

# **The Health and Social Care Act 2008**

*Code of Practice on the  
prevention and control of infections  
and related guidance*

**DH INFORMATION READER BOX**

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# Executive summary

Good infection prevention and control are essential to ensure that people who use health and social care services receive safe and effective care. Effective prevention and control of infection must be part of everyday practice and be applied consistently by everyone.

Good management and organisational processes are crucial to make sure that high standards of infection prevention and control are developed and maintained.

This document sets out the Code of Practice on the prevention and control of infections, under The Health and Social Care Act 2008. It will apply to registered providers of all healthcare and adult social care in England. The Code of Practice (Part 2) sets out the 10 criteria against which the Care Quality Commission (CQC) will judge a registered provider on how it complies with the cleanliness and infection control requirement, which is set out in regulations.<sup>1</sup> Not all criteria will apply to every regulated activity but to ensure that consistently high levels of infection prevention and control are developed and maintained, it is essential that all providers of health and social care read and consider the whole document and not just selective parts.

Parts 3 and 4 of this document will help registered providers interpret the criteria and develop their own risk assessments. The appendices provide examples of how a proportionate approach could be applied to the criteria in all sectors and it is important to read the examples given in the appendices, alongside the guidance under each criterion in Part 3 of this document. The bibliography lists a range of supporting national guidance.

This document builds on the previous Code of Practice: *The Health and Social Care Act 2008 Code of Practice for health and adult social care on the prevention and control of infections and related guidance*, which applied to NHS bodies and providers of independent healthcare and adult social care in England.

The registration requirements will extend further from April 2011 to include primary dental care and independent sector ambulance providers, including air or water ambulances, and from April 2012 primary medical care providers. We have revised the previous Code of Practice document in order to make it applicable to all these settings.

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<sup>1</sup> The Health and Social Care Act 2008 (Regulated Activities) Regulations 2010. Available at: [www.legislation.gov.uk/search?title=The+Health+and+Social+Care+Act+2008+%28Regulated+Activities%29+Regulations+2010&year=&number=&type=uksi](http://www.legislation.gov.uk/search?title=The+Health+and+Social+Care+Act+2008+%28Regulated+Activities%29+Regulations+2010&year=&number=&type=uksi)

The law states that the Code must be taken into account by the CQC when it makes decisions about registration against the cleanliness and infection control requirement. The regulations also say that providers must have regard to the Code when deciding how they will comply with registration requirements. So, by following the Code, registered providers will be able to show that they meet the requirement set out in the regulations. However, the Code is not mandatory so registered providers do not by law have to comply with the Code. A registered provider may be able to demonstrate that it meets the regulations in a different way (equivalent or better) from that described in this document. The Code aims to exemplify what providers need to do in order to comply with the regulations.

# Part 1: Introduction

Good infection prevention and control are essential to ensure that people who use health and social care services receive safe and effective care. Effective prevention and control of infection must be part of everyday practice and be applied consistently by everyone.

Good management and organisational processes are crucial to make sure that high standards of infection prevention and control are set up and maintained.

As the regulator of health and adult social care in England, the Care Quality Commission (CQC) will provide assurance that the care people receive, meets essential levels of quality and safety. These are set out in regulations.<sup>2</sup> This document outlines what registered providers in England, should do to ensure compliance with the registration requirement for cleanliness and infection control and sets out the 10 compliance criteria against which registered providers will be judged.

The CQC have published guidance about compliance, including their judgement framework<sup>3</sup> and will use these documents in conjunction with this Code of Practice and related guidance when judging compliance.

## What and who is the Code of Practice for?

The main purposes of the Code of Practice on the prevention and control of infections (The Code) are to:

- make the registration requirement for cleanliness and infection control clear to all registered providers so that they understand what they need to do to comply;
- provide guidance for the CQC's staff to make judgement about compliance with the requirement for cleanliness and infection control;
- provide information for people who use the services of a registered provider;

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2 [www.legislation.gov.uk/search?title=The+Health+and+Social+Care+Act+2008+%28Regulated+Activities%29+Regulations+2010&year=&number=&type=uksi](http://www.legislation.gov.uk/search?title=The+Health+and+Social+Care+Act+2008+%28Regulated+Activities%29+Regulations+2010&year=&number=&type=uksi)

3 See *Guidance about compliance: Essential standards of quality and safety* at: [www.cqc.org.uk/\\_db/\\_documents/Essential\\_standards\\_of\\_quality\\_and\\_safety\\_March\\_2010\\_FINAL.pdf](http://www.cqc.org.uk/_db/_documents/Essential_standards_of_quality_and_safety_March_2010_FINAL.pdf) and *Guidance about compliance Judgement framework* at: [www.cqc.org.uk/\\_db/\\_documents/Judgement\\_framework\\_March\\_2010\\_FINAL.pdf](http://www.cqc.org.uk/_db/_documents/Judgement_framework_March_2010_FINAL.pdf)

- provide information for commissioners of services on what they should expect of their providers; and
- provide information for the general public.

Readers will note that only paragraphs in Part 3 of this document have been numbered, as these particular sections are likely to be specifically referenced by the CQC in ensuring compliance with the regulations.

### The terms used in this document

There are a wide range of terms relating to services, organisational structures and different ways to describe the same or similar things across health and social care. In this document we have tried to harmonise some of those terms and use descriptions that are meaningful across all sectors.

For example, we have used the term 'service user' to describe patients, donors, residents and clients. Because National Health Service (NHS) Trusts (as an entity), primary care, independent healthcare, independent sector ambulance providers, and adult social care providers are all required to register with the CQC as providers of health or adult social care, they are referred to in this document as 'registered providers'. The term 'care worker' is used to refer to any employee whose normal duties involve providing direct care to service users, for example medical staff, nurses, healthcare assistants, care assistants and volunteers. The term 'independent sector ambulance providers' includes triage, medical or clinical advice provided remotely, face-to-face treatment and transport services. Transport services are those provided by means of vehicles, which are designed for the primary purpose of carrying a person who requires treatment. The term 'vehicle' includes road, air or water ambulances.

However, there are some circumstances where using a term, which has a specific meaning in either healthcare, including primary care and, independent sector ambulance providers or adult social care has been the best way to describe what needs to be done to comply with the regulations by having regard to the Code and the related guidance.

The term 'infection' is used throughout this document, rather than the more explicit term 'healthcare associated infection', except for circumstances where the specific term is appropriate. The Code recognises that some infections that arise in the community such as influenza are responsible for much morbidity in residential units and may not be related to the delivery of healthcare. Nevertheless, they may be preventable by good practice, such as immunisation, which is dealt with in the Code and the related guidance. Appendix E provides further definitions.

## Background

This document builds on the previous Code of Practice *The Health and Social Care Act 2008 Code of Practice for health and adult social care on the prevention and control of infections and related guidance*. The previous Code of Practice applied to NHS bodies and providers of independent healthcare and adult social care in England, and was used by the CQC to judge whether those providers complied with the registration requirement for cleanliness and infection control.

Although the related guidance has been updated, the revised guidance does not introduce any new requirements.

## What is changing?

The way that health and adult social care is regulated has been changing since April 2009 because of the introduction of the Health and Social Care Act 2008 (H&SCA 2008).<sup>4</sup> This Act established the CQC and sets out the overall framework for the regulation of health and adult social care activities. Regulations made under this Act describe the health and adult social care activities, that may only be carried out by providers that are registered with the CQC, and set out the registration requirements that these providers must meet to become and stay registered. Further details on how the CQC will assess compliance with the registration requirements are available at: [www.cqc.org.uk/guidanceforprofessionals/registration/newregistrationsystem/howthenewregistrationsystemwork/complyingwithnewregulations.cfm](http://www.cqc.org.uk/guidanceforprofessionals/registration/newregistrationsystem/howthenewregistrationsystemwork/complyingwithnewregulations.cfm)

The H&SCA 2008 and regulations are law and must be complied with. The CQC has enforcement powers that it may use if registered providers do not comply with the law.

## When will this happen?

NHS bodies providing regulated activities, including prison healthcare services, have been required to comply with the full set of registration requirements since 1 April 2010 with independent healthcare and adult social care providers of regulated activities required to comply with them from 1 October 2010. Primary dental care and independent sector ambulance providers must be registered by April 2011, and primary medical care providers by April 2012.

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<sup>4</sup> The Health and Social Care Act 2008 is available at: [www.legislation.gov.uk/search?title=health+and+social+care+act&yearRadio=range&start-year=2008&end-year=2009&number=&series=&type=primary](http://www.legislation.gov.uk/search?title=health+and+social+care+act&yearRadio=range&start-year=2008&end-year=2009&number=&series=&type=primary)

The regulated activities and registration requirements are set out in the Health and Social Care Act 2008 (Regulated Activities) Regulations 2010. This is available at:

[www.legislation.gov.uk/search?title=The+Health+and+Social+Care+Act+2008+%28Regulated+Activities%29+Regulations+2010&year=&number=&type=uksi](http://www.legislation.gov.uk/search?title=The+Health+and+Social+Care+Act+2008+%28Regulated+Activities%29+Regulations+2010&year=&number=&type=uksi)

## How will the Code be used?

Section 21 of the H&SCA 2008 enables the Secretary of State for Health to issue a Code of Practice about healthcare associated infections. The Code contains statutory guidance about compliance<sup>5</sup> with the registration requirement for cleanliness and infection control (regulation 12 of the Health and Social Care Act 2008 (Regulated Activities) Regulations 2010).

The law states that the Code must be taken into account by the CQC when it makes decisions about registration against the cleanliness and infection control requirement. The regulations also say that providers must have regard to the Code when deciding how they will comply with registration requirements. So, by following the Code, registered providers will be able to show that they meet the regulation on cleanliness and infection control. However, they do not by law have to comply with the Code. A registered provider may be able to demonstrate that it meets the registration requirement regulation on cleanliness and infection control in a different way (equivalent or better) from that described in this document.

To become and stay registered, providers must meet the full range of registration requirements. The CQC has published guidance about how to comply with all the requirements other than the one on cleanliness and infection control. This guidance is in *Guidance about compliance: Essential standards of quality and safety*, which can be found at:

[www.cqc.org.uk/\\_db/\\_documents/Essential\\_standards\\_of\\_quality\\_and\\_safety\\_March\\_2010\\_FINAL.pdf](http://www.cqc.org.uk/_db/_documents/Essential_standards_of_quality_and_safety_March_2010_FINAL.pdf)

The Code does not replace the requirement to comply with any other legislation that applies to health and adult social care services, for example, the Health and Safety at Work etc. Act 1974 and the Control of Substances Hazardous to Health Regulations 2002.

## How will compliance be judged?

The CQC is responsible for judging compliance with the registration requirements set out in regulations. When doing this for the cleanliness and

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<sup>5</sup> The CQC has published guidance about compliance with the remaining registration requirements. Further details are available at [www.cqcguidanceaboutcompliance.org.uk/](http://www.cqcguidanceaboutcompliance.org.uk/)

infection control requirement, it will take account of the Code and how registered providers are doing what the Code says. It will do this in a way that is proportionate to the risk of infection.

All registered providers will need to have adequate systems for infection prevention and control, as stated in the Code (see Part 2), if they are to comply with the law, but because of the wide range of services provided by all registered providers, the Code will be applied in a proportionate way. For example, in an acute hospital setting there is a greater risk to patients of infection and therefore the registered provider will need to comply with most aspects of the compliance criteria. However, in a service provided in someone's own home or a care home where people are supported to be independent in a domestic setting, the registered provider will not need to have the same facilities and approach as an acute hospital.

### **What happens if a registered provider does not meet the requirements in the Code?**

The CQC may use its enforcement powers or take other action where it decides that a registered provider is not meeting its legal obligations as set out in the regulations. It will reach this decision by looking at whether a registered provider is doing what is set out in the Code. If a registered provider is not following the Code, then the CQC will want to consider whether that is because it is not appropriate to the type of service being provided. If it is appropriate, the CQC will want to consider whether a registered provider is still protecting people from the risk of infection in another, equally effective way.

Further information about how the CQC will assess registered providers and what action it can take if a registered provider does not comply with the regulation can be found on its website ([www.cqc.org.uk/guidanceforprofessionals/registration/newregistrationsystem/howthenewregistrationsystemwork/complyingwithnewregulations.cfm](http://www.cqc.org.uk/guidanceforprofessionals/registration/newregistrationsystem/howthenewregistrationsystemwork/complyingwithnewregulations.cfm)) or by contacting its customer services team on 03000 616161.

### **Commissioning of services**

The CQC is responsible for monitoring compliance with the requirements of the Health and Social Care Act 2008 (Regulated Activities) Regulations 2010. Commissioning organisations may wish to assure themselves that the services that they commission are meeting expected requirements and this may involve contract monitoring of the service. In doing so, commissioners must make it clear to the provider that this does not replace or duplicate the regulatory role of the CQC.

## Key components to support compliance

This document provides a range of information including appendices, tables, definitions and an extensive bibliography to support providers in complying with the regulations.

Part 2 (The Code) details the criteria against which the registered provider will be judged on how it complies with the registration requirement for cleanliness and infection control. Part 3 (Guidance for compliance) provides guidance on how to interpret the compliance criteria and develop risk assessments. Part 4 (Guidance tables) details the relevant criteria that might apply to each regulated activity, offers potential sources of professional infection prevention and control advice and, lists which policies may be required to demonstrate compliance with criterion 9.

The appendices provide examples of how a proportionate approach could be applied to the criteria in adult social care, primary dental care, independent sector ambulance providers, and primary medical care services. However, it is important to read the examples given in the appendices, alongside the guidance under each criterion in Part 3 of this document and not just selective parts.

The bibliography lists a range of supporting national guidance. Although most of these guidance documents were written for the NHS and prior to the establishment of the CQC and its registration requirements, there will be elements that are relevant to other registered providers. How they are used is a matter for local determination.

Users may find the website of the National Resource for Infection Control ([www.nric.org.uk](http://www.nric.org.uk)) a useful site for accessing these documents and other relevant material.

## Part 2: The Code of Practice

The table below is the 'Code of Practice' for all providers of healthcare and adult social care on the prevention and control of infections under The Health and Social Care Act 2008. This sets out the 10 criteria against which a registered provider will be judged on how it complies with the registration requirement for cleanliness and infection control. Not all criteria will apply to every regulated activity. Parts 3 and 4 of this document will help registered providers interpret the criteria and develop their own risk assessments.

