

Glossary

Aerosols

Microscopic particles < 5 (micrometers) in size that are the residue of evaporated droplets and are produced when a person coughs, sneezes, shouts, or sings. These particles can remain suspended in the air for prolonged periods of time and can be carried on normal air currents in a room or beyond, to adjacent spaces or areas receiving exhaust air.

Airborne infectious disease

An aerosol transmissible disease acquired through the inhalation of airborne droplet nuclei, small particle aerosols, or dust particles containing the disease agent for which airborne precautions are recommended.

Airborne Precautions

A set of practices used for patients known or suspected to be infected with agents transmitted person-to-person by the airborne route.

Alcohol-based hand rub (ABHR)

A preparation containing alcohol designed for reducing the number of viable microorganisms on the hands.

Alert Organism

An organism that is identified as being potentially significant for infection prevention and control practices. Patients identified with these organisms may have an 'Alert' notice placed in the patient management system currently used in the CDHB.

Anteroom

A small room off a corridor that opens into a larger (usually isolation) room.

Antimicrobial

An agent that destroys micro-organisms, suppresses their multiplication or growth or inhibits their pathogenic action.

Antisepsis

The use of chemical or physical methods to prevent infection by destroying or inhibiting the growth of harmful microorganisms.

Asepsis

The absence of pathogenic (disease-producing) microorganisms.

Aseptic Non-touch Technique (ANTT)

ANTT is the understanding of asepsis and how to achieve asepsis. It is a non-touch practice and includes the recognition and protection of key-parts/key-sites. ANTT incorporates hand hygiene, use of gloves and standardised practices and techniques.

Aseptic technique

Aseptic technique is a set of specific practices and procedures performed under carefully controlled conditions with the goal of minimizing contamination by pathogens.

Bacteria

Single celled organisms that can exist either as independent organisms or as parasites (dependant on another organism for life). Example include Acidophilus a normal inhabitant of yoghurt, E-coli which lives in the bowel but can cause disease elsewhere.

Bloodstream infection (BSI)

The presence of live pathogens in the blood, causing an infection.

Carbapenamase Resistant Enterobacteriaceae (CRE)

A family of bacteria that are difficult to treat because they have high levels of resistance to antibiotics.

Carbapenamase Producing Organisms (CPO) refers to **bacteria** that are resistant to **carbapenem** antibiotics by **producing** an enzyme to break down the **carbapenem** antibiotics

Carrier

An individual who harbours the specific organisms of a disease without manifesting symptoms and is capable of transmitting the infection. The condition of such an individual is referred to as the carrier state.

Cohorting

The placement of two or more patients with similar symptoms or diagnosed conditions in the same room or area of a facility physically separated from other patients and cared for by staffs that do not care for other patients.

Colonisation

The sustained presence of replicating infectious agents on or in the body without the production of an immune response or disease.

Community Acquired Infection (CAI)

Infection caused by micro-organisms acquired in the community and present or incubating at the time of the patients' admission to a healthcare facility.

Contact Precautions

A set of practices used to prevent transmission of infectious agents that are spread by direct or indirect contact with the patient or the patient's environment.

Contamination

Micro-organisms that are either transiently present on a body surface (without causing tissue invasion or physiological reaction) or present on or in an inanimate object.

Decontamination

Use of physical or chemical means to remove, inactivate, or destroy pathogens on a surface or item so that they are no longer capable of transmitting infectious particles and the surface or items is rendered safe for handling, use or disposal.

Detergent solution

Detergent diluted with water as per manufacturer's instructions.

Disinfectant

A chemical agent used on inanimate objects and surfaces (e.g. floors, walls, or sinks) to destroy virtually all recognised pathogenic microorganisms, but not necessarily all microbial forms (e.g. bacterial endospores).

Disinfection

Destruction of pathogenic and other kinds of microorganisms by physical or chemical means. Disinfection is classified as low-level, intermediate-level and high-level disinfection.

Droplet Precautions

A set of practices used for patient's known or suspected to be infected with agents transmitted by respiratory droplets.

Endogenous Infection

An infection caused by a micro-organism that is already part of the host normal flora (e.g. of the skin, nose, oral cavity, gastrointestinal tract).

Epidemic

A widespread outbreak of an infectious disease. Many people are infected at the same time.

Epidemiology

A branch of medical science that deals with the study of the causes, distribution and control of a disease or pathogen in populations.

Exogenous Infection

An infection that is caused by a micro-organism obtained from an external source (e.g. other patients, staff or the environment).

Extended Spectrum Beta Lactamase (ESBL)

An ESBL is an enzyme produced by certain bacteria that inactivates penicillin and results in resistance to that antibiotic.

Five Moments

The 'Five Moments for Hand Hygiene', programme has been developed by the World Health Organization (WHO) and defines the five key moments when healthcare workers should perform hand hygiene.

Fungus

A single-celled or multicellular organism that can cause infection in healthy and immunocompromised persons. Fungi are also used for the development of antibiotics, antitoxins, and other drugs used to control various human diseases.

Healthcare-associated Bloodstream Infection (HABSI)

A bloodstream infection acquired as a result of healthcare interventions including those in the community. These may manifest during hospitalisation or after people leave the healthcare facility.

Hand Hygiene

A general term applying to processes that aim to reduce the number of micro-organisms on hands. This includes use of liquid soap (plain or antimicrobial) and water (if the hands are visibly soiled), or application of a waterless antimicrobial agent (e.g. alcohol-based hand rub) to the surface of the hands.

Hazardous waste

Waste material that is classified as either infectious; medical waste, sharps waste, anatomical waste or special waste.

Healthcare-associated infections (HAI)

Infections acquired as a result of healthcare interventions including those in the community. These may manifest during hospitalisation, after people leave the healthcare facility or whilst receiving care in the community.

