Cleaning	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A process that physically removes contamination but does not necessarily destroy microorganisms
Disinfection	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A process used to reduce the number of microorganisms but may not destroy bacteria spores or some viruses but is considered to reduce the number to a level that is safe
Toys and Games	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Refers to all toys/games used for recreational, therapeutic or educational purposes by children, young people, patients and their families or by healthcare staff
Wear and Tear	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Damage that naturally and inevitably occurs as a result of normal wear or aging

Key Principles

Selection of Toys, Games and Play Equipment

Age appropriate toys, games and equipment will be available for patients within the clinical setting as required which do not increase the risk of spread of infection. This procedure applies to all toys/games/play equipment used by staff, patients and visitors.

In areas where mental health is a key consideration, by following an appropriate risk assessment this procedure remains relevant and all risk assessments must be documented in the patient’s notes.

- Careful consideration must be given to how toys will be kept clean before they are purchased and adjustments must be made to facilitate effective cleaning.
- Toys/games will be chosen with hard non-porous surfaces (which can be thoroughly cleaned).
- Where toys/games with fabric parts must be used, these must be able to be laundered in the washing machine at temperatures held at 71°C for 3 minutes or 65°C for 10 minutes to achieve thermal disinfection and thorough drying.

Donations of Toys/Games etc.

- Toys etc. which are donated by the public for this purpose must be of BS Standard and appropriate to the age, i.e. no toys with small parts should be given to children under 3 years of age. All donations should be discarded if damaged and should comply with infection prevention and control standards.
- Safety equipment must not be accepted second hand – i.e. car seats.
- Toys/games received from members of the public will be checked by ward/department Occupational Therapists for suitability.
- The Trust will not receive soft toys made of fabric which cannot be cleaned in accordance with these procedures and infection prevention and control guidelines.

Storage of Toys/Games

- Toys/games will be stored in a dedicated box/cupboard (or play area if large) which is fit for purpose and is the subject of an identified and documented regular cleaning schedule.
- Only clean toys/games will be stored in this box/cupboard/area.
- The storage box must be cleaned weekly.

Patient's own Toys/Games

- These should be limited to one or two items for patients in in-patient units at the discretion of the Nurse-in-Charge
- These should be stored in their locker when not in use or other appropriate covered storage area e.g. toy box.
- If shared with other patients, the toy/games must be cleaned immediately after use.

Group Play/Therapy

- Where children/patients may benefit from sharing toys/play equipment, staffs have a responsibility to support safe play – this may require a documented risk assessment.
- All toys/equipment **must** be cleaned at the end of all communal use sessions before placing back into storage – this should also be recorded/documented.

Outpatient Areas/Visitors Rooms

- The department manager must have a written system in place for staff to ensure that toys are cleaned and inspected regularly e.g. weekly or at the end of the clinic session.
- Toys will be kept to a manageable minimum so that appropriate cleaning can be undertaken after use and at least weekly.
- Staff will examine each toy/game regularly (at least weekly) or when soiled to ensure that it is fit for purpose.
- Any toys that have been used during a clinic session or during the day will be placed in the appropriate box and cleaned at the end of each clinic session.
- A notice will be displayed in each waiting area advising parents/ patients to report any dirty toys to a member of staff.

Cleaning/Decontamination of Toys/Play Equipment

- Toys awaiting cleaning should be stored in a box labelled as 'dirty toys' and kept in an area that children/patients cannot access.

- Evidence of the toy cleaning **MUST** be kept in each department, and an example of a checklist can be seen in **Appendix 3**. Completed schedules should be retained for a minimum of 3 months.
- Play equipment and storage containers for use within the Trust, must be made of materials which can easily be cleaned using general purpose detergent and water or a disposable detergent wipe.
- Storage boxes must be used whenever practicable, these should be covered (lid) and washable.
- Each practitioner who comes into contact with play equipment will ensure play equipment and storage are checked weekly, cleaned as necessary and compliance documented in the cleaning reference file to be kept within each department.
- Each ward/department manager must have a written system in place for staff to ensure that toys are cleaned and examined between patient use.
- Staff must examine each toy/game after use to ensure that it is fit for re-use i.e. check for broken parts/faults/loose parts etc.
- Toys/games/play equipment will be cleaned using detergent and warm water or a detergent wipe (for patients in isolation a chlorine releasing agent should be used) prior to returning the toy to storage.

Where do I go for further advice or information?

- Infection Prevention and Control Team
- Your Service Manager, Matron, General Manager, Head of Nursing, Group Director and Physical Health Matron
- Your Group Governance Staff

Training

Staff may receive training in relation to this procedure, where it is identified in their appraisal as part of the specific development needs for their role and responsibilities. Please refer to the Trust's Mandatory and Risk Management Training Needs Analysis for further details on training requirements, target audiences and update frequencies.

Information on the cleaning of toys is to be cascaded to staff during their local induction process as/when relevant.

Monitoring / Review of this Procedure

In the event of planned change in the process(es) described within this document or an incident involving the described process(es) within the review cycle, this SOP will be reviewed and revised as necessary to maintain its accuracy and effectiveness.