Compliance criterion	What the registered provider will need to demonstrate
1	Systems to manage and monitor the prevention and control of infection. These systems use risk assessments and consider how susceptible service users are and any risks that their environment and other users may pose to them.
2	Provide and maintain a clean and appropriate environment in managed premises that facilitates the prevention and control of infections.
3	Provide suitable accurate information on infections to service users and their visitors.
4	Provide suitable accurate information on infections to any person concerned with providing further support or nursing/ medical care in a timely fashion.
5	Ensure that people who have or develop an infection are identified promptly and receive the appropriate treatment and care to reduce the risk of passing on the infection to other people.
6	Ensure that all staff and those employed to provide care in all settings are fully involved in the process of preventing and controlling infection.
7	Provide or secure adequate isolation facilities.
8	Secure adequate access to laboratory support as appropriate.
9	Have and adhere to policies, designed for the individual's care and provider organisations, that will help to prevent and control infections.
10	Ensure, so far as is reasonably practicable, that care workers are free of and are protected from exposure to infections that can be caught at work and that all staff are suitably educated in the prevention and control of infection associated with the provision of health and social care.

## Part 3: Guidance for compliance

In order to achieve compliance with the registration requirements relating to infection prevention and control, registered providers would normally be expected to demonstrate that they have in place the policies and procedures to meet each relevant criterion listed in Part 2 and have taken account of the following guidance for compliance. This guidance is not mandatory but is considered to represent the basic steps that are required to ensure that the criteria can be met.

There may be additional or alternative strategies that a registered provider is able to justify as equivalent, or more effective, in achieving compliance in their circumstances. Registered providers are free to decide to use alternative approaches but should be prepared to justify to the CQC how the chosen approach is equally effective or better in ensuring that the criteria are met. Providers of regulated activities need to recognise that effective management of infection prevention and control is an important service user safety issue.

The tables in Part 4 may be used as a guide to help to decide on the application of the individual compliance criteria and available infection prevention and control advice. The principle of proportionality extends throughout this guidance and, where it is decided a policy should exist, the policy's level of detail and complexity will depend on local need based on risk assessment.

### Guidance for compliance with criterion 1

Systems to manage and monitor the prevention and control of infection. These systems use risk assessments and consider how susceptible service users are and any risks that their environment and other users may pose to them.

1.1 Appropriate management and monitoring arrangements should ensure that:

- a registered provider has an agreement within the organisation that outlines its collective responsibility for keeping to a minimum the risks of infection and the general means by which it will prevent and control such risks;
- an individual is designated as the lead for infection prevention and control and be accountable directly to the registered provider;
- the mechanisms are in place by which the registered provider intends to ensure that sufficient resources are available to secure the effective prevention and control of infection. These should include the

implementation of an infection prevention and control programme, infection prevention and control infrastructure and the ability to detect and report infections;

- relevant staff, contractors and other persons, whose normal duties are directly or indirectly concerned with providing care, receive suitable and sufficient information on, and training and supervision in, the measures required to prevent and control the risks of infection;
- a programme of audit is in place to ensure that key policies and practices are being implemented appropriately;
- a policy on information sharing when referring, admitting, transferring, discharging and moving service users within and between health and adult social care facilities is available; and
- a decontamination lead is designated, where appropriate.

*(Refer also to Outcome 6, Regulation 24 Cooperating with other providers contained in CQC Guidance about compliance)*

## Risk assessment

1.2 A registered provider should ensure that it has:

- made a suitable and sufficient assessment of the risks to the person receiving care with respect to prevention and control of infection;
- identified the steps that need to be taken to reduce or control those risks;
- recorded its findings in relation to the first two points;
- implemented the steps identified; and
- put appropriate methods in place to monitor the risks of infection to determine whether further steps are needed to reduce or control infection.

## Directors of Infection Prevention and Control (in NHS provider organisations)

1.3 The role of the DIPC<sup>6</sup> in NHS provider organisations is to:

- be accountable directly to the chief executive and to the board (but not necessarily a member of the board);
- be responsible for the organisation's infection prevention and control team (IPT) or infection control team (ICT)<sup>7</sup>;

<sup>6</sup> This role was first described in *Winning ways: working together to reduce healthcare associated infection in England* and has been described in previous editions of the Code.

<sup>7</sup> Hereafter both IPT and ICT are referred to as ICT in this document.

- oversee local prevention and control of infection policies and their implementation;
- be a full member of the ICT and regularly attend its infection prevention and control meetings;
- report directly to the NHS board and, in non-NHS care settings, the registered provider;
- have the authority to challenge inappropriate practice and inappropriate antibiotic prescribing decisions;
- assess the impact of all existing and new policies on infections and make recommendations for change;
- be an integral member of the organisation's clinical governance and patient safety teams and structures; and
- produce an annual report and release it publicly as outlined in *Winning ways: working together to reduce healthcare associated infection in England*. Suggestions as to what could be included in the report are provided in the template at:  
[www.dh.gov.uk/en/Publicationsandstatistics/Lettersandcirculars/Dearcolleagueletters/DH\\_4083982](http://www.dh.gov.uk/en/Publicationsandstatistics/Lettersandcirculars/Dearcolleagueletters/DH_4083982)

### **Infection Prevention and Control Lead (for example adult social care, primary dental and medical care and independent sector ambulance providers)**

1.4 The role of the Infection Prevention and Control (IPC) Lead in adult social care, primary dental care, primary medical care and independent sector ambulance providers will depend on the organisational structures and on the level and complexity of the care provided. (This is a description of how the role of the DIPC in healthcare might be applied in these settings.) Their role is to:

- be responsible for the organisation's infection prevention and control management and structure;
- oversee local prevention and control of infection policies and their implementation;
- report directly to the registered provider;
- have the authority to challenge inappropriate practice;
- assess the impact of all existing and new policies on infections and make recommendations for change;
- be an integral member of the organisation's governance and service user safety teams and structures where they exist; and

- produce an annual statement with regard to compliance with good practice on infection prevention and control and make it available on request.

### Assurance framework

1.5 Activities to demonstrate that infection prevention and control are an integral part of quality assurance should include:

#### *In NHS provider organisations*

- regular presentations from the DIPC and/or the ICT to the NHS board or registered provider. These should include a trend analysis for infections and compliance with audit programmes;
- quarterly reporting to the NHS board or registered provider by clinical directors and matrons (including nurses who do not hold the specific title of 'matron' but who operate at a similar level of seniority and who have control over similar aspects of the patient or the patient's environment). What is reported on will vary according to the local arrangements. For example it may include:
  - monthly cleanliness scores (unless this is done via the estates and facilities team);
  - monthly Patient Environment Action Team scores (where this is agreed practice); and
  - contract performance measures where provision is outsourced, which will include cleanliness measures and issues of non-compliance and subsequent rectification performance;
- a review of statistics on incidence of alert organisms (for example, but not limited to, meticillin-resistant *Staphylococcus aureus* (MRSA) and *Clostridium difficile*) and conditions, outbreaks and serious untoward incidents;
- evidence of appropriate action taken to deal with occurrences of infection including, where applicable, root cause analysis; and
- an audit programme to ensure that policies have been implemented;

#### *In adult social care, primary dental care and primary medical care etc.*

- evidence of appropriate action taken to deal with occurrences of infection;
- an audit programme to ensure that appropriate policies have been developed and implemented; and
- evidence that the annual statement from the IPC Lead has been reviewed and, where indicated, acted upon.

- 1.6 In accordance with health and safety requirements, where suitable and sufficient assessment of risks requires action to be taken, evidence must be available on compliance with the regulations or, where appropriate, justification of a suitable better alternative. This applies to all healthcare and adult social care.

### **Infection prevention and control programme**

- 1.7 The infection prevention and control programme should:

- set objectives that meet the needs of the organisation and ensure the safety of service users;
- identify priorities for action;
- provide evidence that relevant policies have been implemented to reduce infections; and
- if appropriate, report progress against the objectives of the programme in the DIPC's annual report or the IPC Lead's annual statement.

### **Infection prevention and control infrastructure**

- 1.8 An infection prevention and control infrastructure should encompass:

- in acute healthcare settings, for example, an ICT consisting of an appropriate mix of both nursing and consultant medical expertise (with specialist training in infection prevention and control) and appropriate administrative and analytical support, including adequate information technology – the DIPC is a key member of the ICT;
- in other settings, there will be an infection control nurse (ICN) or another designated person who is responsible for infection prevention and control matters and has access to specialist expertise as necessary; and
- 24-hour access to a nominated qualified infection control doctor (ICD) or consultant in health protection/communicable disease control. The registered provider should know how to access this advice.

### **Movement of service users**

- 1.9 There should be evidence of joint working between staff involved in the provision of advice relating to the prevention and control of infection; those managing bed allocation; care staff and domestic staff in planning service user referrals, admissions, transfers, discharges and movements between departments; and within and between health and adult social care facilities. Where necessary, ambulance providers, hospitals and primary care trusts (PCTs) may need to be involved in such planning.

1.10 A registered provider must ensure that it provides suitable and sufficient information on a service user's infection status whenever it arranges for that person to be moved from the care of one organisation to another, or from a service user's home, so that any risks to the service user and others from infection may be minimised. If appropriate, providers of a service user's transport should be informed of any infection.

*(Refer also to Outcome 6, Regulation 24 Cooperating with other providers contained in CQC Guidance about compliance)*

## Guidance for compliance with criterion 2

Provide and maintain a clean and appropriate environment in managed premises that facilitates the prevention and control of infections.

*(Refer also to Outcome 10, Regulation 15 Safety and suitability of premises contained in CQC Guidance about compliance)*

2.1 With a view to minimising the risk of infection, a registered provider should normally ensure that:

- it designates leads for environmental cleaning and decontamination of equipment used for diagnosis and treatment (a single individual may be designated for both areas);
- in healthcare, the designated lead for cleaning involves directors of nursing, matrons and the ICT or persons of similar standing in all aspects of cleaning services, from contract negotiation and service planning to delivery at ward and clinical level. In other settings, the designated lead for cleaning will need to access appropriate advice on all aspects of cleaning services;
- in healthcare, matrons or persons of a similar standing have personal responsibility and accountability for delivering a safe and clean care environment;
- the nurse or other person in charge of any patient or resident area has direct responsibility for ensuring that cleanliness standards are maintained throughout that shift;
- all parts of the premises from which it provides care are suitable for the purpose, kept clean and maintained in good physical repair and condition;
- the cleaning arrangements detail the standards of cleanliness required in each part of its premises and that a schedule of cleaning frequency is available on request;

- there is adequate provision of suitable hand washing facilities and antimicrobial hand rubs where appropriate;
- there are effective arrangements for the appropriate cleaning of equipment that is used at the point of care, for example hoists, beds and commodes – these should be incorporated within appropriate cleaning, disinfection and decontamination policies; and
- the supply and provision of linen and laundry are appropriate for the level and type of care.

2.2 'The environment' means the totality of a service user's surroundings when in care premises or transported in a vehicle. This includes the fabric of the building, related fixtures and fittings, and services such as air and water supplies. Where care is delivered in the service user's home, the suitability of the environment for that level of care should be considered.

### Policies on the environment

2.3 Premises and facilities should be provided in accordance with best practice guidance. The development of local policies should take account of infection prevention and control advice given by relevant expert or advisory bodies or by the ICT, and this should include provision for liaison between the members of any ICT and the persons with overall responsibility for the management of the service user's environment. Policies should address but not be restricted to:

- cleaning services;
- building and refurbishment, including air-handling systems;
- waste management;
- laundry arrangements for used and infected linen;
- planned preventative maintenance;
- pest control;
- management of drinkable and non-drinkable water supplies;
- minimising the risk of Legionella by adhering to national guidance; and
- food services, including food hygiene and food brought into the care setting by service users, staff and visitors.

*(Refer also to Outcome 10, Regulation 15 Safety and suitability of premises contained in CQC Guidance about compliance)*

## Cleaning services

2.4 The arrangements for cleaning should include:

- clear definition of specific roles and responsibilities for cleaning;
- clear, agreed and available cleaning routines;
- sufficient resources dedicated to keeping the environment clean and fit for purpose;
- consultation with ICTs or equivalent local expertise on cleaning protocols when internal or external contracts are being prepared; and
- details of how staff can request additional cleaning, both urgently and routinely.

## Decontamination

2.5 The decontamination lead should have responsibility for ensuring that policies exist and that they take account of best practice and national guidance. They may wish to consider guidance under the following headings:

- Decontamination of the environment – including cleaning and disinfection of the fabric, fixtures and fittings of a building (walls, floors, ceilings and bathroom facilities) or vehicle.
- Decontamination of equipment – including cleaning and disinfection of items that come into contact with the patient or service user, but are not invasive devices (eg beds, commodes, mattresses, hoists and slings, examination couches).
- Decontamination of reusable medical devices – including cleaning, disinfection and sterilisation of invasive medical devices.
- Reusable medical devices should be reprocessed at one of the following three levels:
  - sterile (at point of use);
  - sterilised (i.e. having been through the sterilisation process);
  - clean (i.e. free of visible contamination).

2.6 The decontamination policy should demonstrate that:

- it complies with guidance establishing essential quality requirements and a plan is in place for progression to best practice;
- decontamination of reusable medical devices takes place in appropriate facilities designed to minimise the risks that are present;

- appropriate procedures are followed for the acquisition, maintenance and validation of decontamination equipment;
- staff are trained in cleaning and decontamination processes and hold appropriate competences for their role; and
- a record-keeping regime is in place to ensure that decontamination processes are fit for purpose and use the required quality systems.

*(Refer also to Outcome 11, Regulation 16 Safety, availability and suitability of equipment contained in CQC Guidance about compliance)*

### Guidance for compliance with criterion 3

Provide suitable accurate information on infections to service users and their visitors.

#### 3.1 Areas relevant to the provision of such information include:

- general principles on the prevention and control of infection and key aspects of the registered provider's policy on infection prevention and control, which takes into account the communication needs of the service user;
- the roles and responsibilities of particular individuals such as carers, relatives and advocates in the prevention and control of infection, to support them when visiting service users;
- supporting service users' awareness and involvement in the safe provision of care;
- the importance of compliance by visitors with hand hygiene;
- the importance of compliance with the registered provider's policy on visiting;
- reporting failures of hygiene and cleanliness;
- explanations of incident/outbreak management.

#### 3.2 Information should be developed with local service user representative organisations, which could include Local Involvement Networks (LINKs) and Patient Advice and Liaison Services (PALS).

*(Refer also to Outcome 1, Regulation 17 Respecting and involving service users contained in CQC Guidance about compliance)*

## Guidance for compliance with criterion 4

Provide suitable accurate information on infections to any person concerned with providing further support or nursing/medical care in a timely fashion.

