

Safe Management of Care Environment

Printable learning resource

What is this resource?

This resource is based on the e-learning module “NES: Safe Management of Care Environment” from the **Scottish Infection Prevention and Control Education Pathway**.

The aim of this document is to make the e-learning content available to learners who

- do not have regular access to a computer and/or a network
- do not yet have the necessary IT skills or confidence to complete e-learning
- have different needs and therefore e-learning is not suitable for them.

All screen captures from the original module are included.

How should this resource be used?

This resource can either be

- uploaded as a PDF file to tablets or other digital devices without internet access, or
- printed. (Printing in black and white is sufficient.)

- All navigational instructions on the screens in this document should be ignored.
- We have given instructions on how to complete interactivities and questions.
- A space has been provided for staff to make any additional notes after each topic.

Internet access

Internet access is required for the following:

Online feedback form and web links for additional resources. Staff should be enabled to use web links and complete the feedback form if at all possible.

Online assessment. The online version of this resource consists of the e-learning module and a separate online assessment, and staff should be enabled and encouraged to complete this online assessment locally.



Safe management of care environment



[Learn how to navigate this module.](#)

Start

Aim and target audience

Safe Management of Care Environment is one of the 10 standard infection control precautions (SICPs).

This module aims to give you the knowledge and skills to ensure that the care environment is safe for practice. This includes **routine** environmental cleanliness and maintenance.

It is ideal for all health and social care staff who have a **responsibility** for providing a clean and well maintained care environment.



It is important that you have completed the **Personal Protective Equipment (PPE)** and **Hand Hygiene** modules before starting this module.

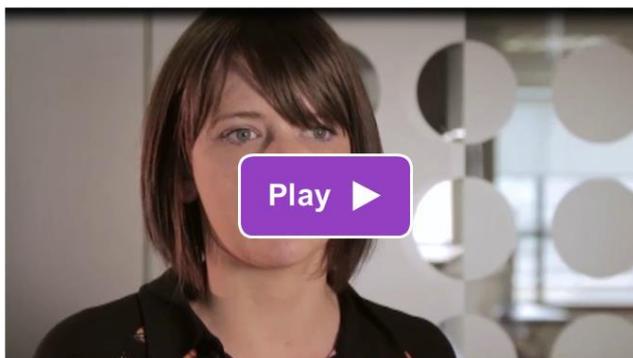


You are the first line of defence against the spread of infections

Regular cleaning of the care environment is an important part of infection prevention and control in all care settings. Cleaning physically removes micro-organisms which may cause infection and the organic matter on which they thrive, but it does not necessarily destroy them.



Meet Julie Robertson who is a hospital cleaner (domestic assistant). Watch her discuss the importance of cleaning and her role.



Can't see or hear the video? Read the [transcript](#).

< PREV NEXT >



NES IPC Environment Video Transcript

You're keeping the hospital ticking, you're keeping it going.
Everybody wouldn't be able to do their jobs if the cleaners weren't there first.
If you're not doing things right, if you're taking one thing from one area to another and maybe contaminating.

You can't do that.

So there is things that people should know before they're doing the job.
I think people need to be aware of infections that can spread and the cleaning is going to be better and the standards are going to be kept up and everybody will be working together and doing things right.

Learning outcomes

After completing this module, you will be able to:

- Identify what is meant by the term **care environment**.
- Prepare yourself and the environment for **routine** cleaning.
- Select, correctly use, dispose of and store cleaning equipment and materials.
- Clean at appropriate times and evidence that cleaning schedules are followed.
- Take action where there is concern over environmental cleanliness.



This module does not cover care equipment, as it is covered in the Safe Management of Care Equipment module.



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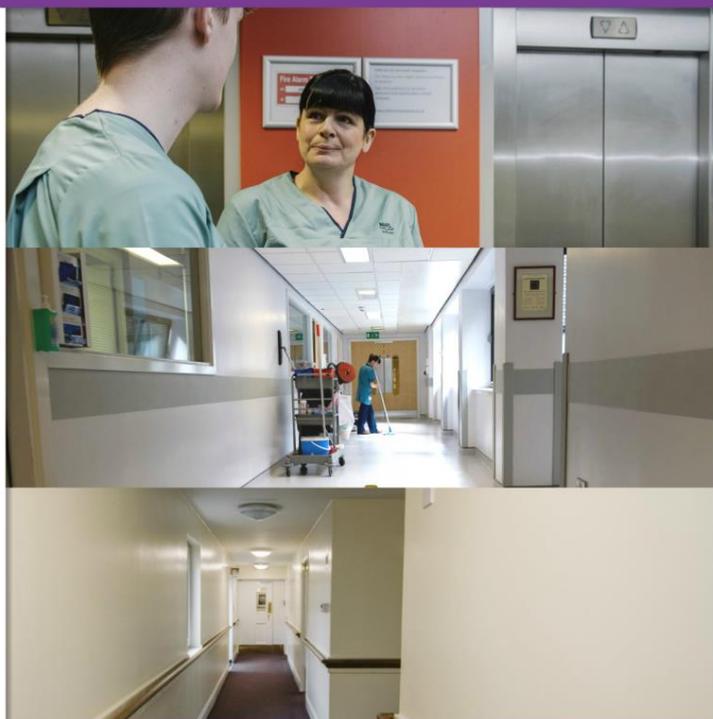
Overview

There are 3 topics in this module.

