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**Cumberland
Council**

Community Infection Prevention and Control Policy for Care Home settings

Safe management of blood and body fluid spillages

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SAFE MANAGEMENT OF BLOOD AND BODY FLUID SPILLAGES

1. Introduction

NHS England recommends that organisations adopt the *National infection prevention and control manual (NIPCM) for England*, complemented by care setting specific Policies. This Policy has been produced in accordance with this recommendation and incorporates the *NIPCM* version as referenced in this Policy with detailed care home specific guidance.

This Policy is one of the 'Standard infection control precautions' (SICPs).

Spillages of blood and other body fluids may transmit blood-borne viruses. Spillages must be treated immediately by staff trained to undertake this safely. Responsibilities for the management of blood/body fluid spillages must be clear within each care setting.

Staff who may have contact with blood or blood stained body fluids, or are exposed to sharps or other exposure risks, should have the opportunity for hepatitis B vaccination and antibody testing to check for their response.

Always use SICPs and, where required, 'Transmission based precautions' (TBPs), refer to the 'SICPs and TBPs Policy for Care Home Settings'.

When caring for residents in relation to any new or emerging infections, staff should refer to national infection prevention and control guidance.

2. Dealing with blood and body fluid spillages

Clean up blood and body fluid spillages promptly to reduce the risk of infection to other people.

Appropriate personal protective equipment (PPE) should be worn, e.g. non-sterile disposable gloves and apron, and SICPs followed.

Best practice is to use an appropriate spillage kit for the type of spillage and surface, e.g. carpet, soft furnishings, following the manufacturer's guidance and ensuring it is within the expiry date. Some spillage kits are suitable for all types of body fluids, including blood, e.g. spill wipes, always check the manufacturer's instructions on suitability and usage.

If a care home approves a product for use in the management of blood and body fluid spillages, it is responsible for ensuring safe systems of work, including the completion of a documented risk assessment approved through local governance procedures. The care home must confirm the efficacy and suitability of the product (i.e. that it conforms with the relevant standards and is appropriate for the intended use) with the product manufacturer.

Spillage kits may contain solidifying polymer granules. A 'National Patient Safety Alert' issued in 2017, following a number of deaths and incidents related to ingestion of the product, advises a risk assessment and procedures in place to ensure supplies are securely stored.

In the absence of spillage kits, chlorine-based solutions can be prepared and used as in the Tables below:

- The required dilution for dealing with blood or blood stained body fluid spillages is 10,000 parts per million (ppm) available chlorine or equivalent product, as per manufacturer's instructions
- The required dilution for dealing with body fluid spillages that are not blood or blood stained, is 1,000 ppm available chlorine or equivalent product, as per manufacturer's instructions

Action for blood and/or blood stained body fluid spillages
Dilution of 10,000 parts per million (ppm) available chlorine

1. Clean hands and put on a disposable apron and gloves (wear facial protection if there is a risk of splashing to the eyes, nose or mouth).
2. Ventilate the area, e.g. open windows/doors, as fumes will be released when using chlorine.
3. Place disposable paper towels over the spillage to absorb and contain it, then apply the solution to the towels. Leave for the required contact time as specified by manufacturer, e.g. 3-10 minutes.
4. Clear away the spillage and dispose of in the appropriate waste stream.
5. With detergent wipes or general purpose neutral detergent and warm water and disposable cloth, clean the area, then leave to air dry or dry with paper towels.
6. Dispose of cloth and paper towels in the appropriate waste stream.
7. Remove and dispose of PPE in the appropriate waste stream.
8. Wash hands with liquid soap and warm running water, rinse and dry thoroughly to prevent the transmission of infection.

Action for body fluid spillages
Dilution of 1,000 parts per million (ppm) available chlorine

1. Do not use a solution containing chlorine directly on to urine as toxic fumes will be released.
2. Clean hands and put on a disposable apron and gloves (wear facial protection if there is a risk of splashing to the eyes, nose or mouth).
3. Ventilate the area, e.g. open windows/doors, as fumes will be released when using chlorine.
4. Soak up any excess liquid/clean up any solid material using paper towels. If it is a urine spillage, a gelling agent can be used. Place solution directly onto the spillage. Leave for the required contact time as specified by the manufacturer.
5. Clear away the spillage and dispose of in the appropriate waste stream.
6. With detergent wipes or general purpose neutral detergent and warm water and disposable cloth, clean the area, then leave to air dry or dry with paper towels.