4.1 A registered provider should ensure that:

- accurate information is communicated in an appropriate manner;
- this information facilitates the provision of optimum care, minimising the risk of inappropriate management and further transmission of infection; and
- where possible, information accompanies the service user.

4.2 Provision of relevant information across organisational boundaries is covered by the regulation requirement 'Co-operating with other providers'. Due attention should be paid to service user confidentiality as outlined in national guidance and training material.<sup>8</sup>

*(Refer also to Outcome 6, Regulation 24 Cooperating with other providers contained in CQC Guidance about compliance)*

## Guidance for compliance with criterion 5

Ensure that people who have or develop an infection are identified promptly and receive the appropriate treatment and care to reduce the risk of passing on the infection to other people.

5.1 Registered providers, excluding personal care providers, should ensure that advice is received from suitably informed practitioners and that, if advised, registered providers should inform their local health protection unit of any outbreaks or serious incidents relating to infection.

5.2 Arrangements to prevent and control infection should demonstrate that responsibility for infection prevention and control is effectively devolved to all groups in the organisation involved in delivering care.

<sup>8</sup> Further advice on the principles for appropriate information-sharing can be found in *Confidentiality: NHS Code of Practice; The Care Record Guarantee; and The Social Care Record Guarantee*. Training materials on information governance can be found in *NHS Information Governance Training Tool*.

## Guidance for compliance with criterion 6

Ensure that all staff and those employed to provide care in all settings are fully involved in the process of preventing and controlling infection.

- 6.1 A registered provider should, so far as is reasonably practicable, ensure that its staff, contractors and others involved in the provision of care co-operate with it, and with each other, so far as is necessary to enable the registered provider to meet its obligations under the Code.
- 6.2 Infection prevention and control would need to be included in the job descriptions and be included in the induction programme and staff updates of all employees (including volunteers). Contractors working in service user areas would need to be aware of any issues with regard to infection prevention and control and obtain 'permission to work'. Confidentiality must be maintained.
- 6.3 Where staff undertake procedures, which require skills such as aseptic technique, staff must be trained and demonstrate proficiency before being allowed to undertake these procedures independently.

## Guidance for compliance with criterion 7

Provide or secure adequate isolation facilities.

- 7.1 A healthcare registered provider delivering in-patient care should ensure that it is able to provide, or secure the provision of, adequate isolation precautions and facilities, as appropriate, sufficient to prevent or minimise the spread of infection. This may include facilities in a day care setting.
- 7.2 Policies should be in place for the allocation of patients to isolation facilities, based on a local risk assessment. The assessment could include consideration of the need for special ventilated isolation facilities. Sufficient staff should be available to care for the service users safely.
- 7.3 Registered providers of accommodation should ensure that they are able to provide or secure facilities to physically separate the service user from other residents in an appropriate manner in order to minimise the spread of infection.
- 7.4 Care homes are not expected to have dedicated isolation facilities for service users but are expected to implement isolation precautions when a service user is suspected or known to have a transmissible infection.

## Guidance for compliance with criterion 8

Secure adequate access to laboratory support as appropriate.

- 8.1 A registered provider should ensure that laboratories that are used to provide a microbiology service in connection with arrangements for infection prevention and control have in place appropriate protocols and that they operate according to the standards required by the relevant national accreditation bodies. In adult social care, the service user's General Practitioner will arrange such testing when necessary for the treatment and management of disease.
- 8.2 Protocols should include:
- a microbiology laboratory policy for investigation and surveillance of healthcare associated infections; and
  - standard laboratory operating procedures for the examination of specimens.

## Guidance for compliance with criterion 9

Have and adhere to policies, designed for the individual's care and provider organisations, that will help to prevent and control infections.

- 9.1 A registered provider should, in relation to preventing, reducing and controlling the risks of infections, have in place the appropriate policies concerning the matters mentioned in a to y below. All policies should be clearly marked with a review date.
- 9.2 A guide is given in Table 3 as to which policies may be appropriate to the regulated activities. A decision should be made locally following a risk assessment.
- 9.3 Any registered provider should have policies in place relevant to the regulated activity it provides. Each policy should indicate ownership (i.e. who commissioned and retains managerial responsibility), authorship and by whom the policy will be applied. Implementation of policies should be monitored and there should be evidence of a rolling programme of audit and a date for revision stated.
- a. *Standard infection prevention and control precautions*
- Policy should be based on evidence-based guidelines, including those on hand hygiene at the point of care and the use of personal protective equipment.

- Policy should be easily accessible and be understood by all groups of staff, service users and the public.
- Compliance with the policy should be audited.

*b. Aseptic technique*

Where aseptic procedures are performed:

- clinical procedures should be carried out in a manner that maintains and promotes the principles of asepsis;
- education, training and assessment in the aseptic technique should be provided to all persons undertaking such procedures;
- the technique should be standardised across the organisation; and
- an audit should be undertaken to monitor compliance with the technique.

*c. Outbreaks of communicable infection*

- The degree of detail in the policy should reflect local circumstances. A low risk, single-specialty facility or provider of primary care will not require the same arrangements as those providing the full range of medical and surgical care.
- Professional advice on infection prevention and control for regulated activities may be drawn from a number of expert sources. Table 2 outlines the most likely arrangements for the different regulated activities.
- Policies for outbreaks of communicable infection should include initial assessment, communication, management and organisation, plus investigation and control.
- The contact details of those likely to be involved in outbreak management should be reviewed at least annually.
- All registered providers should report significant outbreaks of infection to their local health protection unit, including outbreaks in service users who are detained under the Mental Health Act 1983, if advised to do so by suitably informed practitioners.

*d. Isolation of service users with an infection (see also criterion 7)*

- The isolation policy should be evidence based and reflect local risk assessment<sup>9</sup>.

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9 Health and Safety Executive (2006) *Five steps to risk assessment*. INDG163(rev2). London: HSE.

- Indications for isolation should be included in the policy, as should procedures for the infection prevention and control management of service users in isolation.
- Information on isolation should be easily accessible and understood by all groups of staff, service users and the public.

e. *Safe handling and disposal of sharps*

Relevant considerations include:

- risk management and training in the management of mucous membrane exposure and sharps injuries and incidents;
- provision of medical devices that incorporate sharps protection mechanisms where there are clear indications that they will provide safe systems of working for staff;
- a policy that is easily accessible and understood by all groups of staff;
- safe use, secure storage and disposal of sharps; and
- auditing of policy compliance.

f. *Prevention of occupational exposure to blood-borne viruses (BBVs), including prevention of sharps injuries*

Measures to avoid exposure to BBVs (hepatitis B and C and HIV) should include:

- immunisation against hepatitis B, as set out in *Immunisation against infectious disease*, better known as 'The Green Book' (published by the Department of Health);
- the wearing of gloves and other protective clothing;
- the safe handling and disposal of sharps, including the provision of medical devices that incorporate sharps protection where there are clear indications that they will provide safe systems of working for staff; and
- measures to reduce risks during surgical procedures.

g. *Management of occupational exposure to BBVs and post-exposure prophylaxis*

Management should ensure:

- that any member of staff who has a significant occupational exposure to blood or body fluids is aware of the immediate action required and is referred appropriately for further management and follow-up;

- provision of clear information for staff about reporting potential occupational exposure – in particular the need for prompt action following a known or potential exposure to HIV or hepatitis B; and
- arrangements for post-exposure prophylaxis for hepatitis B and HIV.

*(Refer also to Outcome 12, Regulation 21 Requirements relating to workers contained in CQC Guidance about compliance)*

*h. Closure of rooms, wards, departments and premises to new admissions*

- A system should be in place for the provision of advice from the local health protection unit/DIPC/ICT for the registered provider.
- There should be clear criteria in relation to closures and re-opening.
- The policy should address the need for environmental decontamination prior to re-opening.

*i. Disinfection*

The use of disinfectants is a local decision, and should be based on current accepted good practice.

*j. Decontamination of reusable medical devices*

Decontamination involves a combination of processes and includes cleaning, disinfection and sterilisation, according to the intended use of the device. This aims to render a reusable item safe for further use on service users and for handling by staff.

- Effective decontamination of reusable medical devices is an essential part of infection risk control and is of special importance when the device comes into contact with service users or their body fluids. There should be a system to protect service users and staff that minimises the risk of transmission of infection from medical devices. This requires that the device or instrument set can be clearly linked in a traceable fashion to the individual process cycle that was used to decontaminate it, such that the success of that cycle in rendering the device safe for reuse can be verified.
- Reusable medical devices should be decontaminated in accordance with manufacturers' instructions and current national or local best practice guidance. This must ensure that the device complies with the 'Essential Requirements' provided in the Medical Devices Regulations 2002. This requires that the device should be clean and, where appropriate, sterilised at the end of the decontamination process and maintained in a clinically satisfactory condition up to the point of use.

- Management systems should ensure adequate supplies of reusable medical devices, particularly where specific devices are essential to the continuity of care.
- Reusable medical devices employed in invasive procedures, for example, endoscopes and surgical instruments have to be either individually identifiable or identified to a set of which they are a consistent member, throughout the use and decontamination cycle in order to ensure subsequent traceability.
- Systems should also be implemented to enable the identification of service users on whom the medical devices have been used.
- Decontamination of single-patient use devices, i.e. that equipment designated for use only by one patient, should be subject to local policy and manufacturers instructions.

*(Refer also to Outcome 11, Regulation 16 Safety, availability and suitability of equipment contained in CQC Guidance about compliance)*

*k. Single-use medical devices*

Policies should be in place for handling devices designed for single use only. Single-use medical devices should be used once and disposed of safely.

*l. Antimicrobial prescribing*

- Prescribing should generally be harmonised with that in the *British National Formulary*. However, local guidelines may be required in certain circumstances.
- All local guidelines should include information on a particular drug's regimen and duration.
- Procedures should be in place to ensure prudent prescribing and antimicrobial stewardship. There should be an ongoing programme of audit, revision and update. In healthcare this is usually monitored by the antimicrobial management team or local prescribing advisors.

*m. Reporting of infections to the Health Protection Agency or local authority*

*Mandatory reporting of healthcare associated infections to the Health Protection Agency*

- This includes a requirement for NHS Trust Chief Executives to report all cases of MRSA bacteraemia and all cases of *Clostridium difficile* infection in patients aged two years or older that are identified in their institution. The independent sector hospitals are also expected to report cases in a similar manner. The requirements of this system will vary from time to time as directed by the Department of Health.

### *Health Protection (Notification) Regulations 2010*

- These require attending doctors (registered medical practitioners) to notify the Proper Officer of the local authority of cases of specified infectious disease or of other infectious disease or contamination, which present, or could present, significant harm to human health, to allow prompt investigation and response. The regulations also require diagnostic laboratories testing human samples to notify the Health Protection Agency of the identification of specified causative agents of infectious disease.
- n. *Control of outbreaks and infections associated with specific alert organisms*  
This should take account of local epidemiology and risk assessment. These infections must include, as a minimum, MRSA, respiratory infection, diarrhoeal outbreaks, *Clostridium difficile* infection and transmissible spongiform encephalopathies.

#### *MRSA*

The policy should make provision for:

- screening of NHS patients on emergency or relevant elective admission to a unit that provides surgical, diagnostic or other medical care. The arrangements for undertaking screening will be subject to local agreement;
- suppression regimens for colonised patients when appropriate;
- isolation of infected or colonised patients;
- transfer of infected or colonised patients within organisations or to other care facilities;
- antibiotic prophylaxis for surgery; and
- undertaking a root cause analysis on patients with a MRSA bacteraemia.

#### *Clostridium difficile*

The policy should make provision for:

- surveillance of *Clostridium difficile* infection;
- diagnostic criteria;
- isolation of infected service users and cohort nursing;
- environmental decontamination;
- antibiotic prescribing policies; and
- contraindication of anti-motility agents.

*Glycopeptide resistant enterococci (GRE)*

The policy should make provision for:

- identification of high-risk groups;
- isolation and prevention of cross-infection; and
- prophylaxis for surgical and invasive procedures.

*Acinetobacter, extended-spectrum beta lactamase (ESBLs) and other antibiotic-resistant bacteria*

The policy should make provision for:

- surveillance of identified patients at risk and of high-risk environments; and
- procedures for managing infected patients to prevent spread of infection.

*Viral haemorrhagic fevers (VHF)*

The policy should make provision for:

- appropriate staff to be aware of the special measures to be taken for nursing VHF patients, and to be properly trained in the application of full isolation procedures;
- patient risk assessment and categorisation;
- confirmed cases to be handled under full isolation measures in a high-security infectious diseases unit or equivalent;
- handling of patient specimens at the appropriate containment level;
- follow-up of all staff in contact with the patient at every stage of care; and
- special measures for the handling of all waste and laundry.

*Creutzfeldt-Jakob disease (CJD), variant CJD (vCJD) and other human prion diseases*

The policy should make provision for the management of patients with, or at increased risk of, CJD/vCJD and other human prion diseases.

*Relevant policies for other specific alert organisms*

The specific alert organisms that follow may be relevant to any unit admitting, or treating as out-patients.

*Control of tuberculosis, including multidrug-resistant tuberculosis:*

- isolation of infectious patients;
- transfer of infectious patients within care organisations or to other care facilities;

- contact tracing; and
- treatment compliance.

*Respiratory viruses:*

- alert system for suspected cases;
- isolation criteria; and
- infection prevention and control measures.

*Diarrhoeal infections:*

- isolation criteria;
- infection prevention and control measures; and
- cleaning and disinfection policy.

*o. CJD/vCJD – handling of instruments and devices*

Advice on the handling of instruments and devices in procedures on patients with known or suspected CJD/vCJD, or at increased risk of CJD/vCJD, including disposal/quarantine procedures, is provided in guidance from the Advisory Committee on Dangerous Pathogens (ACDP) TSE Working Group.

*(Refer also to Outcome 11, Regulation 16 Safety, availability and suitability of equipment contained in CQC Guidance about compliance)*

*p. Safe handling and disposal of waste*

The risks from waste disposal should be properly controlled. In practice, in relation to waste, this involves:

- assessing risk;
- developing appropriate policies;
- putting arrangements in place to manage risks;
- monitoring, auditing and reviewing the way in which arrangements work; and
- being aware of statutory requirements and; legislative change and managing compliance.