- **Topic 1:** Introduction to the care environment
- **Topic 2:** Four steps to a clean environment
- **Topic 3:** Taking action to improve cleaning

You will learn from a series of **activities**, **job aids** and **real life scenarios** that will help you put your knowledge into practice where you work. You can learn more using the links in the **Resources** page at the end of this module.

Once you've visited **all the screens** in this module, you can access the separate assessment. You need to **score 80%** in the assessment to pass and get a certificate of completion.



This module will take you about **20 minutes** to complete.

< PREV NEXT >

Cleanliness in the news

Cleanliness in health and social care often hits the headlines. A clean care environment, whether in a practice, a hospital, the community setting or care home, is vital for infection prevention. **People receiving care and visitors must feel confident that your setting is safe for practice.**



Select each label for more information.

What happens when cleaning is done to a safe standard?

What happens when cleaning is below the required standard?

What happens when cleaning is done to a safe standard?

Close

Cleaning done well leaves people receiving care, staff and visitors with a good impression!

“ I watched the nurses repeatedly clean beds and lockers. Never once did they miss a speck. ”

Visitor

“ The domestic staff worked tirelessly, cleaning meticulously. This reflected in the fresh smell and appearance in this unit. ”

Patient

“ We always get complimented on how clean our area is. ”

Staff

What happens when cleaning is below the required standard?

Close

Cleaning done below standard leaves people receiving care, staff and visitors with a bad impression!

“ My dad...spilled his urine bottle onto the floor. A cleaner...mopped it up and...used the same mop along the floor into the hallway. ”

Visitor

“ I got MRSA after an operation. No wonder! The place was filthy. I won't be going back there again! ”

Patient

“ We're fed up with getting complaints about the cleanliness of our area. We try really hard to keep it clean but it's never enough. ”

Staff



Topic 1: Introduction to the care environment

In this topic, you will learn more about what is meant by the term **care environment**. You will learn who has the overall responsibility for making sure that it is kept safe for practice. You will also learn what **frequently touched surfaces** are and why it is important to focus on keeping them clean.



You can learn how to keep care equipment safe and fit for practice in the **Safe Management of Care Equipment** module.

Remember, you can use the **Menu** to jump to any screen or to check where you are in this topic.

< PREV NEXT >

> Topic 1: Introduction to the care environment

What is the care environment?

You have an important role to play in ensuring that the care environment is clean and safe for practice. The care environment comprises all accommodation, fixtures and fittings where care is delivered.



Select each tile to reveal example areas within the care environment.

Low and high level surfaces

Furniture/fixtures and fittings

Ambulances

Storage areas (clean and dirty)

Accommodation and corridors

Sanitary fixtures and fittings

Consulting rooms/ waiting rooms

Flooring/glass partitions/panels/ wall finishes



You can download some [example areas within the care environment](#).

< PREV NEXT >

Examples of environmental cleaning task groups

This job aid gives you some examples of the different areas and surfaces that need to be cleaned in the environment.

Low level/ High level surfaces

Dado rails, window ledges, floors, vents, partition ledges, pipes, skirting and any other surfaces which may attract dust or spillages. Wall surfaces, ledges, cabinets, furnishings, pipes, vents, grills, direction signs, curtain rails which can be reached utilising high dusting tools.

Furniture/fixtures and fittings

Door handles, desks, lockers, tables, examination couches, cabinets, bed lights, examination lights, light switches, light cords, control panels, patient call button, pictures, TVs and hifi equipment, including remote controls, radiators, pipe work, ledges, fire extinguishers, decorative plants, trees and containers, clocks, patient-line units, desk telephones.

Ambulance stations

The majority of areas are considered non-clinical with the exception of laundry, sluice, consumable storage, staff changing and sanitary facilities.

Storage areas (clean and dirty)

Clean linen, equipment, supplies, waste and linen for uplift.

Accommodation and corridors

On-call/relatives rooms, bedrooms, sitting rooms, entrances, corridors, recreation rooms.

Sanitary fixtures and fittings

Wash hand basins and surrounds, bath, showers, toilet, bidets, urinals, soap, toilet roll and towel dispensers, toilet brush holders, bath/shower mats, pipes, fixtures & fittings.

Consulting rooms/treatment rooms/waiting areas

Clinics/health centres/dental surgeries/outpatient departments and public waiting areas.

Flooring/glass partitions/panels/wall finishes

Soft and hard flooring, control panels behind beds, laminate and ceramic wall finishes, door kick plates, glass partitions.

The care environment - who is responsible?

