Overview

This standard concerns the preparation and maintenance of environments, instruments and equipment for clinical dental procedures, and the control of infection and cross-infection. It includes general cleaning, preparing the appropriate materials for clinical procedures, handling waste and spillage, routine maintenance, stock control and sterilisation.

This standard is designed to relate to environments which are specifically designated for clinical dental procedures, such as routine and day surgery, outpatients and clinics, and community locations which are turned round for that use on a specific occasion including a person’s home. You will need to know about different methods of cleaning, infection prevention and control and sterilisation, when and why they should be used, and the potential consequences of inaction.

This standard is applicable to members of the oral health care team who have responsibility for preparing and maintaining environments for clinical dental procedures whether they are hospital, surgery or community based. Users of this standard will need to ensure that practice reflects up to date information and policies.
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Performance criteria

You must be able to:

P1 apply standard precautions for infection prevention and control and take other appropriate health and safety measures

P2 wear the appropriate personal protective equipment at all times during cleaning and sterilisation procedures and maintain personal hygiene

P3 ensure that the environment where procedures are to be undertaken is clean and tidy, and allows for safe working practices at all times

P4 correctly and safely use cleaning equipment and materials that are appropriate to the items or surface area to be cleaned, and the level of cleanliness required

P5 correctly and safely clean and maintain the aspirating equipment as per the manufacturer’s instructions

P6 correctly and safely clean, maintain and disinfect the water lines and water storage equipment

P7 fully prepare instruments, equipment, materials and medicaments that are necessary for planned procedures so that they are safe and ready

P8 ensure that equipment is functioning correctly and take the appropriate action when it is not

P9 use equipment in a manner which is consistent with the manufacturer’s instructions and leave ready for re-use

P10 adjust heating, lighting, ventilation and humidity appropriately to meet the needs of the procedure and patient

P11 use methods of controlling infection which are appropriate to:
   P11.1 the environment
   P11.2 the nature of the clinical dental procedure

P12 prepare and handle instruments and handpieces for sterilisation appropriately and in a manner which minimises danger to self and others

P13 carry out appropriate sterilisation procedures in the correct sequence and duration including pre-cleaning of instruments, preparation of instrument trays, operation of autoclave and removal of instruments at correct stage in cycle

P14 report any hazards, problems, or evidence of potentially infectious conditions to the appropriate person as soon as is possible

P15 make equipment and materials safe and secure and leave them at the correct level of cleanliness, and in the correct location, on the completion of procedures
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P16  dispose of waste, spillage promptly and in a safe manner and place
P17  package and store sterilised items correctly, using the most appropriate form of packaging medium and maintaining the integrity of the packaging
P18  ensure that adequate supplies of stock are available for clinical procedures
P19  keep accurate and legible records of sterilisation procedures
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Knowledge and understanding

You need to know and understand:

K1 the principles and causes of infection and cross-infection
K2 micro-organisms - the meaning and significance of the terms pathogenic and non-pathogenic
K3 potentially infectious conditions what they are, the appropriate action to take and why they should be reported
K4 the scientific principles of and difference between sterilisation, asepsis, disinfection and social cleanliness and how each relates to the patient, the setting, the procedure and equipment
K5 what is meant by standard precautions and how this is applied in the preparation of environments, including zoning and protective barriers
K6 when sterile, aseptic and disinfectant procedures may need to be carried out, and the possible consequences of not doing so
K7 good hygiene practice - what it is and methods of maintaining it
K8 effective hand cleansing - what it is and methods for achieving it
K9 the purpose of personal protective equipment and the different types which may be necessary
K10 the cleaning agents which are appropriate to different surface areas
K11 the types and properties of decontaminants, when and why they are used
K12 methods of cleaning different types of equipment, instruments and handpieces and the different activities which are appropriate to each
K13 methods of sterilisation, the types of sterilisers which are used and their relationship to the different equipment/instruments including pre-packed items and the disposal of waste
K14 methods of testing to show that autoclaves and other equipment are functioning effectively
K15 the correct sequence and duration for different forms of sterilisation
K16 the different forms of packaging and storing sterilised instruments and handpieces and which methods are appropriate to which circumstances
K17 the potential results of using damaged or pre-used sterile goods
K18 methods of safe handling of items, before and after sterilisation and the reasons for this
K19 the actions which are appropriate to take when sterilisation equipment is not working to the optimum level
K20 the purposes of maintaining the clinical environment as clutter-free and
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as clean as possible
K21 the reasons for keeping heating, lighting and ventilation appropriate to the treatment and the effects which they can have on infection and cross-infection
K22 safe and secure environments - what this means for treatment areas and the dangers which are inherent in them
K23 the instruments, equipment, materials and medicaments which may be necessary for different treatments and correct methods of preparing these
K24 why failures in instruments, equipment, materials and medicaments should be reported
K25 the purpose and correct methods of preparing and handling the range of equipment, instruments, materials and medicaments used in dentistry
K26 how to use and maintain an aspirator
K27 the reasons and frequency for regular maintenance and disinfection of water lines and water storage equipment
K28 legal requirements and manufacturer’s instructions relating to servicing of equipment including recording and maintenance of service intervals
K29 the different types of waste and spillage including those which may be of particular relevance to the procedure and setting
K30 methods of disposing of waste and spillage and the relationship of this to different types
K31 procedures for disposing of damaged sterile pre-packed items
K32 the dangers of not disposing of waste and spillage in the correct ways
K33 why waste and spillage should be disposed of promptly
K34 why it is necessary to report damaged disposal containers
K35 why equipment must be placed in the correct locations for storage, sterilisation or transportation
K36 health and safety regulations and national policies and procedures
K37 the legal and organisational policies relating to the disposal of waste and spillage from clinical treatments and investigations
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Additional Information

External Links
This standard links with the following dimension within the NHS Knowledge and Skills Framework (October 2004):
Dimension: EF2 Environments and buildings
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