Precautions in connection with handling waste should include:

- training and information (including definition and classification of waste);
- personal hygiene;
- segregation and storage of waste;
- the use of appropriate personal protective equipment;
- immunisation;
- appropriate procedures for handling such waste;
- appropriate packaging and labelling;
- suitable transport on-site and off-site;
- clear procedures for dealing with accidents, incidents and spillages; and
- appropriate treatment and disposal of such waste.

Systems should be in place to ensure that the risks to service users from exposure to infections caused by waste present in the environment are properly managed, and that duties under environmental law are discharged. The most important of these are:

- duty of care in the management of waste;
- duty to control polluting emissions to the air;
- duty to control discharges to sewers;
- obligations of waste managers;
- collection of data and obligations to complete and retain documentation including record keeping; and
- requirement to provide contingency plans and have emergency procedures in place.

*(Refer also to Outcome 10, Regulation 15 Safety and suitability of premises contained in CQC Guidance about compliance)*

**q. *Packaging, handling and delivery of laboratory specimens***

Biological samples, cultures and other materials should be transported in a manner that ensures that they do not leak in transit and are compliant with current legislation. Staff who handle samples must be aware of the need to correctly identify, label and store samples prior to forwarding to laboratories. In addition, they must be aware of the procedures needed when the container or packaging becomes soiled with body fluids.

*r. Care of deceased persons*

Appropriate procedures should include:

- risk assessment of potential hazards;
- the provision of appropriate facilities and accommodation;
- safe working practices;
- arrangements for visitors;
- information, instruction, training and supervision; and
- health surveillance and immunisation (where appropriate).

*s. Use and care of invasive devices*

Policy should be based on evidence-based guidelines and should be easily accessible by all relevant care workers. Compliance with policy should be audited. Information on policy should be included in infection prevention and control training programmes for all relevant staff groups.

*(Refer also to Outcome 11, Regulation 16 Safety, availability and suitability of equipment contained in CQC Guidance about compliance)*

*t. Purchase, cleaning, decontamination, maintenance and disposal of equipment*

Policies for the purchase, cleaning, decontamination, maintenance and disposal of all equipment should take into account infection prevention and control advice that is given by relevant experts or advisory bodies or by the ICT.

*u. Surveillance and data collection*

For all appropriate healthcare settings, there should be evidence of local surveillance and use of comparative data, where available, in order to monitor infection rates and to assess the risks of infection. This evidence should include data on alert organisms, and other infections where appropriate, alert conditions and wound infection per clinical unit or specialty. When appropriate or where they exist, recognised definitions should be used.

Electronic reporting to the Health Protection Agency of clinical laboratory isolates is recommended where the appropriate information technology is in place.

There should also be timely feedback to clinical units, with a record of achievements and actions taken as a result of surveillance. Post-discharge surveillance of surgical site infection should be considered and, where practicable, should be implemented.

v. *Dissemination of information*

There should be a local protocol for the dissemination of information about infections between care organisations concerning an individual service user. This is to facilitate surveillance and optimal management of infections in the wider community. Guidance on data protection legislation also needs to be observed.

(Refer also to Outcome 6, Regulation 24 Cooperating with other providers contained in CQC Guidance about compliance)

w. *Isolation facilities*

There should be a policy concerning the appropriate provision of isolation facilities. This should address:

- potential sources of infection;
- the use of protective measures and equipment; and
- the management of outbreaks.

x. *Uniform and dress code*

Uniform and workwear policies ensure that clothing worn by staff when carrying out their duties is clean and fit for purpose. Particular consideration should be given to items of attire that may inadvertently come into contact with the person being cared for. Uniform and dress code policies should specifically support good hand hygiene.

y. *Immunisation of service users*

Registered providers should ensure that policies and procedures are in place with regard to the immunisation status of service users such that:

- there is a record of all immunisations given;
- the immunisation status and eligibility for immunisation of service users are regularly reviewed in line with *Immunisation against infectious disease* ('The Green Book') and other Department of Health guidance; and
- following a review of the record of immunisations, all service users are offered further immunisation as needed, according to the national schedule.

## Guidance for compliance with criterion 10

Ensure, so far as is reasonably practicable, that care workers are free of and are protected from exposure to infections that can be caught at work and that all staff are suitably educated in the prevention and control of infection associated with the provision of health and social care.

10.1 Registered providers should ensure that policies and procedures are in place in relation to the prevention and control of infection such that:

- all staff can access occupational health services or access appropriate occupational health advice;
- occupational health policies on the prevention and management of communicable infections in care workers are in place;
- decisions on offering immunisation should be made on the basis of a local risk assessment as described in *Immunisation against infectious disease* ('The Green Book'). Employers should make vaccines available free of charge to employees if a risk assessment indicates that it is needed (COSHH Regulations 2002);
- there is a record of relevant immunisations;
- the principles and practice of prevention and control of infection are included in induction and training programmes for new staff. The principles include: ensuring that policies are up to date; feedback from audit results; examples of good practice; and action needed to correct poor practice;
- there is appropriate ongoing education for existing staff (including support staff, volunteers, agency/locum staff and staff employed by contractors), which should incorporate the principles and practice of prevention and control of infection.
- there is a record of training and updates for all staff; and
- the responsibilities of each member of staff for the prevention and control of infection are reflected in their job description and in any personal development plan or appraisal.

### *Occupational health services*

10.2 Occupational health services for staff should include:

- risk-based screening for communicable diseases and assessment of immunity to infection after a conditional offer of employment and ongoing health surveillance;

- offer of relevant immunisations; and
- having arrangements in place for regularly reviewing the immunisation status of care workers and providing vaccinations to staff as necessary in line with *Immunisation against infectious disease* ('The Green Book') and other Department of Health guidance.

### 10.3 Occupational health services in respect of BBVs should include:

- having arrangements for identifying and managing healthcare staff infected with hepatitis B or C or HIV and advising about fitness for work and monitoring as necessary, in line with Department of Health guidance;
- liaising with the *UK Advisory Panel for Healthcare Workers Infected with Blood-borne Viruses* when advice is needed on procedures that may be carried out by BBV-infected care workers, or when advice on patient tracing, notification and offer of BBV testing may be needed;
- a risk assessment and appropriate referral after accidental occupational exposure to blood and body fluids; and
- management of occupational exposure to infection, which may include provision for emergency and out-of-hours treatment, possibly in conjunction with accident and emergency services and on-call infection prevention and control specialists. This should include a specific risk assessment following an exposure prone procedure.

*(Refer also to Outcome 12, Regulation 21 Requirements relating to workers contained in CQC Guidance about compliance)*

## Part 4: Guidance tables

These tables are designed to help registered providers, the DIPC (NHS provider organisations) and IPC Leads (adult social care, primary dental care and primary medical care, and independent sector ambulance providers) decide how the Code and related guidance applies to the registered activities and type of service they provide. Further guidance on the activities that are covered by registration are available at [www.cqc.org.uk](http://www.cqc.org.uk)

Because of the wide range of services provided in healthcare and adult social care, registered providers should carry out their own risk assessments to help them decide the elements to be included in their policies or whether or not a policy is required at all. They will need to be able to justify their decisions.

Table 1	The application of the Code of Practice to regulated activities
Table 2	A guide to potential sources of professional infection prevention and control advice
Table 3	Policies appropriate to regulated activities

**Table 1 – The application of the Code of Practice to regulated activities**

This table provides a guide as to which criteria may apply to each regulated activity. This is a matter for local determination.

		Regulated activities														
		Personal care	Accommodation for persons who require nursing or personal care	Accommodation for persons who require treatment for substance misuse	Accommodation and nursing or personal care in the further education sector	Treatment of disease, disorder or injury	Assessment or medical treatment for persons detained under the Mental Health Act 1983	Surgical procedures	Diagnostic and screening procedures	Management of supply of blood and blood derived products etc	Transport services, triage and medical advice provided remotely Ω	Maternity and midwifery services	Termination of pregnancies	Services in slimming clinics	Nursing care	Family planning services
Compliance criterion	1	Systems to manage and monitor the prevention and control of infection. These systems use risk assessments and consider how susceptible service users are and any risks that their environment and other users may pose to them	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
	2	Provide and maintain a clean and appropriate environment in managed premises that facilitates the prevention and control of infections		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓
	3	Provide suitable accurate information on infections to service users and their visitors	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓
	4	Provide suitable accurate information on infections to any person concerned with providing further support or nursing/medical care in a timely fashion	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓

§ See Table 3   Ω Applies to transport and triage services delivered at site   # Does not apply to primary dental care   ♣ Does not apply to primary dental/medical care

**Table 1 – The application of the Code of Practice to regulated activities continued**

This table provides a guide as to which criteria may apply to each regulated activity. This is a matter for local determination.

		Regulated activities														
		Personal care	Accommodation for persons who require nursing or personal care	Accommodation for persons who require treatment for substance misuse	Accommodation and nursing or personal care in the further education sector	Treatment of disease, disorder or injury	Assessment or medical treatment for persons detained under the Mental Health Act 1983	Surgical procedures	Diagnostic and screening procedures	Management of supply of blood and blood derived products etc	Transport services, triage and medical advice provided remotely Ω	Maternity and midwifery services	Termination of pregnancies	Services in slimming clinics	Nursing care	Family planning services
Compliance criterion	5	Ensure that people who have or develop an infection are identified promptly and receive the appropriate treatment and care to reduce the risk of passing on the infection to other people		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
	6	Ensure that all staff and those employed to provide care in all settings are fully involved in the process of preventing and controlling infection	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
	7	Provide or secure adequate isolation facilities ♣		✓	✓		✓	✓	✓			✓				
	8	Secure adequate access to laboratory support as appropriate #			✓		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓
	9	Have and adhere to policies, designed for the individual's care and provider organisations, that will help to prevent and control infections	§	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓

§ See Table 3 Ω Applies to transport and triage services delivered at site # Does not apply to primary dental care ♣ Does not apply to primary dental/medical care

Table 1 – The application of the Code of Practice to regulated activities continued

This table provides a guide as to which criteria may apply to each regulated activity. This is a matter for local determination.

		Regulated activities														
		Personal care	Accommodation for persons who require nursing or personal care	Accommodation for persons who require treatment for substance misuse	Accommodation and nursing or personal care in the further education sector	Treatment of disease, disorder or injury	Assessment or medical treatment for persons detained under the Mental Health Act 1983	Surgical procedures	Diagnostic and screening procedures	Management of supply of blood and blood derived products etc	Transport services, triage and medical advice provided remotely Ω	Maternity and midwifery services	Termination of pregnancies	Services in slimming clinics	Nursing care	Family planning services
10	Ensure, so far as is reasonably practicable, that care workers are free of and are protected from exposure to infections that can be caught at work and that all staff are suitably educated in the prevention and control of infection associated with the provision of health and social care	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓

§ See Table 3   Ω Applies to transport and triage services delivered at site   # Does not apply to primary dental care   ♣ Does not apply to primary dental/medical care

Table 2 – A guide to potential sources of professional infection prevention and control advice<sup>10</sup>

		Regulated activities														
		Personal care	Accommodation for persons who require nursing or personal care	Accommodation for persons who require treatment for substance misuse	Accommodation and nursing or personal care in the further education sector	Treatment of disease, disorder or injury	Assessment or medical treatment for persons detained under the Mental Health Act 1983	Surgical procedures	Diagnostic and screening procedures	Management of supply of blood and blood derived products etc	Transport services, triage and medical advice provided remotely	Maternity and midwifery services	Termination of pregnancies	Services in slimming clinics	Nursing care	Family planning services
Professional group	Director of Infection Prevention and Control or Infection Prevention and Control Lead		✓			✓	✓	✓			●	✓	✓			✓
	Infection control nurse/ infection control practitioner					✓	✓	✓			●	✓				
	Consultant microbiologist					✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓				
	Designated site lead for infection (may not always be a healthcare worker)	≠	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓
	Access to consultant in communicable disease control/ local Health Protection Unit		✓	✓	✓	✓ ⊙	✓	✓ ⊙	✓ ⊙	✓	●		✓			✓
	Fully constituted infection control team and infection control committee ♣					✓	✓	✓			●	✓				
	Primary care trust infection control support	✓	✓	✓		⊙		⊙	⊙				✓		✓	✓
	Primary healthcare teams	✓	✓	✓	✓									✓	✓	✓
	Occupational health services (consult when risk of transmission from care workers to service user or vice versa)	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓ ⊙	✓	✓ ⊙	✓ ⊙	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓

<sup>10</sup> Where no specialist occupational health service advice exists, advice may be sought from service user's general practitioner

● Relevant to acute and independent sector ambulance providers    ≠ Providers of domiciliary care would need to have a designated lead  
 ⊙ Applies to primary dental/medical care    ♣ Does not apply to primary dental/medical care or independent sector ambulance providers

Table 3 – Policies appropriate to regulated activities

Compliance with criterion 9		Regulated activities														
		Personal care	Accommodation for persons who require nursing or personal care	Accommodation for persons who require treatment for substance misuse	Accommodation and nursing or personal care in the further education sector	Treatment of disease, disorder or injury	Assessment or medical treatment for persons detained under the Mental Health Act 1983	Surgical procedures	Diagnostic and screening procedures	Management of supply of blood and blood derived products etc	Transport services, triage and medical advice provided remotely $\Omega$	Maternity and midwifery services	Termination of pregnancies	Services in slimming clinics	Nursing care	Family planning services
Policies	a	Standard infection prevention and control precautions	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
	b	Aseptic technique		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
	c	Outbreaks of communicable infection #		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	▲		✓	✓		✓	
	d	Isolation of service users with an infection #		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓		✓	
	e	Safe handling and disposal of sharps	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
	f	Prevention of occupational exposure to blood-borne viruses, inc prevention of sharps injuries	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
	g	Management of occupational exposure to blood-borne viruses and post-exposure prophylaxis	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
	h	Closure of rooms, wards, departments and premises to new admissions ♣		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓				✓		✓	
	i	Disinfection ★		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
	j	Decontamination of reusable medical devices ★		✓			✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
	k	Single-use medical devices ★	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓

$\Omega$  Applies to transport and triage service delivered at site    ▲ Applies to invasive diagnostic procedures    ★ Decontamination lead will be responsible for these areas

♣ Unlikely or does not apply to primary dental/medical care    # Does not apply to primary dental care