The **person in charge** of the care area has the **overall** responsibility for ensuring safe working practice within their area, **including** all aspects of environmental cleanliness. They must act on any problems identified.

In general, **cleaning staff / domestic services staff** are responsible for cleaning the care environment areas, fixtures and fittings, but this may vary between settings. For example, **clinical staff, administrative staff** or other staff also sometimes share responsibility for cleaning certain parts of the care environment in different care settings.

You should be aware of specific responsibilities in your setting. It's important that **everyone works together and communicates with each other** to provide a safe environment for people receiving care.



Frequently touched surfaces

Some surfaces in the care environment are **frequently touched** by hands. **These are heavily contaminated with micro-organisms.** It's really important that you don't forget these surfaces. **Focus on keeping these areas clean.**



Select each image to take a closer look at the frequently touched surfaces.



Close X



The **sides and undersides** of beds and trolleys can become heavily contaminated during care. Sometimes dirt or blood and body fluid builds up.

These areas are often overlooked and show visible contamination.

Good to know: Some **cleaning staff** might **share responsibility** with **clinical staff** for keeping **some** parts of the bed/trolley clean depending on local policies.

Close X



Bed tables are often used for placing meals, magazines, drinks, sick bowls and used tissues.

The **sides and undersides** of the tables can be heavily contaminated, especially if there are **spillages** or if they're touched by **unclean** hands.

Close X



Many different people sit on seats, often using the **sides and undersides of armrests and seats** to move position or push themselves up out of the chair.

That means these areas can get heavily contaminated. Dirt can easily build up - especially if hand hygiene isn't performed regularly.

All surfaces that people receiving care, staff or visitors might have contact with could be contaminated and need regular cleaning.

Close X



Think about how many people touch door handles and plates during a single day, including people receiving care, visitors and staff!

These surfaces can also easily become **visibly** soiled if touched by **dirty** hands.



Staff often communicate and handle information using computers.

Keyboard keys can easily become visibly soiled as they are frequently touched by staff hands.



Hand hygiene is a key practice in reducing the spread of micro-organisms.

The tap **handle** and the soap dispenser **lever** or **plunger** are regularly touched by **unclean** hands and can become heavily contaminated with micro-organisms.

Frequently touched surfaces



You have learned about what the care environment is and what's in it. Take a moment to check your knowledge before moving to the next topic.

Which of the following are frequently touched surfaces in the care environment?



Select **ALL** options that apply, then select **SUBMIT**.

- Soap dispensers and taps
- Door handles and door push plates
- Walls and floors
- Computer keyboards



Please try to answer the question above and then check the answer and the feedback on the following page.



Frequently touched surfaces



You have learned about what the care environment is and what's in it. Take a moment to check your knowledge before moving to the next topic.

Which of the following are frequently touched surfaces in the care environment?



Select **ALL options** that apply, then select **SUBMIT**.

- Soap dispensers and taps
- Door handles and door push plates
- Walls and floors
- Computer keyboards

That's correct.

Door handles and door push plates, soap dispensers and taps and computer keyboards are frequently touched surfaces.

Floors may be heavily contaminated with micro-organisms from feet, dust and human skin scales, but like walls, they're rarely touched by hands.

Floors and walls are easily cleaned. If they're kept in a good state of repair, they don't spread micro-organisms unless touched.

Select **Continue** to go to Topic 2, where you'll learn about the **four steps** to a clean environment.

Continue >

< PREV SUBMIT

Notes for Topic 1: Introduction to the care environment



Topic 2: Four steps to a clean environment

In this topic, you'll learn about **four steps** to a clean environment:

- Collecting equipment and materials
- Cleaning methods
- Discarding waste and storage of equipment
- Completing cleaning schedules.

You'll also have an opportunity to work through some activities to check your learning.



Remember, you can use the **Menu** to jump to any screen or to check where you are in this topic.

< PREV NEXT >

> Topic 2: Four steps to a clean environment

Routine environmental cleaning



What do you think routine environmental cleaning means?



Select the **option** that applies, then select **SUBMIT**.

- Regular cleaning carried out on a scheduled basis
- Ad hoc cleaning (like mopping up spillages)
- Enhanced cleaning during outbreaks



Please try to answer the question above and then check the answer and the feedback on the following page.



That's correct.

Routine environmental cleaning is regular cleaning which is carried out on a scheduled basis, not on an ad hoc basis and not in response to an outbreak.

Routine environmental cleaning



What do you think routine environmental cleaning means?



Select the **option** that applies, then select **SUBMIT**.

- Regular cleaning carried out on a scheduled basis
- Ad hoc cleaning (like mopping up spillages)
- Enhanced cleaning during outbreaks

Continue >

< PREV SUBMIT

Four steps to routine environmental cleaning

Your role is to provide **consistent** and **good quality routine cleaning** to prevent micro-organisms spreading in the environment, making it clean and safe for practice. You can do this in **four steps**.