7. Dispose of cloth and paper towels in the appropriate waste stream.
8. Remove and dispose of PPE in the appropriate waste stream.
9. Wash hands with liquid soap and warm running water, rinse and dry thoroughly to prevent the transmission of infection.

- Dispose of waste and PPE as infectious or offensive waste, as appropriate.
- Wash hands with liquid soap and warm running water, rinse and dry thoroughly with paper towels.
- If a mop and bucket are used, they should be in accordance with the national colour coding, refer to the 'Safe management of the care environment Policy for Care Home settings'. After use, the mop head should be laundered or disposed of immediately in the appropriate waste stream. The bucket should be washed with general purpose neutral detergent and warm water and dried with paper towels, and then wiped with a chlorine-based disinfectant at 1,000 ppm available chlorine or equivalent product, as per manufacturer's instructions, and stored upside down to air dry.
- All cloths must be single use and disposed of after use.

3. Use of chlorine-based disinfectants

- Always use the appropriate PPE, e.g. disposable apron and gloves, and wear facial protection if there is a risk of splashing to the face.
- Some disinfectants supplied as tablets must be made up with the specified amount of water using a diluter bottle in order to achieve the correct concentration.
- Always use cold water when diluting chlorine-based disinfectants.
- If the dilution of the chlorine-based disinfectant is incorrect and a weak solution is used, any blood-borne virus, e.g. hepatitis B, hepatitis C and HIV, will not be killed. If the dilution is too strong, the equipment or surfaces may be damaged.
- Diluted chlorine-based disinfectant solutions become less effective after 24 hours. When a solution is made, the date and time should be recorded and the solution disposed of after 24 hours.
- To ensure that microorganisms, such as bacteria and viruses, are killed, always leave chlorine-based disinfectant solutions as specified by the manufacturer, e.g. 3-10 minutes.
- Do not use a chlorine-based disinfectant solution directly on urine as toxic fumes will be released.
- Chlorine-based disinfectants, such as household bleach, should not be used on soft furnishings, untreated wood and carpets as it will cause 'whitening/ bleaching'. Therefore, only general purpose neutral detergent and warm water, a carpet shampoo machine or steam cleaner, should be used.
- If soft furnishings or other items are heavily contaminated with blood or body fluids that cannot be adequately decontaminated, they may need to be disposed of.

4. Evidence of good practice

It is recommended that, for assurance purposes, 'Safe management of blood and body fluid spillages' is audited. This can be achieved by completing the 'SICPs Assurance: Annual IPC Audit Tool for Care Homes' available to download at www.infectionpreventioncontrol.co.uk/resources/sicps-assurance-annual-ipc-audit-tool-for-care-homes/

Following completion of the audit, an 'Action plan' should be drawn up and implemented to demonstrate continuous improvement.

5. Infection Prevention and Control resources, education and training

See Appendix 1 for the 'Safe management of blood and body fluid spillages: Quick reference guide'.

The Community Infection Prevention and Control (IPC) Team have produced a wide range of innovative educational and IPC resources designed to assist your Care Home in achieving compliance with the *Health and Social Care Act 2008: code of practice on the prevention and control of infections and related resources* and CQC registration requirements.

These resources are either free to download from the website or available at a minimal cost covering administration and printing:

- 30 IPC Policy documents for Care Home settings
- Preventing Infection Workbook: Guidance for Care Homes
- IPC CQC inspection preparation Pack for Care Homes
- IPC audit tools, posters, leaflets and factsheets
- IPC Bulletin for Care Homes

In addition, we hold IPC educational training events in North Yorkshire.

Further information on these high quality evidence-based resources is available at www.infectionpreventioncontrol.co.uk.