High-risk patients

Patients with an increased probability of infection due to their underlying medical condition. Includes the patients from the following

clinical areas; Burns, Intensive Care Unit, Neonatal nurseries, Birthing Unit, Operating Theatre, Paediatric/CHOC, Transplant/BMTU and immunosuppressed patients.

Hypochlorite

A chlorine-based disinfectant.

Iatrogenic Infection

An infection caused by a micro-organism introduced by an invasive procedure.

Immunocompromised

Refers to an individual whose immune system has been impaired by disease or treatment.

Incidence

The number of new events (e.g. cases of disease) occurring in a population over defined period of time.

Infection

The invasion of body tissue by disease-causing organisms, their multiplication and the reaction of the tissue to the infectious agents and the toxins they produce.

Infectious agent

An infectious agent (also called a pathogen or germ) is a biological agent that causes disease or illness to its host. Most infectious agents are microorganisms such as bacteria, viruses, fungi, parasites and prions.

Invasive procedure

Entry into tissues, cavities or organs or repair of traumatic injuries.

Methicillin-resistant Staphylococcus aureus (MRSA)

Strains of *Staphylococcus aureus* that are resistant to many of the antibiotics commonly used to treat infections. Epidemic strains also have a capacity to spread easily from person-to-person.

Multi-drug resistant organisms (MDROs)

Bacteria that are resistant to one or more classes of antimicrobial agents and usually are resistant to all but one or two commercially available antimicrobial agents.

Negative pressure room

A single-occupancy patient care room with a ventilation system that generates **negative pressure** to allow air to flow into the isolation **room** but not escape from the **room**, as air will naturally flow from areas with higher **pressure** to areas with lower **pressure**

Notifiable Disease

A communicable disease notifiable to the Medical Officer of Health as listed by the Ministry of Health.

Pandemic

An epidemic that is geographically widespread, occurring either throughout a region or throughout the world.

Parasite

An organism which lives in or on another organism (its host) and benefits by deriving nutrients at the hosts expense and can cause disease in humans.

Pathogenic

An agent that causes disease, e.g. bacterium, virus or fungus.

Patient Surroundings or Patient Zone

A space temporarily dedicated to an individual patient for that patient's stay where the immediate surroundings will be colonized with the patient's flora. This includes furniture and equipment within

the zone. The curtain is considered to be OUTSIDE the patient surroundings or zone

Percutaneous injury

Any injury that is caused by a sharp instrument/object e.g. needle, scalpel, cutting or puncturing the skin.

Personal Protective Equipment (PPE)

A variety of barriers used alone or in combination to protect mucous membranes, skin, and clothing from contact with blood and body fluid. PPE includes, but is not limited to, gloves, masks, respirators, goggles, face shields, and gowns.

Phlebitis

Inflammation of the wall of a vein.

Prevalence

The number of events (e.g. cases of disease) present in a defined population at one point in time.

Prion

Prions are infectious agents composed entirely of a protein material and lead to disease. e.g. Creutzfeldt-Jakob disease (CJD) and its variant (vCJD)

Procedure

An act of care for a patient where there is a risk of direct introduction of a pathogen to the patient.

Protective Environment Precautions

Protective environment precautions are based on environmental and facility controls that minimise fungal spore counts in the air and reduce the risk of invasive environmental fungal infections e.g. HEPA filtered positive pressure air handling.

Resident micro-organism

Micro-organisms that are part of the normal flora.

Resistant micro-organisms

Micro-organisms that do not respond to antibiotic concentrations with usual dosage regimens.

Respiratory Hygiene and Cough Etiquette

A combination of measures designed to minimize the transmission of respiratory pathogens via droplet or airborne routes in healthcare settings.

Sensitive micro-organisms

Micro-organisms that respond to antibiotic concentrations with usual drug regimens.

Sharps

Instruments used in delivering healthcare that can inflict a penetrating injury if used or disposed of incorrectly, e.g. needles, lancets and scalpels.

Standard Precautions

Work practices that constitute the first-line approach to infection control in the healthcare environment. These are recommended for the treatment and care of all patients.

Sterile

Free from all living microorganisms; usually described as a probability (e.g. the probability of a surviving microorganism being 1 in 1 million).

Sterilisation

Use of a physical or chemical procedure to destroy all microorganisms including substantial numbers of resistant bacterial spores.

Strain

A strain is a genetic variant or subtype of a microorganism including substantial numbers of resistant bacterial spores.

Surface barrier

Barriers (e.g. clear plastic wrap, bags, sheets, tubing or other materials impervious to moisture) designed to help prevent contamination of surfaces and equipment.

Surgical site infection (SSI)

A post-surgical infection that is caused by the surgical procedure.

Surveillance

The ongoing systematic collection and analysis of data and the provision of information which leads to action being taken to prevent and control a disease, usually one of an infectious nature

Transient Micro-organisms

Micro-organisms that are a recent contamination of the skin and survive on the skin for a limited time. This is acquired from having contact with people who have normal, colonised or infected flora or from the environment.

Transmission-based precautions

CDHB definition Transmission-based precautions are used when the route(s) of transmission of a micro-organism is/are not completely interrupted using Standard Precautions.

Vancomycin resistant enterococci (VRE)

Enterococci bacteria that are naturally present in the intestinal tract of all people which have acquired resistance to Vancomycin. VRE are frequently resistant to other antibiotics generally used to treat enterococcal infections. These antibiotic-resistant bacteria have the potential to be spread between patients.

Virus

A micro-organism that is smaller than a bacterium that cannot grow or reproduce away from a living cell. It invades living cells and can mutate whilst replicating making treatment difficult.

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