Step 1

Collect PPE, cleaning equipment and materials

Step 2

Follow cleaning methods

Step 3

Discard waste and store equipment

Step 4

Complete cleaning schedules



Download this [job aid](#) to see what to do at each step.

< PREV NEXT >

Environmental cleaning steps

Step 1 Collect cleaning equipment and materials

- Select Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) – single use disposable gloves and apron.
 - **Good to know!** Reusable household gloves (like Marigolds) aren't suitable for environmental cleaning tasks in healthcare settings due to the risk of cross-infection.
- Select cleaning equipment and prepare appropriate cleaning solutions for individual tasks.
- Use disposable cloths or paper towels.
- Check that equipment is clean and in a good state of repair.
- Use a fresh solution of **general purpose neutral detergent in warm water** for **routine** cleaning.
- Products containing 1,000 parts per million available chlorine should be used routinely on sanitary fittings.
- Avoid using refillable containers – these are a breeding ground for micro-organisms.
- Follow the NHSScotland Equipment Colour Coding in NHS facilities.

Step 2 Follow cleaning methods

- Follow the manufacturer's instructions for dilution, application and contact time.
- Change cleaning solution when dirty OR at 15 minutes intervals OR when changing tasks.
- Follow your local cleaning work schedule.
- Move or remove non-essential items and clutter.
- Clean from clean tasks/areas to dirty.
- Minimise disruption to care being provided.

Step 3 Discard waste and store of equipment

- Clean equipment after use and store dry.
- Remove and discard PPE and perform hand hygiene.
- Discard disposable cloths/paper roll immediately into the healthcare waste receptacle.

- Don't pour used cleaning solutions into wash hand basins, because you will contaminate the basin. Use a sluice or dirty utility area.
- Store non floor standing equipment off the floor.
- Keep cleaning solutions locked away when not in use.

Step 4 Follow cleaning schedules

Cleaning schedules are not just about ticking a box but are about showing that agreed standards of cleanliness have been achieved.

- Identify what has to be cleaned, when and how.
- Ensure they include evidence of responsibilities, cleaning methods and frequencies of tasks.
- Review cleaning schedules to make sure that tasks are being completed.

Step 1 – Collect PPE, cleaning equipment and materials

Preparation

Meet Maggie. She has been a cleaner for 23 years. She is about to start her day. First she asks her colleagues if there's **anything new** she needs to know about.

Then she checks the cleaning schedule to make sure there are no changes.

There are no special cleaning requirements. Maggie must clean rooms without sanitary fittings first.

Go to the next screen where you will choose the cleaning equipment and materials Maggie needs.



> Topic 2:

Four steps to a clean environment

Step 1 – Collect PPE, cleaning equipment and materials

Preparation



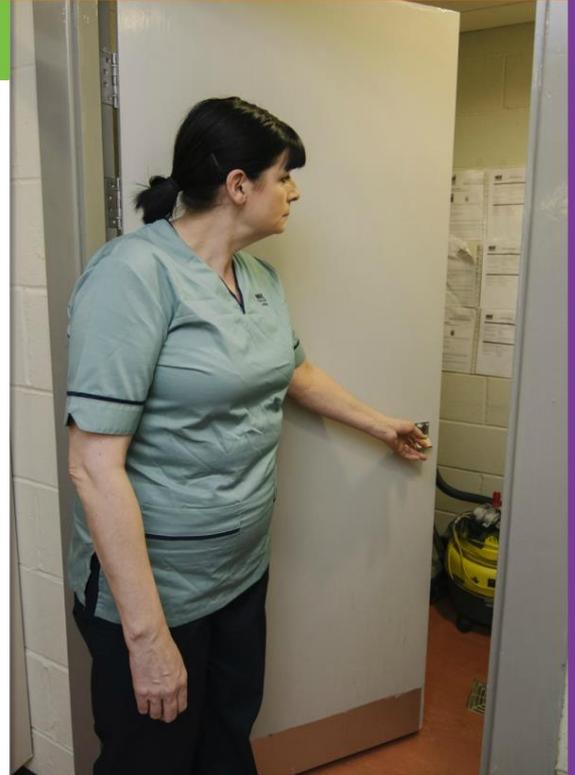
Maggie prepares by first choosing the correct appropriate PPE – disposable gloves and an apron.

Now she must select the cleaning equipment and products she needs to clean the rooms.



Choose the equipment and products you think Maggie will need, then select SUBMIT.

- Wet floor sign to prevent slips and trips
- Fresh solution of detergent in warm water
- Disposable cloth or paper towels
- Fresh solution of disinfectant in warm water



< PREV SUBMIT

Please try to answer the question above and then check the answer and the feedback on the following page.

> Topic 2: Four steps to a clean environment

Step 1 – Collect PPE, cleaning equipment and materials

Preparation



Maggie prepares by first choosing the correct appropriate PPE – disposable gloves and an apron.

Now she must select the cleaning equipment and products she needs to clean the rooms.



Choose the equipment and products you think Maggie will need, then select SUBMIT.