Table 3 – Policies appropriate to regulated activities continued

Compliance with criterion 9		Regulated activities															
		Personal care	Accommodation for persons who require nursing or personal care	Accommodation for persons who require treatment for substance misuse	Accommodation and nursing or personal care in the further education sector	Treatment of disease, disorder or injury	Assessment or medical treatment for persons detained under the Mental Health Act 1983	Surgical procedures	Diagnostic and screening procedures	Management of supply of blood and blood derived products etc	Transport services, triage and medical advice provided remotely $\Omega$	Maternity and midwifery services	Termination of pregnancies	Services in slimming clinics	Nursing care	Family planning services	
Policies	l	Antimicrobial prescribing					✓	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓		✓	✓
	m	Reporting of infections to the Health Protection Agency or local authority $\clubsuit$ #					✓		✓	✓							
	n	Control of outbreaks and infections associated with specific alert organisms #		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓				✓				
	o	CJD/vCJD – handling of instruments and devices #					✓	✓	✓	✓							
	p	Safe handling and disposal of waste	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
	q	Packaging, handling and delivery of laboratory specimens #		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓
	r	Care of deceased persons $\clubsuit$	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓			✓	
	s	Use and care of invasive devices #	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓
	t	Purchase, cleaning, decontamination, maintenance and disposal of equipment $\star$		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
	u	Surveillance and data collection #					✓	✓	✓				✓	✓			

$\Omega$  Applies to transport and triage service delivered at site  $\blacktriangle$  Applies to invasive diagnostic procedures  $\star$  Decontamination lead will be responsible for these areas  
 $\clubsuit$  Unlikely or does not apply to primary dental/medical care # Does not apply to primary dental care

Table 3 – Policies appropriate to regulated activities continued

Compliance with criterion 9		Regulated activities															
		Personal care	Accommodation for persons who require nursing or personal care	Accommodation for persons who require treatment for substance misuse	Accommodation and nursing or personal care in the further education sector	Treatment of disease, disorder or injury	Assessment or medical treatment for persons detained under the Mental Health Act 1983	Surgical procedures	Diagnostic and screening procedures	Management of supply of blood and blood derived products etc	Transport services, triage and medical advice provided remotely Ω	Maternity and midwifery services	Termination of pregnancies	Services in slimming clinics	Nursing care	Family planning services	
Policies	v	Dissemination of information		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓			✓	✓	✓		✓	✓
	w	Isolation facilities ♣		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓				
	x	Uniform and dress code	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
	y	Immunisation of service users #		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓				✓	✓			✓

Ω Applies to transport and triage service delivered at site    ▲ Applies to invasive diagnostic procedures    ★ Decontamination lead will be responsible for these areas

♣ Unlikely or does not apply to primary dental/medical care    # Does not apply to primary dental care

# Appendix A: Examples of interpretation for adult social care

It is essential to read the following examples alongside the guidance under each criterion in Part 3 and not just selective parts.

The examples demonstrate how a proportionate approach to the guidance could apply in certain types of adult social care services. They are examples only and registered providers and IPC Leads should carry out their own risk assessments to help them decide which parts of the criteria apply to their particular service.

Registered providers and IPC Leads will make sure that they can provide evidence to support any decision to follow these examples or any other alternative approaches to the full guidance.

## Guidance for compliance with criterion 1

*Systems to manage and monitor the prevention and control of infection. These systems use risk assessments and consider how susceptible service users are and any risks that their environment and other users may pose to them.*

In a small service providing personal care or accommodation with personal care:

- Someone with appropriate knowledge and skills will become the IPC Lead and take responsibility for infection prevention and control. This could be the registered provider, registered manager or another member of staff.
- Infection prevention and control programmes and infrastructures will not need to be as complex as in a larger adult social care or health setting. As a minimum the infection control programme should say what:
  - infection prevention and control measures are needed in the service;
  - policies, procedures and guidance are needed, and how they will be kept up to date and monitored to make sure they are followed; and
  - initial and ongoing training staff will receive.

The infrastructure should include:

- a record of the names and contact details of health practitioners who can provide advice. General Practitioners and the local primary care trust ICT are likely to be key contacts in the infrastructure; and
- guidance for staff about the type of circumstances in which contact should be made.

The annual statement, for anyone who wishes to see it, including residents and regulatory authorities, will not need to be as detailed as one prepared for a health setting. The IPC Lead will ensure their annual statement for each facility provides a short review of any:

- known outbreaks of infection;
- audits undertaken and subsequent actions;
- action taken following an outbreak of infection;
- risk assessments undertaken for prevention and control of infection;
- training received by staff; and
- review and update of policies, procedures and guidance.

## Guidance for compliance with criterion 2

*Provide and maintain a clean and appropriate environment in managed premises that facilitates the prevention and control of infections.*

Domiciliary care services that provide support in people's own homes will not be expected to comply with this criterion.

Care homes aim to provide a place where people feel at home and the arrangements to keep the environment clean must take this into account. All cleaning routines must respect the fact that in care homes a resident's bedroom and other shared areas may have furniture and other possessions that belong to that individual.

In some small care homes the specific aim will be to support people to be independent and to have choice and control over their daily life, including decisions about the environment in which they live.

In a service where people are generally well and supported to develop independent living skills:

- detailed cleaning schedules would not be necessary. Cleaning responsibilities and routines should form part of the individual plan of care;
- there may be a plan for cleaning communal areas which describes individual responsibilities for cleaning;
- staff should carry out ongoing assessment of the standard of cleanliness and support residents if cleanliness falls short of an acceptable minimum;
- it is unlikely that the policy on the environment will need to cover all the points set out in the main guidance; and

- the decontamination policy is effectively a policy on how to clean all areas of the environment, fixtures and fittings (and medical devices if used) and what products to use. It will not need to be as complex as one in a healthcare setting. Where service users are responsible for cleaning their own rooms, this does not need to be included, although it could be part of their individual plan to help them know how to clean their room and what to use. The policy should cover:
  - how to clean the different areas of the environment, fixtures, fittings and specialist equipment (for example a hoist);
  - what products and equipment to use when cleaning;
  - what to do and what products to use if there is a spillage of blood or body fluids; and
  - what training staff need to implement the policy.

### Guidance for compliance with criterion 3

*Provide suitable accurate information on infections to service users and their visitors.*

Domiciliary care services that provide support in people's own homes, and care services where people are generally well, will not need to have the range of information suggested to meet this criterion. However, they should provide information about their approach to prevention and control of infection, staff roles and responsibilities, and whom people should contact with concerns about prevention and control of infection.

For adult social care services providing personal care, all the information suggested in the guidance should be included. However, it may not be necessary to provide the level of detail that a healthcare setting would need. For example:

- information should draw people's attention to the need for good hand hygiene; and
- visiting the service user may be restricted if there is an outbreak of infection.

### Guidance for compliance with criterion 4

*Provide suitable accurate information on infections to any person concerned with providing further support or nursing/medical care in a timely fashion.*

This criterion will apply to registered providers who share (or transfer) responsibility for the care and treatment of service users with other providers.

The registered provider will need to ensure that information about infections is shared with other providers, paying attention to service users' confidentiality. This could include circumstances where the service user:

- moves to or from another health or adult social care setting or the service user's home;
- is admitted to hospital;
- is transported in an ambulance; and
- attends for treatment or support in another health or adult social care setting.

Staff will need to know:

- how and under what circumstances information about a service user's infection status is shared both routinely and in an emergency; and
- how they ensure that the information they share follows the laws that relate to the safe handling of information.

Where personal care is provided by a domiciliary care agency to an individual person in their own home, it is unlikely that the agency will be responsible for providing this information. However, this criterion will apply if it provides personal care to a group of service users in a supported living service or sheltered housing complex and takes an active role in liaising with or contacting healthcare professionals on behalf of service users.

### Guidance for compliance with criterion 5

*Ensure that people who have or develop an infection are identified promptly and receive the appropriate treatment and care to reduce the risk of passing on the infection to other people.*

In an adult social care service, General Practitioners will provide the necessary initial advice when a service user develops an infection. The General Practitioner may then wish to consult with professional infection prevention and control resources or the local health protection unit.

### Guidance for compliance with criterion 6

*Ensure that all staff and those employed to provide care in all settings are fully involved in the process of preventing and controlling infection.*

The registered manager must ensure that everyone who is working in the care setting, including agency staff, contractors and volunteers, understand and comply with the need to prevent and control infections. Please also refer to the corresponding item in Part 3 of this document.

## Guidance for compliance with criterion 7

*Provide or secure adequate isolation facilities.*

Care homes do not need to have dedicated isolation facilities. If isolation is needed, a resident's own room can be used. Ideally the room should be a single bedroom with en-suite facilities.

## Guidance for compliance with criterion 8

*Secure adequate access to laboratory support as appropriate.*

This criterion does not apply to adult social care services. The General Practitioner will take responsibility for sending off any necessary samples to the laboratory.

## Guidance for compliance with criterion 9

*Have and adhere to policies, designed for the individual's care and provider organisations, that will help to prevent and control infections.*

The following guidance is for the policies that may be most relevant to adult social care services. Registered providers should use Table 3 and their own risk assessments to help them decide how the remaining policy areas might apply to their services.

### *a. Standard infection prevention and control precautions*

All staff should have training on hand hygiene and when and how personal protective equipment should be used. Policies should also be in place for the safe handling and disposal of sharps and the safe disposal of waste.

Where service users are responsible for their own care, it is important that they understand that they should not share personal items, such as toothbrushes, razors or towels, with other service users.

### *b. Aseptic technique*

Staff who undertake aseptic procedures, refer to paragraph 6.3 in Part 3. Personal care givers looking after service users with indwelling devices are not responsible for giving clinical care but need to have a knowledge of asepsis and an understanding of the importance of not introducing contamination to these devices.

*c. Outbreaks of communicable infection*

The policy will not need to be as detailed in a low-risk service where people are not regularly exposed to the risk of infections that can be transferred from one person to another. Guidance should be available to staff about:

- how to recognise symptoms that may indicate a possible outbreak.  
For example:
  - cough and/or fever might indicate influenza;
  - diarrhoea and/or vomiting might indicate *Clostridium difficile*, norovirus or food poisoning;
  - skin lesion/rash might indicate scabies; and
- the circumstances when medical assistance must be sought without delay.

*d. Isolation of service users with an infection*

The policy should say how staff care for a service user who has to be isolated. Information about the environment used for isolation does not need to be included as this is covered in criterion 7.

*e. Safe handling and disposal of sharps*

Where the disposal of sharp instruments is required, the corresponding item in Part 3 will apply.

*f. Prevention of occupational exposure to blood-borne viruses (BBVs), including prevention of sharps injuries*

Standard precautions and the use of the appropriate personal protective equipment should in most instances be adequate to protect the care worker.

*g. Management of occupational exposure to BBVs and post-exposure prophylaxis*

In most instances a policy would not be appropriate.

*h. Closure of rooms, wards, departments and premises to new admissions*

Please refer to the corresponding item in Part 3.

*i. Disinfection*

Please refer to the corresponding item in Part 3.

*j. Decontamination of reusable medical devices*

In most cases in care homes, the decontamination of medical devices would include the cleaning of equipment used as aids to daily living such as hoists and wheelchairs.

*k. Single-use medical devices*

Please refer to the corresponding item in Part 3.

*l. Antimicrobial prescribing*

A service user's General Practitioner should follow local guidelines for prescribing antimicrobials.

*m. Reporting of infections to the Health Protection Agency or local authority*

This does not apply to care homes.

*n. Control of outbreaks and infections associated with specific alert organisms*

As a minimum, the policy must include how MRSA, respiratory illness, diarrhoeal outbreaks, and *Clostridium difficile* infection will be controlled and managed.

It is unlikely that adult social care services will need to have policies to cover all the remaining specific alert organisms listed in the guidance. Registered providers and infection prevention and control leads will need to have initial and ongoing risk assessments to identify which of the other specific alert organisms apply to their services.

Adult social care services are not expected to monitor alert organisms. The registered provider will need to report outbreaks of infection to its local health protection unit, as advised by its primary care practitioner.

*o. CJD/vCJD – handling of instruments and devices*

This does not apply to care homes.

*p. Safe handling and disposal of waste*

In general, the majority of waste in adult social care falls under the category of 'offensive/hygiene' waste. This is waste such as incontinence and other waste produced from human hygiene; sanitary waste...etc, which is non-infectious and which does not require specialist treatment or disposal, but which may cause offence to those coming into contact with it.

Whether this type of waste can go into the domestic waste stream will depend upon the specific circumstances of each case. It will depend on issues such as risk assessments and whether a care professional is in attendance or not as different legislation would come into play. For example if the resident is self-caring and not requiring the assistance of care workers then the waste may be suitable for the domestic waste stream, bearing in mind that only quantities less than 7kg (approximately one bag) may be placed in the domestic waste stream. However, if the home employs carers to assist in the activities of daily living then waste should not enter the domestic waste stream.

Where any doubt exists, advice should be sought from its local Environment Agency office or local authority.

*q. Packaging, handling and delivery of laboratory specimens*

Please refer to the corresponding item in Part 3.

*r. Care of deceased persons*

Please refer to the corresponding item in Part 3.

*s. Use and care of invasive devices*

This applies to devices such as feeding tubes and urinary catheters. Please refer to the corresponding item in Part 3.

*t. Purchase, cleaning, decontamination, maintenance and disposal of equipment*

Please refer to the corresponding item in Part 3.

*u. Surveillance and data collection*

This does not apply to care homes.

*v. Dissemination of information*

Please refer to the corresponding item in Part 3.

*w. Isolation facilities*

Please refer to the corresponding item in Part 3.

*x. Uniform and dress code*

Staff would not be expected to wear uniforms in a service where the aim is to provide personalised care in a domestic setting. Work wear should be easily washable and aprons and gloves should be available for staff if they carry out personal care tasks.

*y. Immunisation of service users*

Registered providers should ensure that service users have information about vaccinations in a way that they understand so that they are able to make informed decisions about immunisation.

## Guidance for compliance with criterion 10

*Ensure, so far as is reasonably practicable, that care workers are free of and are protected from exposure to infections that can be caught at work and that all staff are suitably educated in the prevention and control of infection associated with the provision of health and social care.*

Small adult social care services that are not part of a large organisational structure may not have access to occupational health services. Registered providers should ensure that they are able to get advice when needed, for example through their insurance company, a General Practitioner or an occupational health agency.

The registered provider should ensure that all staff complete a confidential health assessment after a conditional offer of employment and give information about residence overseas, previous and current illness, and immunisation against relevant infections.

Policies for the protection of staff should include:

- health screening for communicable diseases;
- how exposure to infections will be managed;
- risk assessment of the need for immunisations;
- the responsibilities of staff to report episodes of illness; and
- the circumstances under which staff may need to be excluded from work.