6. References

Department of Health (Updated December 2022) *Health and Social Care Act 2008: code of practice on the prevention and control of infections and related guidance*

Health and Safety Executive (December 2019) *How to deal with an exposure incident*

NHS England (Updated 2025) *National infection prevention and control manual (NIPCM)*

for England

NHS England (2019) *National Patient Safety Alert: Risk of death and severe harm from ingesting superabsorbent polymer gel granules*

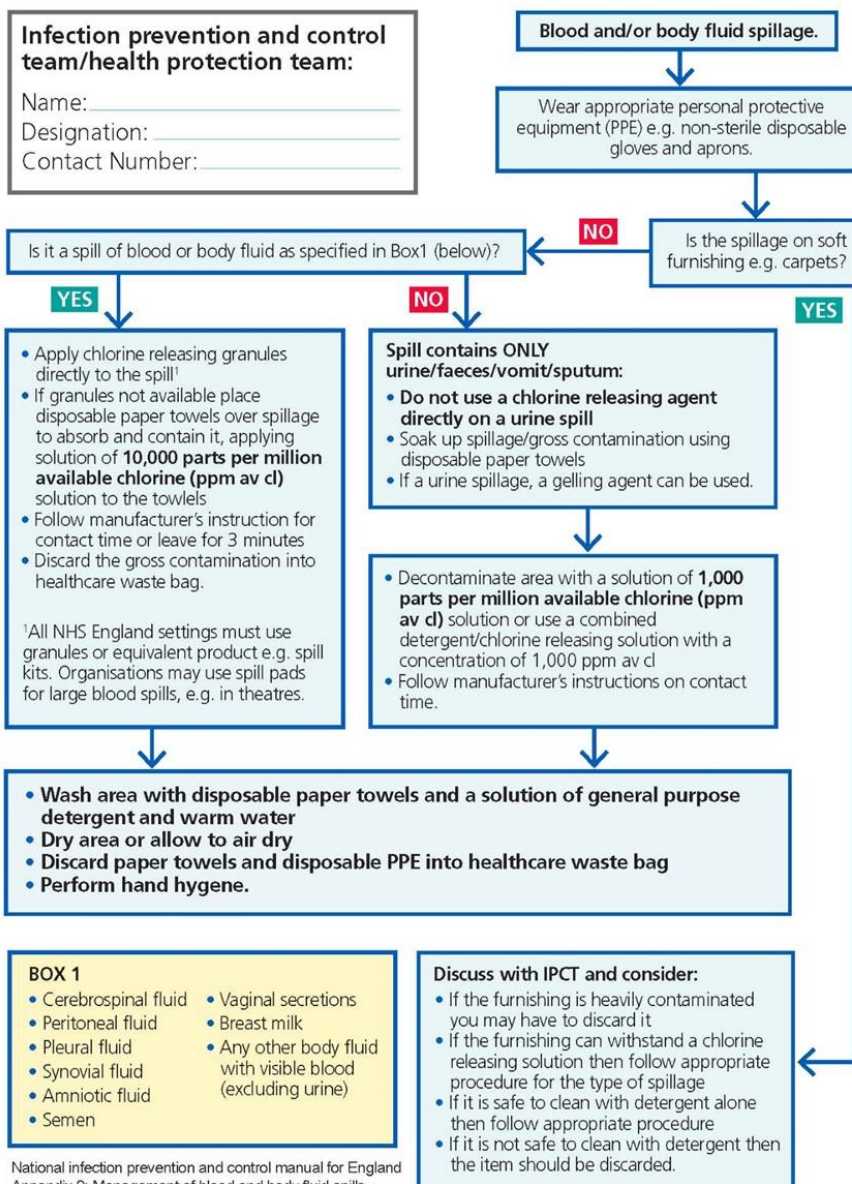
7. Appendices

Appendix 1: Safe management of blood and body fluid spillages: Quick reference guide



Safe management of blood and body fluid spillages: Quick reference guide

Appendix 9: Management of blood and body fluid spills



For further information, please refer to the full Policy which can be found at www.infectionpreventioncontrol.co.uk/care-homes/policies/

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