- Wet floor sign to prevent slips and trips
- Fresh solution of detergent in warm water
- Disposable cloth or paper towels
- Fresh solution of disinfectant in warm water

Correct

That's correct.

A fresh solution of detergent and warm water is all that's required for **routine** cleaning.

Disinfectant is not required as Maggie isn't cleaning sanitary fittings.

Disposable cloths or paper towels are used as micro-organisms can be spread through contaminated reusable cloths.

A wet floor sign is used to warn of a slip or trip hazard.

Continue >

< PREV SUBMIT

> Topic 2: Four steps to a clean environment

Step 1 – Collect PPE, cleaning equipment and materials

Check equipment is in good condition



Maggie is going to remove any debris from the hard floor. She discovers that her mop is cracked and the head of the mop is loose.



Select **ALL the actions** you think are correct, then select **SUBMIT**.

- Put tape around the crack and use the mop.
- Ask her supervisor for a replacement.
- Use a dustpan and brush or vacuum cleaner in the meantime.



Please try to answer the question above and then check the answer and the feedback on the following page.

Check equipment is in good condition



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Select **ALL the actions** you think are correct, then select **SUBMIT**.

- Put tape around the crack and use the mop.
- Ask her supervisor for a replacement.
- Use a dustpan and brush or vacuum cleaner in the meantime.



Correct

That's correct.

Maggie should ask her supervisor for a replacement mop. If she can't get one right away she could use a dustpan and brush or a vacuum cleaner to remove visible dust or debris.

Cleaning equipment that has been taped is difficult to clean and should not be used.

Continue >

< PREV SUBMIT

Equipment colour coding

Different coloured equipment is mandatory in NHSScotland premises for flat or conventional mopping systems in specific areas.

Colour coding systems help ensure that equipment does not spread micro-organisms from dirty to clean areas.

Colour coding **isn't required** for micro-fibre mopping systems that are **single use** systems or for **single use** disposable PPE, although some boards/service areas use colour coded disposable aprons.



Would this equipment colour coding be suitable for your setting? **Could you adapt or adopt it?**

<p>Bathrooms, washrooms, showers, toilets, basins and bathroom floors</p>	<p>General areas including wards, departments, offices and basins in public places</p>	<p>Ward kitchen areas and patient food service at ward level</p>	<p>Isolation areas/cleaning interior of ambulances</p>

< PREV NEXT >

Step 2 – Follow cleaning methods

Cleaning methods for different tasks

Maggie puts on her PPE and starts to clean. The **way** she cleans the environment is as **important** as using the correct equipment and products.



Select the boxes to see the specific key cleaning methods for some of the tasks Maggie needs to carry out.

Suction cleaning

When **suction cleaning** (wet vacuuming) the floor, Maggie first moves larger items from the area. Then she removes debris like paper from floor.

High level cleaning

She correctly assembles and plugs in the suction equipment. She suctions using even strokes. She divides the area into sections to make sure all areas are covered.

Cleaning of fixtures and fittings (including dispensers)

When she's finished suctioning, she positions wet floor signs before returning or moving larger items.

Finally, she removes wet floor signs, unplugs her equipment, then cleans and dries and stores it correctly. She would follow a similar process when dry vacuuming.

Step 2 – Follow cleaning methods

Cleaning methods for different tasks

Maggie puts on her PPE and starts to clean. The **way** she cleans the environment is as **important** as using the correct equipment and products.



Select the boxes to see the specific key cleaning methods for some of the tasks Maggie needs to carry out.

Suction cleaning

When carrying out **high level cleaning**, Maggie puts on safety goggles. Then she half fills a bucket with water and correctly adds the cleaning agent. Next she positions wet floor signs.

High level cleaning

Maggie works from clean to dirty preventing cross contamination. She starts by removing debris from the surfaces. She dampens and concertinas (folds) her cloth to give a number of clean cloth surfaces.

Cleaning of fixtures and fittings (including dispensers)

She wipes all high level surfaces with the damp cloth using one swipe. Then she folds a section of the cloth over to reveal a clean unused surface and wipes again. She continues to do this until all the clean surfaces on the cloth have been used. Then she replaces the cloth.

When she's finished, Maggie removes the wet floor signs.

Step 2 – Follow cleaning methods

Cleaning methods for different tasks

Maggie puts on her PPE and starts to clean. The **way** she cleans the environment is as **important** as using the correct equipment and products.



Select the boxes to see the specific key cleaning methods for some of the tasks Maggie needs to carry out.

Suction cleaning

When cleaning **fixtures and fittings**, Maggie wipes the surfaces with a damp cloth using one swipe.

High level cleaning

She folds a section of the cloth over to reveal a clean unused surface and wipes again. She always works from clean to dirty.

Cleaning of fixtures and fittings (including dispensers)

She pays particular attention to touch surfaces such as handles and light pulls/switches, dispensers' undersides and nozzles.

When she's finished, she disposes of the cloth and rinses and dries with a clean cloth.