### Induction

The way that qualifications are organised and structured is changing. This includes all vocational qualifications in all sectors – not just social care.

In 2005, Skills for Care, the strategic development body for the adult social care workforce in England, launched the *Common Induction Standards*. These are mapped to the General Social Care Council (GSCC) Code of Practice for social care workers, which describes the standards of professional conduct and practice required of social care workers as they go about their daily work. This GSCC Code of Practice reflects existing good practice, and must be met by all workers. In 2010, the *Common Induction Standards* were refreshed to reflect changes in the culture and delivery of social care over the past five years.

The induction process will help employers to meet their responsibility to promote the GSCC's Code of Practice for employers of social care workers, and to provide training and development opportunities to help social care workers to strengthen and develop their skills and knowledge. In particular, it will help employers to meet their Code 3.1: 'providing induction, training and development opportunities to help social care workers do their jobs effectively and prepare for new and changing roles and responsibilities'.

The *Common Induction Standards* (refreshed 2010) has strengthened the emphasis on an understanding of infection prevention and control, and show how these are mapped to the GSCC Code of Practice.

### Ongoing training

Staff will require ongoing training in the prevention and control of infection. Skills for Care has developed a knowledge set on the prevention and control of infection to support this. There is also an e-learning programme that care home staff can access.

In addition, staff can study to gain a Level 2 award in the prevention and control of infection (Qualifications and Credit Framework – QCF). This may be specifically useful for those staff with particular responsibilities around infection prevention and control. This certificate is made up of three units. Other staff may choose to study one or more of these units as Continuing Professional Development or as part of their Health and Social Care Diploma at levels 2 or 3.

A record should be kept by the registered manager of all staff induction and ongoing training.

## Appendix B: Examples of interpretation for primary dental care

It is essential to read the following examples alongside the guidance under each criterion in Part 3 and not just selective parts.

The examples demonstrate how a proportionate approach to the guidance could apply in primary dental care practices. They are examples only and registered providers and IPC Leads (the nominated lead member of staff as set out in *Health Technical Memorandum 01-05: Decontamination in primary care dental practices* (HTM 01-05)) should carry out their own risk assessments to help them decide which parts of the criteria apply to their particular service.

Registered providers and IPC Leads will make sure that they can provide evidence to support any decision to follow these examples or any other alternative approaches to the full guidance. Providers of dental health services within NHS bodies have been registered with the CQC since April 2010. Independent dental practitioners will be registered with the CQC from April 2011.

Criterion 2 of the Code describes the requirement to provide and maintain a clean and appropriate environment in managed premises that facilitates the prevention and control of infections. This includes a specific requirement for effective arrangements for the appropriate decontamination of instruments and other equipment.

The HTM 01-05 is designed to assist all registered primary dental care services meet satisfactory levels of decontamination. HTM 01-05 describes essential quality requirements and the aim is that all practices will have met these essential quality requirements by the end of 2010. This will include having a detailed plan showing how practices will work towards achieving best practice. The Code has taken due note of HTM 01-05 and does not impose any additional burdens on decontamination.

However, whilst HTM 01-05 describes essential quality requirements and provides guidance around decontamination, it is important to recognise that in the same way, the related guidance set out in this Code of Practice document provides guidance around the wider aspects of infection prevention and control.

The Department of Health and Infection Prevention Society local self-assessment audit tool outlined in the Bibliography is designed to allow practices to assess compliance with HTM 01-05.

## Guidance for compliance with criterion 1

*Systems to manage and monitor the prevention and control of infection. These systems use risk assessments and consider how susceptible service users are and any risks that their environment and other users may pose to them.*

A designated person with appropriate knowledge and skills will take responsibility for infection prevention and control in the practice (the IPC Lead). This could be the registered provider, registered manager, or another member of staff. Infection prevention and control programmes, assurance framework and infrastructures will not need to be as complex as in larger adult social care or health settings.

The infection control programme should say as a minimum what:

- infection prevention and control measures are needed in the practice;
- policies, procedures and guidance are needed and how they will be kept up to date and monitored for compliance; and
- initial and ongoing training staff will receive.

The infrastructure should include a record of the names and contact details of health practitioners who can provide advice. General Practitioners and the local primary care trust ICT are likely to be key contacts in the infrastructure. There should be guidance for staff about the type of circumstances in which contact should be made.

The requirement for 24-hour access to a nominated qualified infection control doctor or consultant in health protection/communicable disease control does not apply to primary dental care.

An annual statement, for anyone who wishes to see it, including patients and regulatory authorities, should be prepared by the IPC Lead, which should provide a short review of any:

- known infection transmission event and actions arising from this;
- audits undertaken and subsequent actions;
- risk assessments undertaken for prevention and control of infection;
- training received by staff; and
- review and update of policies, procedures and guidance.

## Guidance for compliance with criterion 2

*Provide and maintain a clean and appropriate environment in managed premises that facilitates the prevention and control of infections.*

Clinical areas should be furnished taking account of the guidance issued by the Department of Health and the advice provided by the British Dental Association. Primary dental care facilities are frequently converted or domestic premises where the layout of rooms may be fixed.

There should be a designated lead for cleaning and decontamination of the environment and equipment, who may be the same person as the lead for infection prevention and control, and who can access appropriate expert advice.

Decontamination policies should comply with essential quality requirements described in national guidance issued by the Department of Health, and should include cleaning of the environment, fixtures and fittings and decontamination of reusable medical devices, what products and equipment to use, and staff training in all these areas. A cleaning schedule should be in place for clinical areas, including specifying which areas are to be cleaned between patients.

Taking account of the guidance issued by the Department of Health, there should be a policy for preventing contamination of dental unit water lines, including appropriate water supply and maintenance schedule. There should be a risk assessment for *Legionella*. Logbooks, including testing, service, maintenance and repair records should be maintained in the practice for at least two years.

The National Patient Safety Agency has produced detailed guidance on specification for cleanliness for primary dental care and primary medical care and a reference is in the Bibliography.

## Guidance for compliance with criterion 3

*Provide suitable accurate information on infections to service users and their visitors.*

Primary dental care practices will not need to supply the full range of information suggested. However, they should have information available about their approach to infection prevention and control, staff roles and responsibilities, and to whom people should contact with concerns about infection prevention and control.

## Guidance for compliance with criterion 4

*Provide suitable accurate information on infections to any person concerned with providing further support or nursing/medical care in a timely fashion.*

It is unlikely that primary dental care practitioners will be required to provide this information except when referring patients to specialist services. Staff should know how and under what circumstances information about a user's infection status is shared, and how they ensure that the information they share complies with the legislation on the safe handling of information.

## Guidance for compliance with criterion 5

*Ensure that people who have or develop an infection are identified promptly and receive the appropriate treatment and care to reduce the risk of passing on the infection to other people.*

Dental practitioners should obtain a medical history and risk factors for infection, including common blood-borne viruses from all service users. Standard precautions should be applied to the management of all service users.

## Guidance for compliance with criterion 6

*Ensure that all staff and those employed to provide care in all settings are fully involved in the process of preventing and controlling infection.*

The registered provider must ensure that every person working in the dental practice, including agency staff, contractors and volunteers, understand and comply with the need to prevent and control infections. Please also refer to the corresponding item in Part 3.

## Guidance for compliance with criterion 7

*Provide or secure adequate isolation facilities.*

Primary dental care facilities do not require dedicated isolation facilities.

## Guidance for compliance with criterion 8

*Secure adequate access to laboratory support as appropriate.*

This refers to laboratory support for diagnosis or surveillance of infection. Primary care dental practices are not required to have routine access to microbiology laboratory services. They should be aware of local microbiological services and where to access advice should it be required. This criterion does not apply to dental laboratories who manufacture dentures, crowns, orthodontic equipment, etc. as they fall outside the scope of this Code.

## Guidance for compliance with criterion 9

*Have and adhere to policies, designed for the individual's care and provider organisations, that will help to prevent and control infections.*

The following guidance is for the policies that may be the most relevant to primary dental care services. Registered providers should use Table 3 and their own risk assessments to help them decide how the remaining policy areas might apply to their services. In the case of policies referring to decontamination, environment, equipment and waste, reference should be made to the existing guidance issued by the Department of Health and by the British Dental Association.

### *a. Standard infection prevention and control precautions*

All staff should be trained in hand hygiene and proper use of personal protective equipment both during clinical work and during decontamination. Policies should be in place for safe handling and disposal of waste and sharps.

### *b. Aseptic technique*

All staff who perform clinical procedures that require asepsis should be trained in aseptic technique.

### *c. Outbreaks of communicable infection*

This does not apply to primary dental care.

### *d. Isolation of service users with an infection*

This does not apply to primary dental care.

### *e. Safe handling and disposal of sharps*

Please refer to the corresponding item in Part 3.

*f. Prevention of occupational exposure to blood-borne viruses (BBVs), including prevention of sharps injuries*

This should include the offer of staff immunisation against hepatitis B, and maintenance of a record of employees' hepatitis B immune status. Staff should be trained in sharps handling and in the management of blood and body fluid spills and splashes, including the use of chlorine-releasing agents.

*g. Management of occupational exposure to BBVs and post-exposure prophylaxis*

There should be clear, accessible information about reporting occupational exposure and the need for action after exposure to BBVs, as well as arrangements for post-exposure prophylaxis for hepatitis B and HIV, including out of working hours. This may be provided by PCT occupational health services if available, but should also be accessible out of hours, for example from a local Accident & Emergency department.

*h. Closure of rooms, wards, departments and premises to new admissions*

It is unlikely that primary care practices will be required to close premises as a direct consequence of infection.

*i. Disinfection*

Please refer to the corresponding item in Part 3.

*j. Decontamination of reusable medical devices*

These policies should take into account the national guidance issued by the Department of Health, and should include cleaning, disinfection, inspection, packaging, disposal, sterilisation, transport and storage of reusable instruments. There should be a nominated lead for decontamination. Whilst in some areas of medical and surgical care, instrument sets or individual instruments must be traceable, this does not apply at present to dental instruments.

*k. Single-use medical devices*

This should detail which instruments are required to be single use. This will include some instruments which are designated as multiple-use by the manufacturers but which are considered single-use owing to the inability to adequately decontaminate them. Current advice (Chief Dental Officer, CDO Update, March 2010) is that reusable endodontic files and reamers may be reused on the same patient, provided processes are adequate as described in that CDO Update.

This proposed relaxation only goes so far as endodontic files and reamers being reused on the same patient. This is conditional upon the instruments being marketed as reusable and the dental practice's registered manager being satisfied that the tracing and audit procedures used are such as to exclude error in identifying the instrument(s) and associating them with the correct patient.

*l. Antimicrobial prescribing*

Please refer to the corresponding item in Part 3. In addition, the requirement of monitoring by the antimicrobial management team does not apply to primary dental care.

*m. Reporting of infection to the Health Protection Agency or local authority*

This does not apply to primary dental care.

*n. Control of outbreaks and infections associated with specific alert organisms*

This does not apply to primary dental care.

*o. CJD/vCJD – handling of instruments and devices*

This does not apply to primary dental care. Application of HTM 01-05 will effectively reduce the risk of prion transmission.

*p. Safe handling and disposal of waste*

This should take account of existing guidance issued by the Department of Health, and should include staff training, provision of appropriate waste disposal facilities in treatment rooms, separation of waste streams, and provision of a registered waste contractor.

*q. Packaging, handling and delivery of laboratory specimens*

This does not apply to primary dental care.

*r. Care of deceased persons*

This does not apply to primary dental care.

*s. Use and care of invasive devices*

This does not apply to primary dental care.

*t. Purchase, cleaning, decontamination, maintenance and disposal of equipment*

Please refer to the corresponding item in Part 3.

*u. Surveillance and data collection*

Dental care practices are not required to collect surveillance data on infections.

*v. Dissemination of information*

Please refer to criterion 4 of Appendix B.

*w. Isolation facilities*

Dental care practices are not required to provide dedicated isolation facilities.

*x. Uniform and dress code*

Please refer to the corresponding item in Part 3. Further guidance is available in *HTM 01-05*.

y. *Immunisation of service users*

This does not apply to primary dental care.

## Guidance for compliance with criterion 10

*Ensure, so far as is reasonably practicable, that care workers are free of and are protected from exposure to infections that can be caught at work and that all staff are suitably educated in the prevention and control of infection associated with the provision of health and social care.*

Access to an occupational health service should be available for practices who work with NHS contracts, usually from the PCT. There should be clear advice for staff on whom to contact in the event of exposure to BBVs and provision for emergency post-exposure treatment.

Policies for protection of staff should include:

- risk assessment of need for immunisation, in particular hepatitis B immunisation;
- health screening for communicable disease, including tuberculosis and where appropriate, BBV screening for those undertaking exposure prone procedures;
- use of personal protective equipment (PPE), including staff training in the safe use and disposal of PPE;
- post-exposure management, for example for inoculation injuries; and
- circumstances under which staff may need to be excluded from work.

Staff will require ongoing training in infection prevention and control. A record should be kept of all staff training.

## Appendix C: Examples of interpretation for independent sector ambulance providers

It is essential to read the following examples alongside the guidance under each criterion in Part 3 and not just selective parts.

The examples demonstrate how a proportionate approach to the guidance could apply to independent sector ambulance providers. They are examples only and registered providers and IPC Leads should carry out their own risk assessments to help them decide which parts of the criteria apply to their particular service.

Registered providers and IPC Leads will make sure that they can provide evidence to support any decision to follow these examples or any other alternative approaches to the full guidance.

### Guidance for compliance with criterion 1

*Systems to manage and monitor the prevention and control of infection. These systems use risk assessments and consider how susceptible service users are and any risks that their environment and other users may pose to them.*

Please refer to 1.1, 1.2, 1.4, 1.5, 1.6, 1.7 and 1.8 in Part 3.

The infrastructure should include:

- a record of the names and contact details of health practitioners who can provide advice. General Practitioners may be the likely key contacts for day-to-day matters and the local health protection unit for emergencies; and
- guidance for staff about the type of circumstances in which contact should be made.

The annual statement, for anyone who wishes to see it, including patients and regulatory authorities, will not need to be as detailed as one prepared for the acute sector healthcare setting. The IPC Lead will ensure their annual statement for each facility provides a short review of any:

- audits undertaken and action taken following recommendations from an audit;
- risk assessments undertaken for prevention and control of infection;

- training received by staff; and
- review and update of policies, procedures and guidance.

## Guidance for compliance with criterion 2

*Provide and maintain a clean and appropriate environment in managed premises that facilitates the prevention and control of infections.*

Please refer to the corresponding item in Part 3. For decontamination, sterilisation of reusable medical devices is not relevant for independent sector ambulance providers.