Equality Impact Assessment

Please refer to overarching policy

Data Protection Act and Freedom of Information Act

Please refer to overarching policy

Appendix 1

Cleaning Procedure for Toys/Games/Play Equipment

All toys MUST be cleaned after each use/end of play session or at least weekly when not in use. (It is recognised that some sessions include more than one child/patient, cleaning therefore is only necessary at the end of these sessions)

Books	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Books and posters should be examined for visible soiling with body fluid and disposed of as necessary Between patients, wipe the book cover with a detergent wipe Books with signs of dampness or mildew must be discarded Patients in isolation – the Infection Prevention and Control Nurse will advise
Ball Pools	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> These should be inspected daily for cleanliness, debris and foreign items Routine cleaning should be undertaken weekly ensuring all parts are cleaned using warm water and a neutral detergent solution, then rinsed and dried thoroughly
Construction toys e.g. Lego and Mega Blocks etc.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Care must be taken to examine small parts, at the end of play, wash all parts thoroughly in warm water and neutral detergent. They can then be soaked for a period of 5 minutes in a chlorine based solution e.g. Milton 1,000 parts per million) Alternatively place in a 'net bag' and wash in the washing machine
Dressing up clothing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> All clothes should be washable and washed at a temperature of 60°C for 10 minutes If kept together in a 'dressing up box' or on a rail, all the clothes must be laundered weekly Storage boxes should also be cleaned weekly. If the clothes are visibly soiled they must be removed immediately and laundered
Hand held mechanical or electronic toys	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Damp wipe with a disposable detergent wipes between patient use and thorough drying before returning to storage
Hard surface toys	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Must have a smooth, non-porous surface that is easy to clean. N.B. toys with moving parts or openings can harbour dirt and germs in the crevices Use detergent wipes to wipe clean toys after use. If wipes are not available use a fresh solution of detergent made up as per manufacturer's instructions, using disposable cloth. Rinse and dry thoroughly. DO NOT store toys wet
Play dough and therapeutic putty	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ALWAYS encourage user to wash hands before start of play/use Play dough ideally should be discarded at the end of the session and not stored for another day – but please refer to the manufacturer's instructions Therapeutic putty ideally should be single patient use but the manufacturer's guidelines must be followed if the product is not labelled as single patient use <i>Home-made play dough</i> MUST be discarded at the end of the session as this contains no preservatives and will enable microbial growth For all dough/putty which is not single patient use, records must be maintained which include date the dough/putty was first used and how many sessions it is re-used and when it is due for replacement
Play sand	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Sand pits are not recommended for general play purposes. However, for individual play therapy, sand may be used for that child and discarded after use
Stuffed soft toys	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Avoid as far as possible. Soft toys must not be kept for general use in healthcare settings because they are porous, support microbial growth and can be difficult to decontaminate

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • If used these should be for one child/patient use only and given to the child/patient as a gift to take home • There may be occasions when soft toys form an essential part of a therapy session – where this is the case soft toys must be subject to machine washing after each episode of care and thorough air/tumble drying (according to the manufacturer's instructions). Repeated decontamination of soft toys can compromise the integrity of the fabric and create a choking hazard, therefore ensure thorough checking takes place before and after and discard if needed
Therapeutic toys	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All therapeutic toys including soft bodied toys must be made of wipeable material • All users should be encouraged to wash their hands before touching any play equipment • There must be a local protocol in place for cleaning/replacement
Toy storage boxes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Check integrity weekly if any broken/missing parts replace as needed • Remove all toys and clean weekly with detergent and water and dry thoroughly before replacing cleaned contents
Wall mounted and large toys/games	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Clean all areas using disposable detergent wipes after each use. • Store dry between uses
Water play	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • This should be on a one-to-one basis only • Water MUST be discarded at the end of the session • All toys should be cleaned and dried thoroughly prior to storage – N.B. hollow toys e.g. bath squirters, may support the growth of moulds internally
Wooden toys	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Wooden toys are porous and difficult to clean and therefore should not be used in hospital/clinical settings
Toys/games soiled with body fluids	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Consider disposal if grossly contaminated • All blood/body fluid should be decontaminated (see Decontamination Procedure) • Seek advice from the Infection Prevention and Control Team

N.B record all toy cleaning and inspections undertaken (see **Appendix 2 and 3**)

Additional Cleaning Measures

- If toys become contaminated with any blood/body fluids they need to be removed immediately from the area and cleaned using a chlorine releasing agent (10,000 parts per million).
- Where toys have been contaminated with specific microorganisms for example during an outbreak or when a patient is in source isolation, additional decontamination procedures may be required.
- If this is not possible the toy must be discarded (clinical waste stream).
- If uncertain seek guidance from the Infection Prevention and Control Team.

Appendix 2

Toys/Play Equipment Cleaning Checklist

Depending on the use and function of the play equipment/toys in use, cleaning requirements may be classified as either:

- After patient use
- Between patient use
- On a daily basis
- On a weekly basis

All equipment should be assessed and cleaned thoroughly. The cleaning checklist should be completed as directed by the ward/department manager.

Equipment must be cleaned using detergent wipes. The exception to this is:

If a blood or blood-stained fluid spillage is identified, the area must be cleaned immediately using a Biohazard Spill Kit and staff must wear PPE (disposable gloves and aprons) during this procedure.

The toys must be soaked for a period of 5 minutes in a Chlorine based solution (10,000 parts per million) e.g. Haz-Tabs or Milton and air dried.

If any equipment is found to be in a poor state of repair, it must be taken out of use and reported, repaired or replaced as soon as possible.

Standard Operating Procedure Details

Unique Identifier for this SOP is	BCPFT-COI-POL-05-11
State if SOP is New or Revised	Revised
Policy Category	Control of Infection
Executive Director whose portfolio this SOP comes under	Executive Director of Nursing, AHPs and Governance
Policy Lead/Author Job titles only	Infection Prevention and Control Team
Committee/Group Responsible for Approval of this SOP	Infection Prevention and Control Committee
Month/year consultation process completed	n/a
Month/year SOP was approved	June 2019
Next review due	June 2022
Disclosure Status	'B' can be disclosed to patients and the public

Review and Amendment History

Version	Date	Description of Change
1.1	Feb 2019	Procedure reviewed – no changes required
1.0	Jan 2016	New Procedure established to supplement Infection Control Assurance Policy