Step 2 – Follow cleaning methods

Cleaning techniques and products - more information



Take a look at the [National Infection Prevention and Control Manual](#) and the [NHSScotland National Cleaning Services Specification](#) for more information on techniques for maintaining a clean and safe care environment.

If you provide care at home, care homes or any other settings you can use these resources to influence and adapt practices to suit your setting.

Now you'll tackle some common challenges that Maggie encounters when cleaning the environment.



Manual link: <http://www.nipcm.scot.nhs.uk/chapter-1-standard-infection-control-precautions-sicps/#a1082>

Cleaning Service Specification link: http://auriondemo.com/nes/ipc-rebrand/care-environment/story_content/external_files/NHSScotland-National-Cleaning-Services-Specification.pdf

> Topic 2: Four steps to a clean environment

Step 2 – Follow cleaning methods

Challenge - a cluttered storage room

Maggie has to clean a storage room. She enters and discovers it's very cluttered!

She has a lot of experience as a cleaner, so she knows there are a few things she could do, although clearing clutter is not one of her tasks.



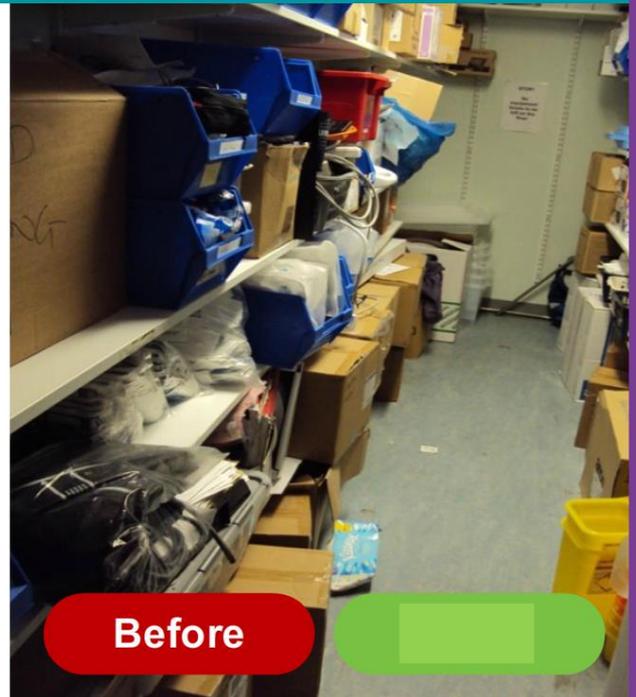
Maggie could clear the clutter.



Maggie could ask staff to help clear the clutter.



Maggie could ask staff to keep stock off the floor.



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Step 2 – Follow cleaning methods

Challenge - when to change disposable gloves

Maggie has a new colleague who is not sure when she should change her single use disposable gloves.

She decides to check with her supervisor to be sure.

Maggie's supervisor gives her a handy checklist.

 **Select each checkbox to discover time when gloves must be changed.**

 Remember to perform hand hygiene after removing your gloves.



When to change disposable gloves

- After each use or completion of a task
- If a puncture is suspected or identified.
- After contact with cleaning chemicals that might affect the integrity of her gloves.

Step 3 – Discard waste and store equipment

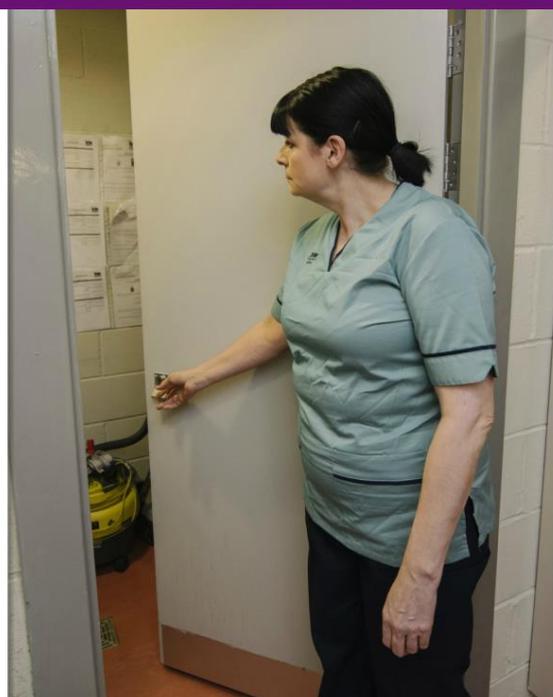
Safe disposal and storage

Maggie finishes cleaning the room. She now needs to safely dispose of her equipment and store it correctly ready for its next use.

Maggie tries to pour her dirty water and detergent solution into the designated utility sink for disposing of the used water and solution.

But she sees that the utility sink is blocked!

Go to the next screen to see what happens.



Step 3 – Discard waste and store equipment

Blocked sink



Maggie can't dispose of her dirty water and detergent cleaning solution in a blocked sink.

What should she do?



Select **ALL the options** that apply, then select **SUBMIT**.