## Guidance for compliance with criterion 3

*Provide suitable accurate information on infections to service users and their visitors.*

Please refer to the corresponding item in Part 3. The aspect of visitors is not relevant to this sector.

## Guidance for compliance with criterion 4

*Provide suitable accurate information on infections to any person concerned with providing further support or nursing/medical care in a timely fashion.*

Please refer to the corresponding item in Part 3.

## Guidance for compliance with criterion 5

*Ensure that people who have or develop an infection are identified promptly and receive the appropriate treatment and care to reduce the risk of passing on the infection to other people.*

Please refer to the corresponding item in Part 3.

## Guidance for compliance with criterion 6

*Ensure that all staff and those employed to provide care in all settings are fully involved in the process of preventing and controlling infection.*

Please refer to the corresponding item in Part 3.

## Guidance for compliance with criterion 7

*Provide or secure adequate isolation facilities.*

This does not apply to independent sector ambulance providers.

## Guidance for compliance with criterion 8

*Secure adequate access to laboratory support as appropriate.*

This does not apply to independent sector ambulance providers.

## Guidance for compliance with criterion 9

*Have and adhere to policies, designed for the individual's care and provider organisations, that will help to prevent and control infections.*

The following guidance indicates the policies that may be relevant to independent sector ambulance providers. Registered providers should use Table 3 and their own risk assessments to help them decide how the remaining policy areas might apply to their services.

*a. Standard infection prevention and control precautions*

Please refer to the corresponding item in Part 3.

*b. Aseptic technique*

Please refer to the corresponding item in Part 3.

*c. Outbreaks of communicable infection*

This does not apply to independent sector ambulance providers.

*d. Isolation of service users with an infection (see also criterion 7)*

Registered independent ambulance providers are not expected to have dedicated isolation facilities for service users.

*e. Safe handling and disposal of sharps*

Please refer to the corresponding item in Part 3.

*f. Prevention of occupational exposure to blood-borne viruses (BBVs), including prevention of sharps injuries*

Please refer to the corresponding item in Part 3.

*g. Management of occupational exposure to BBVs and post-exposure prophylaxis*

Please refer to the corresponding item in Part 3.

*h. Closure of rooms, wards, departments and premises to new admissions*

This does not apply to independent sector ambulance providers.

*i. Disinfection*

Please refer to the corresponding item in Part 3.

*j. Decontamination of reusable medical devices*

Effective decontamination of reusable medical devices is an essential part of infection risk control and is of special importance when the device comes into contact with service users or their body fluids. There should be a system to protect service users and staff that minimises the risk of transmission of infection from medical devices.

*k. Single-use medical devices*

Please refer to the corresponding item in Part 3.

*l. Antimicrobial prescribing*

This does not apply to independent sector ambulance providers.

*m. Reporting of infections to the Health Protection Agency*

This does not apply to independent sector ambulance providers.

*n. Control of outbreaks and infections associated with specific alert organisms*

This does not apply to independent sector ambulance providers.

*o. CJD/vCJD – handling of instruments and devices*

This does not apply to independent sector ambulance providers.

*p. Safe handling and disposal of waste*

Please refer to the corresponding item in Part 3.

*q. Packaging, handling and delivery of laboratory specimens*

This does not apply to independent sector ambulance providers.

*r. Care of deceased persons*

Appropriate procedures should include:

- risk assessment of potential hazards;
- safe working practices;
- information, instruction, training and supervision; and
- health surveillance and immunisation (where appropriate).

*s. Use and care of invasive devices*

Please refer to the corresponding item in Part 3.

*t. Purchase, cleaning, decontamination, maintenance and disposal of equipment*

Please refer to the corresponding item in Part 3.

*u. Surveillance and data collection*

This does not apply to independent sector ambulance providers.

*v. Dissemination of information (see also criterion 4)*

This policy will not need to be as detailed as healthcare facilities. There should be a local protocol for the dissemination of information about infections between care organisations concerning an individual service user. This is to facilitate surveillance and optimal management of infections in the wider community. Guidance on data protection legislation also needs to be observed.

*w. Isolation facilities*

This does not apply to independent sector ambulance providers.

*x. Uniform and dress code*

Please refer to the corresponding item in Part 3.

*y. Immunisation of service users*

This does not apply to independent sector ambulance providers.

## Guidance for compliance with criterion 10

*Ensure, so far as is reasonably practicable, that care workers are free of and are protected from exposure to infections that can be caught at work and that all staff are suitably educated in the prevention and control of infection associated with the provision of health and social care.*

Registered providers should ensure that policies and procedures are in place in relation to the prevention and control of infection such that:

- all staff can access occupational health services or occupational health advice where relevant and appropriate;
- occupational health policies on the prevention and management of communicable infections in care workers are in place;
- decisions on offering immunisation should be made on the basis of a local risk assessment as described in *Immunisation against infectious disease* ('The Green Book'). Employers should make vaccines available free of charge to employees if a risk assessment indicates that it is needed (COSHH Regulations 2002);
- there is a record of relevant immunisations;
- the principles and practice of prevention and control of infection are included in induction and training programmes for new staff. The principles include: ensuring that policies are up to date; feedback from audit results; examples of good practice; and action needed to correct poor practice;

- there is a programme of ongoing education for existing staff (including support staff, volunteers, agency/locum staff and staff employed by contractors), which should incorporate the principles and practice of prevention and control of infection;
- there is a record of training and updates for all staff; and
- the responsibilities of each member of staff for the prevention and control of infection are reflected in their job description and in any personal development plan or appraisal.

### Occupational health services

Small independent ambulance providers that are not part of a large organisational structure may not have access to occupational health services. Registered providers should ensure that they are able to get advice when needed, for example through their insurance company, a General Practitioner or occupational health agency. The following policies may be required:

- risk-based screening for communicable diseases and assessment of immunity to infection after a conditional offer of employment and ongoing health surveillance;
- provision of relevant immunisations; and
- having arrangements in place for regularly reviewing the immunisation status of care workers and providing vaccinations to staff as necessary in line with *Immunisation against infectious disease* ('The Green Book') and other Department of Health guidance.

### Occupational health services in respect of BBVs should include:

- having arrangements for identifying and managing healthcare staff infected with hepatitis B or C or HIV and advising about fitness for work in line with Department of Health guidance;
- liaising with the UK Advisory Panel for Healthcare Workers Infected with Blood-borne Viruses when advice is needed on procedures that may be carried out by BBV-infected care workers, and when advice on patient tracing, notification and offer of BBV testing may be needed; and
- management of occupational exposure to infection, which may include provision for emergency and out-of-hours treatment, possibly in conjunction with accident and emergency services and on-call infection prevention and control specialists.

## Appendix D: Examples of interpretation for primary medical care

It is essential to read the following examples alongside the guidance under each criterion in Part 3 and not just selective parts.

The examples demonstrate how a proportionate approach to the guidance could apply in primary medical care practices. They are examples only and registered providers and IPC Leads should carry out their own risk assessments to help them decide which parts of the criteria apply to their particular service.

Registered providers and IPC Leads will make sure that they can provide evidence to support any decision to follow these examples or any other alternative approaches to the full guidance.

### Guidance for compliance with criterion 1

*Systems to manage and monitor the prevention and control of infection. These systems use risk assessments and consider how susceptible service users are and any risks that their environment and other users may pose to them.*

A designated person with appropriate knowledge and skills will take responsibility for infection prevention and control in the practice (the IPC Lead). This could be the registered provider, registered manager, or another member of staff. Infection prevention and control programmes, assurance framework and infrastructures will not need to be as complex as in larger health or adult social care settings. It is not envisaged that there should be a DIPC in most primary medical care settings.

The infection control programme should say as a minimum what:

- infection prevention and control measures are needed in the practice;
- policies, procedures and guidance are needed and how they will be kept up to date and monitored for compliance; and
- initial and ongoing training staff will receive where appropriate.

The provider should have a record of the names and contact details of health practitioners who can provide advice. General Practitioner colleagues or the IPC Lead for the provider and the local primary care trust ICT are likely to be key

contacts. There should be guidance for staff about the type of circumstances in which contact should be made.

An annual statement, for anyone who wishes to see it, including patients and regulatory authorities, should be prepared by the IPC Lead for each registered provider, which should provide a short review of any:

- known infection transmission event and actions arising from this;
- audits undertaken and subsequent actions;
- risk assessments undertaken for prevention and control of infection;
- training received by staff; and
- review and update of policies, procedures and guidance.

## Guidance for compliance with criterion 2

*Provide and maintain a clean and appropriate environment in managed premises that facilitates the prevention and control of infections.*

There should be a designated lead for cleaning and decontamination of the environment, who may be the same person as the lead for infection prevention and control, and who can access appropriate expert advice.

Premises should be furnished taking account of national guidance and rooms with specialist functions, for example minor surgery, should be adapted accordingly following a risk assessment. Planned examination of wounds and potential infected sites should be carried out in a designated setting designed for the purpose, for example a treatment room.

The environmental cleaning and decontamination policy should specify how to clean all areas, fixtures and fittings, and specify what products to use. In those practices that perform invasive procedures, including minor surgery and acupuncture, a policy must be in place for the appropriate decontamination of the rooms used for those procedures. There should be a cleaning schedule, covering communal areas, consultation rooms, treatment areas and specialist surgical or other areas.

The National Patient Safety Agency has produced detailed guidance on specifications for cleanliness for primary dental and medical care and these are included in the Bibliography.

### Guidance for compliance with criterion 3

*Provide suitable accurate information on infections to service users and their visitors.*

Primary medical care practices should make available information about their approach to prevention and control of infection, staff roles and responsibilities, and who people should contact with concerns about prevention and control of infection. They should make available up to date information on current infection issues, for example influenza.

Practices may wish to involve or seek advice from their patient groups on the material they are using and how it is disseminated. Practices may wish to display their policies and information on their website or other websites, where appropriate.

The British Medical Association has developed a patient liaison group (PLG) resource which addresses the role of patient participation groups (PPGs) in primary care. PPGs offer General Practitioners an opportunity to involve their patients in the running of their practices.

In addition, the Royal College of General Practitioners has a PPG through which it maintains its links with patients and their concerns. The College ensures that the views of patients are taken into account in the development of general practice.

### Guidance for compliance with criterion 4

*Provide suitable accurate information on infections to any person concerned with providing further support or nursing/medical care in a timely fashion.*

Primary medical care practitioners are key providers of information to other health and adult social care providers and to public health authorities, both concerning individual users and community outbreaks. Appropriate information should be held in the practice patient summary record.

The registered provider may share information with other health and adult social care providers as appropriate, paying attention to service users' confidentiality. This could include circumstances where:

- a service user is referred or admitted to a hospital, adult social care or mental health facility;
- a service user is scheduled for an invasive procedure;
- a service user is transported in an ambulance; or
- there is an outbreak or suspected outbreak amongst service user's.

## Guidance for compliance with criterion 5

*Ensure that people who have or develop an infection are identified promptly and receive the appropriate treatment and care to reduce the risk of passing on the infection to other people.*

The primary medical care practitioner will provide initial advice and treatment when a service user under their care develops an infection and will assess any potential communicable disease control issues. In most cases further action will not be needed. If required, the primary medical care practitioner may consult with the designated source of specialist infection control advice and/or the local health protection unit or refer to more specialist care. This may be applicable, for example in cases of smear-positive pulmonary tuberculosis, highly transmissible diseases such as chickenpox or norovirus, or suspected outbreaks.

## Guidance for compliance with criterion 6

*Ensure that all staff and those employed to provide care in all settings are fully involved in the process of preventing and controlling infection.*

The registered provider must ensure that every person working in the practice, including agency staff, external contractors and volunteers, understand and comply with the need to prevent and control infections, including those associated with invasive devices. Please also refer to the corresponding item in Part 3.

## Guidance for compliance with criterion 7

*Provide or secure adequate isolation facilities.*

Primary medical care facilities do not require dedicated isolation treatment rooms but are expected to implement reasonable precautions when a service user is suspected or known to have a transmissible infection.

## Guidance for compliance with criterion 8

*Secure adequate access to laboratory support as appropriate.*

Primary care practices should have access to a diagnostic microbiology and virology laboratory service, which operates according to the requirements of the relevant national accreditation bodies, for the investigation and management of disease. This may be from an NHS acute Trust or from an alternative provider. For the NHS, this will be provided through local commissioning arrangements; non-NHS General Practitioners will need to make appropriate arrangements.

## Guidance for compliance with criterion 9

*Have and adhere to policies, designed for the individual's care and provider organisations, that will help to prevent and control infections.*

The following guidance indicates the policies that may be relevant to primary medical care services. Registered providers should use Table 3 and their own risk assessments to help them decide how the remaining policy areas might apply to their services.

### *a. Standard infection prevention and control precautions*

All staff should be trained in hand hygiene and proper use of personal protective equipment both during clinical work and during decontamination. Policies should be in place for safe handling and disposal of waste and sharps.

### *b. Aseptic technique*

All staff who perform clinical procedures should be trained in aseptic technique.

### *c. Outbreaks of communicable infection*

A policy, with the relevant contact names and details, should be in place to respond appropriately to a communicable disease outbreak which is detected by the practice, or by other clinicians or the health protection services. This should include a source of expert infection control advice.

### *d. Isolation of service users with an infection*

Standard precautions minimise the risk of transmission of infection to staff. The policy may include management of patients with suspected communicable infections such as chicken pox or measles in communal waiting areas and clinical areas.

### *e. Safe handling and disposal of sharps*

Please refer to the corresponding item in Part 3.

### *f. Prevention of occupational exposure to blood-borne viruses (BBVs), including prevention of sharps injuries*

This should include the offer of immunisation to clinical and other relevant staff against hepatitis B, and maintenance of a record of employees' hepatitis B immune status. Training in sharps handling and in management of blood and body fluid spills and splashes should be in place, including the use of chlorine-releasing agents.

### *g. Management of occupational exposure to BBVs and post-exposure prophylaxis*

There should be clear, accessible information about reporting occupational exposure and the need for action after exposure to BBVs, as well as arrangements for post-exposure prophylaxis for hepatitis B and HIV, including

out of working hours. This may be provided by PCT occupational health services if available, but should also be accessible out of hours, for example from a local Accident & Emergency department.

*h. Closure of rooms, wards, departments and premises to new admissions*

It is unlikely that primary care practices will be required to close premises as a direct consequence of infection.

*i. Disinfection*

Please refer to the corresponding item in Part 3.

*j. Decontamination of reusable medical devices*

There should be a nominated lead for decontamination of equipment and reusable medical devices. Policy should take account of the existing guidance issued by the Department of Health where available. All staff should be trained in the relevant decontamination procedures. Equipment used for decontamination, including automated washer-disinfectors should be routinely inspected, maintained and validated. Where invasive procedures are undertaken, the practice should ensure that reprocessing of surgical instruments is in line with best practice, for example the use of an accredited sterile supply department.

*k. Single-use medical devices*

Please refer to the corresponding item in Part 3.

*l. Antimicrobial prescribing*

An agreed local policy for antimicrobial prescribing should be in place and is as important in primary care as it is in secondary and tertiary care and where appropriate, be harmonised with the *British National Formulary*. A source of specialist therapeutic advice should also be available. This could be the PCT prescribing adviser in the first instance. Practices should aim to achieve maximum therapeutic effect whilst minimising the risk of contributing an additional burden on antimicrobial resistance and *Clostridium difficile* infection. Practices may be asked to provide evidence of how they comply with local antimicrobial guidelines and how they check they are adhering to this policy.

*m. Reporting of infection to the Health Protection Agency or local authority*

Please refer to the corresponding item in Part 3.

*n. Control of outbreaks and infections associated with specific alert organisms*

Practices are not expected to have policies for control of alert organisms but are expected to have policies that minimise risk to patients from these organisms, for example antimicrobial prescribing policies that take account of *Clostridium difficile* risk. The policy should also cover management of patients infected with alert organisms. These policies should be compiled by practices with the assistance of the PCT and Health Protection Agency when necessary.

Where there is a requirement for screening for the carriage of MRSA prior to admission to secondary care, this should be the subject of local agreement.

*o. CJD/vCJD – handling of instruments and devices*

Please refer to the corresponding item in Part 3.

*p. Safe handling and disposal of waste*

This should take account of existing guidance issued by the Department of Health and should include staff training, provision of appropriate waste disposal facilities in treatment rooms, separation of waste streams, and provision of a registered waste contractor.

*q. Packaging, handling and delivery of laboratory specimens*

Please refer to the corresponding item in Part 3.

*r. Care of deceased persons*

Primary medical care practices are not required to meet this specific policy.

*s. Use and care of invasive devices*

Policy should be based on evidence-based guidelines and should be easily accessible by all relevant care workers where invasive devices are used. Compliance with policy should be audited. Information on policy should be included in infection prevention and control training programmes for all relevant staff groups.

*t. Purchase, cleaning, decontamination, maintenance and disposal of equipment*

Please refer to the corresponding item in Part 3.

*u. Surveillance and data collection*

Primary medical care practices are not required to meet this specific policy.

*v. Dissemination of information*

Primary medical care practices are not required to meet this specific policy.

*w. Isolation facilities*

Primary medical care practices are not required to provide dedicated isolation facilities.

*x. Uniform and dress code*

Clothing/uniform and workwear policies ensure that clothing worn by staff when carrying out their duties should be clean and fit for purpose. Particular consideration should be given to items of attire that may inadvertently come into contact with the person being cared for.

*y. Immunisation of service users*

Please refer to the corresponding item in Part 3.

## Guidance for compliance with criterion 10

*Ensure, so far as is reasonably practicable, that care workers are free of and are protected from exposure to infections that can be caught at work and that all staff are suitably educated in the prevention and control of infection associated with the provision of health and social care.*

Access to an occupational health service should be available; PCTs have a responsibility to commission adequate occupational health services for primary medical service providers.

Please also refer to the corresponding item in Part 3.

## Appendix E: Definitions

Acute sector healthcare	Healthcare provided within a hospital setting and those primary care organisations working outside general practice, which would include those services previously provided by primary care trusts.
Adult social care	Social care includes all forms of personal care and other practical assistance provided for individuals who, due to age, illness, disability, pregnancy, childbirth, dependence on alcohol or drugs or any other similar circumstances, are in need of such care or assistance. For the purposes of the CQC, it only includes care provided for, or mainly for, adults in England.
Advocate	The term can be used in a general sense, as someone who speaks on behalf of a service user, or it can have a special meaning derived from the Mental Health Act 1983 and the Mental Capacity Act 2005. Informal advocates can be: carers; relatives; partners; neighbours or friends; or staff. Formal advocates can be those prescribed by legislation: independent mental health advocates or independent mental capacity advocates, or it can be those provided by local authority schemes, the NHS and charities.
Alert organism	Alert organism surveillance is used widely to detect and prevent outbreaks of infection. These organisms are reported to ICTs on a regular basis to identify possible or potential outbreaks of infections. The organisms that are surveyed will depend on local or national epidemiology. Examples of alert organisms may include <i>Acinetobacter</i> and group A streptococcus.
Antimicrobials	Antimicrobials are substances which are used in the treatment of infection caused by bacteria, fungi or viruses.

Aseptic technique	Used to describe clinical procedures that have been developed to prevent contamination of wounds and other susceptible body sites.
Assurance framework	A system for informing third parties that a process of due diligence is in place to assure safety and quality exists within that setting.
Audit	Audit is a quality improvement process that aims to improve service user care and outcomes by carrying out a systematic review and implementing change. This is not necessarily complex and in its simplest form shows compliance with a single protocol. Its value is in showing improvement or maintenance of a high standard. Once an audit has been completed and actions taken, repeating the audit will complete the audit cycle.
Blood-borne viruses (BBVs)	Organisms such as hepatitis B, hepatitis C and HIV that are potentially transmissible in the occupational setting via percutaneous (sharp) or mucocutaneous (mucous membrane/broken skin) routes.
Care worker	Any person whose normal duties concern the provision of diagnosis, treatment, accommodation or related services to service users and who has access to service users in the normal course of their work. This term includes not only front-line clinical care and support staff, but also volunteers, students, and some staff employed in estates and facilities management, such as cleaning staff and maintenance engineers.
Cohort nursing	The physical separation of service users with the same infection or those displaying similar signs and symptoms of infection in either a designated ward or a designated bay on a ward.
Colonisation	Where an organism is present on or within a person's body but without signs or symptoms of disease.

CQC	The Care Quality Commission, which is the integrated regulator of health and adult social care, replacing the Healthcare Commission, the Commission for Social Care Inspection and the Mental Health Act Commission. It was established by section 1 of the Health and Social Care Act 2008.
Decontamination	<p>The combination of processes (including cleaning, disinfection and sterilisation) used to make a reusable item safe for further use on service users and for handling by staff.</p> <p>Reusable medical devices should be reprocessed at one of the following three levels:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>– sterile (at point of use);</li><li>– sterilised (i.e. having been through the sterilisation process);</li><li>– clean (i.e. free of visible contamination).</li></ul>
Decontamination lead	The senior member of staff with responsibility for managing all aspects of decontamination. It is expected that this officer will report directly to the chief executive or registered provider. It is not intended that this post should always be filled by a technically competent individual, merely that their level of seniority within the organisation is sufficient to encompass all aspects of delivery and thus ensure compliance with best practice.
DIPC	Director of Infection Prevention and Control. An individual with overall responsibility for infection control and accountable to the registered provider in NHS provider organisations.
Disinfection	A process used to reduce the number of viable infectious agents but which may not necessarily inactivate some microbial agents, such as certain viruses and bacterial spores. Disinfection does not achieve the same reduction in microbial contamination levels as sterilisation.
Domiciliary care	Homecare that helps people cope with disability or illness, and allows them to maintain independence.

Exposure prone procedure	Exposure prone procedures are those invasive procedures where there is a risk that injury to the worker may result in the exposure of the patient's open tissues to the blood of the worker. Such procedures occur mainly in surgery, obstetrics and gynaecology, dentistry and some aspects of midwifery. Most nursing duties do not involve exposure prone procedures; exceptions include A&E and some aspects of theatre nursing.
Health and Social Care Act 2008	The legislation that established the CQC and lays out the framework for its powers and responsibilities.
Health protection unit	Local health protection units lead the Health Protection Agency response to all health related incidents.
ICD	Infection control doctor.
ICN/ICP	Infection control nurse/infection control practitioner.
ICT	Infection control team.
Infection	Where the body is invaded by a harmful organism (pathogen) which causes disease or illness.
Invasive device	A device which, in whole or part, penetrates inside the body, either through a body orifice or through the surface of the body.
IPC Lead	Infection Prevention and Control Lead for an organisation will have overall responsibility for infection prevention and control and will be accountable to the registered provider.
IPT	Infection prevention team.
Isolation facilities	Separation of a service user with a suspected or confirmed infection from other service users. In a healthcare setting, this will usually be a single room with handwashing facilities, ideally with en-suite lavatory and bath/shower. In some instances, isolation rooms will require additional special ventilation. In an adult social care setting, a service user can usually be safely isolated in his or her own room.

LINKs	Local Involvement Networks, which aim to give citizens a stronger voice in how their health and social care services are delivered. Run by local individuals and groups and independently supported – the role of LINKs is to find out what people want, monitor local services and to use their powers to hold them to account. Each local authority (that provides social services) has been given funding and is under a legal duty to make contractual arrangements that enable LINK activities to take place.
Low-risk single (specialty) facility	A provider unit delivering care around a single specialty.
Managed premises	Any premises where regulated activities are delivered, but excluding a service user's home where domiciliary care is provided and offices used purely for managerial services.
Medical device	A healthcare product other than medicines used for the diagnosis, prevention, monitoring and treatment of disease, injury or disability. This means everything from artificial hips to wound dressings, incubators to insulin delivery devices, scanners to scalpels, and wheelchairs to commodes.
NHS body	A Primary Care Trust; a Strategic Health Authority; a National Health Service Trust all or most of whose hospitals, establishments and facilities are situated in England; an NHS Foundation Trust; or a Special Health Authority performing functions only or mainly in respect of England.
PALS	Patient Advice and Liaison Services, which has been introduced to ensure that the NHS listens to patients, their relatives, carers and friends, answers their questions and resolves their concerns.

Personal care	Physical assistance given to a person in connection with eating and drinking, toileting (including in relation to the process of menstruation), washing and bathing, dressing, oral care, or the care of skin, hair and nails; or the prompting and supervision of a person, in relation to the performance of any of the activities where that person is unable to make a decision for themselves in relation to performing such an activity without such prompting and supervision.
Post-exposure prophylaxis (PEP)	This is a form of treatment to reduce the likelihood of viral infection after potential exposure to BBVs.
Primary healthcare teams	Health services primarily based in the local community, including community matrons, district nurses, General Practitioners, pharmacists, dentists, optometrists and podiatrists. This includes people employed by primary care trusts and primary medical care contractors.
Registered manager	An individual who is registered with the CQC to manage regulated activity at particular premises where the registered provider is not in day-to-day control.
Registered person	Any person who is the service provider or registered manager.
Registered provider	Any person, partnership or organisation that provides one or more of the regulated activities and is registered with the CQC as a registered provider of that service or those services.
Regulated activities	Broad service areas or types of care that are set out in regulations under section 8 of the Health and Social Care Act 2008. They will include those health and adult social care activities that an organisation needs to register with the CQC to provide care or treatment in England.

Risk assessment	An important step in deciding the policies and practices necessary to protect service users and staff from the risks of infection. It requires a careful examination of the service user's environment and procedures they may undergo that might cause them harm, to enable an assessment to be made of whether sufficient policies and precautions are in place to prevent infection.
Root Cause Analysis (RCA)	A process which allows organisations to understand areas requiring improvement in the patient care pathway, and more importantly, identifies and targets actions to minimise the chance of recurrence for future patients.
Serious untoward incident	A serious untoward incident (SUI) is in general terms something out of the ordinary or unexpected, with the potential to cause serious harm, and/or likely to attract public and media interest. This may be because it involves a large number of people, there is a question of poor clinical or management judgement, a service has failed, a service user has died under unusual circumstances, or there is the perception that any of these has occurred. SUIs are not exclusively clinical issues, for example an electrical failure may have consequences that make it an SUI.
Service users	Patients and users of adult social care (eg 'clients') as well as those children's services regulated by the CQC, such as domiciliary personal care services for children with disabilities.
Single-use device	A medical device that is intended to be used on an individual patient during a single procedure and then discarded. It is not intended to be re-processed and used on another patient. The labelling identifies the device as disposable and not intended to be re-processed and used again.

Single patient use	<p>Where a medical device has been designated as suitable for single patient use, more than one episode of use of this device on the same patient is permitted. The device may undergo some form of reprocessing/cleaning between each use in accordance with the manufacturers instructions for reuse. Before deciding that this is appropriate, it may be necessary to undertake a risk assessment to establish that process is safe.</p>
Traceability	<p>In respect of medical devices, primarily surgical instruments, traceability relates to either individual instruments or instrument sets being tracked through use and decontamination processes and traced in terms of identification of patients on whom they have been used. In most cases, traceability is applied to sets rather than individual instruments but this is changing as technology develops and individual instruments are already tracked in some situations. For example, traceability of individual instruments or devices is recommended where these have come into contact with certain tissues (CNS – brain and posterior ophthalmic) that are classified as carrying a high risk of potential transmission of prion disease should the infectious agent be present.</p>

## Appendix F: Regulations (extract)

The following is an extract from the *Health and Social Care Act 2008 (Regulated Activities) Regulations 2010: Part 4 Quality and safety of service provision in relation to regulated activity*.

### Cleanliness and infection control

**12.—** (1) The registered person must, so far as reasonably practicable, ensure that—

(a) service users;

(b) persons employed for the purpose of the carrying on of the regulated activity; and

(c) others who may be at risk of exposure to a health care associated infection arising from the carrying on of the regulated activity,

are protected against identifiable risks of acquiring such an infection by the means specified in paragraph (2).

(2) The means referred to in paragraph (1) are—

(a) the effective operation of systems designed to assess the risk of and to prevent, detect and control the spread of a health care associated infection;

(b) where applicable, the provision of appropriate treatment for those who are affected by a health care associated infection; and

(c) the maintenance of appropriate standards of cleanliness and hygiene in relation to—

(i) premises occupied for the purpose of carrying on the regulated activity,

(ii) equipment and reusable medical devices used for the purpose of carrying on the regulated activity, and

(iii) materials to be used in the treatment of service users where such materials are at risk of being contaminated with a health care associated infection.

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However, when a medical procedure is carried out in an adult social care setting, the relevant healthcare guidance should be consulted. Procedures should be performed only by carers who have demonstrated the appropriate competency and who are able to work to levels that may be indicated in the following publications.

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