- Pour the water into a handwashing sink.
- Look for another dirty area to dispose of the water.
- Soak the disposable cloths in the dirty water.
- Report that the dirty utility sink is blocked.



< PREV SUBMIT

Please try to answer the question above and then check the answer and the feedback on the following page.

Step 3 – Discard waste and store equipment

Blocked sink



Maggie can't dispose of her dirty water and detergent cleaning solution in a blocked sink.

What should she do?



Select **ALL the options** that apply, then select **SUBMIT**.

- Pour the water into a handwashing sink.
- Look for another dirty area to dispose of the water.
- Soak the disposable cloths in the dirty water.
- Report that the dirty utility sink is blocked.



That's correct.

If Maggie leaves the disposable cloths in dirty water, they will become even more contaminated with micro-organisms and somebody else might use them.

Handwashing sinks should never be used for disposing of dirty cleaning solutions as they will become contaminated.

Maggie should look for another designated area to dispose of the solution and report that the sink is blocked.



Step 4 – Complete cleaning schedules

Maggie now performs hand hygiene and records her cleaning. Record keeping is **KEY** to showing that cleaning has been carried out to the **correct standards**.



Select each person to explore how schedules help you.



Download an [example of a cleaning schedule](#) from the National Cleaning Specification.

When you're ready, select **NEXT** to go to Topic 3.



Example of a cleaning schedule link: <http://www.hfs.scot.nhs.uk/publications-/guidance-publications/?keywords=national+cleaning+services+specification§ion=&category=&month=&year=&show=10>

Close X



Cleaning schedules should include:

- Who is responsible for cleaning.
- How often the environment should be cleaned.
- How the environment should be cleaned.

Close X



Schedules show what has been done and what still needs to be done.

Close X



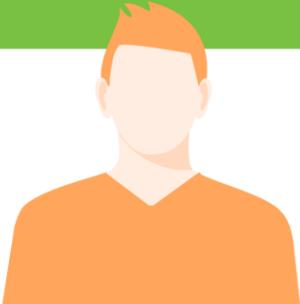
Schedules save duplication of effort if the task has already been done.

Close X



Schedules give staff satisfaction that they're providing a clean and safe environment for practice.

Close X



Schedules let users, the public, staff and inspectors see that the correct standards are being carried out.

Notes for Topic 2: Four steps to a clean environment



Topic 3: Taking action to improve cleaning

In this topic, you'll learn about when routine cleaning might have to be adjusted to prevent the spread of micro-organisms.

You'll also explore the importance of teamwork in providing a clean and safe care environment fit for practice.

 Remember, you can use the **Menu** to jump to any screen or to check where you are in this topic.

Routine environmental cleaning

When a care environment is routinely and effectively cleaned, the risks of transferring micro-organisms to others and the wider environment is reduced.



Select the arrow to learn about when routine cleaning might have to be adjusted to prevent the spread of micro-organisms.



< PREV NEXT >

Sometimes the frequency of routine cleaning needs to be adjusted when there is an increased risk of environmental contamination.



This could be for example if there is an outbreak of infection such as Norovirus or Flu, or a change of use of a care area.



Depending on the **care setting** and the result of a risk assessment, **frequently touched surfaces** might need to be cleaned more often.



Disinfectants might be added into the cleaning routine to help contain any outbreaks.



Good to know!

Your local Infection Prevention and Control or Health Protection Team will let you know if there is a need to change your practices.



> Topic 3: Taking action to improve cleaning

Teamwork is important

Everyone who is involved in cleaning the care environment must work together to be effective and efficient. If not, things will be missed and the people receiving care might be at risk of infection from the environment.

Things you can do:

- Identify who does the most cleaning in your area.
- Ask them what is making it difficult for them.
- Find out how they think things can be improved or made easier.
- Discover what they think works well.
- Go to your line manager or other colleagues with these suggestions.



Consider - you might be able to visit other areas to learn from them.



< PREV NEXT >

> Topic 3: Taking action to improve cleaning

You can make a difference

Here's a staff member who discovered that particular areas were always missed when cleaning took place in her work area.

She spoke to the domestic supervisor and nurse in charge and helped to create a new cleaning schedule to ensure responsibilities were clear.



Select the image to learn about the impact the work of the team had.

“

The most challenging bit was getting everybody on board. We made that easier by involving all the staff from the beginning.

But it did actually have an impact, it did make the place cleaner, and also has the potential to reduce healthcare associated infections within the department.

”



< PREV NEXT >

> Topic 3: Taking action to improve cleaning

I didn't catch an infection...thanks to the cleaners

This person's experience shows the positive effects of **consistent** and **good quality routine** cleaning had on their journey through the healthcare system.



I am so grateful to all of the staff who took the time to properly clean my rooms when I was in hospital and then in the care home.

I saw the cleaners, nurses and physiotherapists working together and taking pride in their work. It gave me and my family confidence. I felt safe and comfortable, because everything was clean.

You hear so many stories about people catching infections in hospital, but I didn't. That was down to the hard work of everyone, especially the cleaning staff who never stopped.



< PREV NEXT >

Notes for Topic 3: Taking action to improve cleaning

> Topic 3: Taking action to improve cleaning

Summary

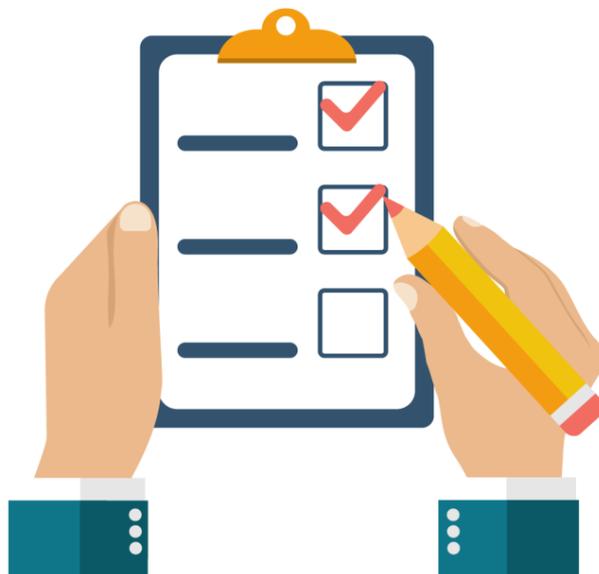
Now that you've completed this module you'll be able to provide a care environment that is safe for practice.

Take a moment to review the key points of this module:

- Keep the environment **clean** and **free from clutter**.
- Keep cleaning equipment in a **good state of repair**.
- **Cleaning technique** is as important as the **products** and **equipment** you use.
- Focus on **frequently touched areas** especially the sides and undersides of surfaces.
- Be aware of **environmental cleaning schedules** and **your specific responsibilities**.
- **Report** any issues of **concern**.



Remember, you can use the **Menu** to revisit any screen in this module.



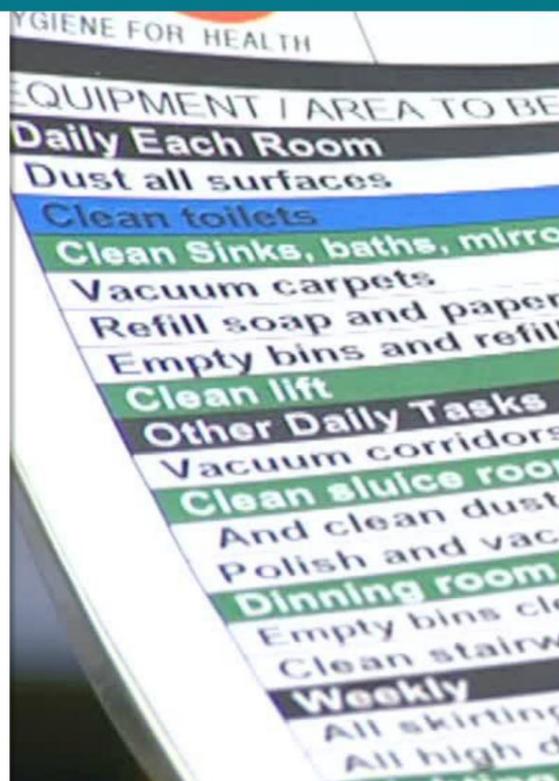
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> Topic 3: Taking action to improve cleaning

Next steps

Now you can put your learning into practice. Start with these examples:

- Find out **who** cleans **what** in your care setting.
- Check if you can **reduce clutter**.
- Check the **frequently touched surfaces**. Are they as clean as they could be?
- Find out how to **raise areas of concern** in your setting.
- Make sure you know your **local policies, guidelines** and **procedures**.



< PREV NEXT >

> Topic 3:

Taking action to improve cleaning

Feedback and assessment

Before you start the assessment, we'd like to get your feedback on this module.



Please complete the [Care Environment – Feedback Questionnaire](#).

After you've answered the questionnaire, you must complete the assessment.



Close this browser window to exit the module and then open the assessment.



Copyright



Alternative formats



< PREV

Feedback questionnaire link:

<https://response.questback.com/nhseducationforscotland/sipcep08environment>

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Transcriptions of any videos within this resource are available on request.

Printable learning resource – Completion Record

Learning outcomes:

- Identify what is meant by the term **care environment**.
- Prepare yourself and the environment for **routine** cleaning.
- Select, correctly use, dispose of and store cleaning equipment and materials.
- Clean at appropriate times and evidence that cleaning schedules are followed.
- Take action where there is concern over environmental cleanliness.

Anticipated learning time: 20 minutes

I confirm that I have completed the above module.

Learner name:

Learner role and location:

Learner signature



**Scottish Infection
Prevention and Control
Education Pathway**

A route to excellence

This resource may be made available, in full or summary form, in alternative formats and community languages. Please contact us on **0131 656 3200** or email **altformats@nes.scot.nhs.uk** to discuss how we can best meet your requirements.



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