

Cancer Care

Guide to Conduct Hand Hygiene Reviews



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If you have questions about this guide or about hand hygiene reviews in general, you can email hand.hygiene@ahs.ca or contact your zone [Project Manager](#).



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The treatment of cancer related illness occurs in both the inpatient and ambulatory setting. This section will focus on the ambulatory setting. Some of the ambulatory treatments in Cancer Control include radiation therapy, IV therapy (i.e. chemotherapy, stem cell therapy, bone marrow transplant), and other minor procedures.

Some of the healthcare providers a reviewer may see in Cancer Control include **but are not limited to:**

- nurses (RN, LPN, Nurse Practitioner)
- cancer care personnel (Radiation Therapist)
- physicians
- volunteers

Observation point: Healthcare providers are identified based on their profession not by their program. For more information on healthcare providers refer to Section 4 Healthcare Provider Groups or contact your IPC Zone Reviewer.

IV Therapy

When performing hand hygiene reviews in IV therapy (i.e. chemotherapy, stem cell therapy, bone marrow transplant) it is important to note:

- The patient's care equipment (i.e. chair, infusion pump, bedside table) in the treatment room have been cleaned and low level disinfected after each patient. Once the cleaning and low level disinfection have been completed the area remains vacant until the next patient arrives. During this period the touch surfaces of the patient care equipment remain untouched and are therefore clean.
- During treatment the IV pump/pole, patient's chair, and bedside table are considered the patient environment.

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- Gloves are task specific and must be removed as soon as the task for which they were donned is complete. Gloves must never be worn when accessing clean supplies from a common source.

Radiation Therapy

In Radiation therapy, the treatment rooms are referred to as vaults. The vault includes the table, all supplies and equipment needed to perform treatment. There is a button called the Last-Person-Out (LPO) button. If this button is not pushed, treatment cannot be performed on the patient. It is a safety mechanism so that radiation is not discharged outside of the vault and access is not permitted until the radiation therapy is complete. Depending on the site the LPO button may or may not be cleaned between patients. If the button is not cleaned between patients, the healthcare provider will have to perform hand hygiene in between contact with the patient and the button.

When conducting hand hygiene reviews in Radiation Therapy, it is important to note:

- The table and all supporting equipment used in the procedure have been cleaned and low level disinfected between patients. This area is also left vacant after cleaning and disinfection has been completed and remains clean until the next patient arrives.

The following are examples of the 4 Moments for Hand Hygiene a reviewer may observe; this list is not intended to be all-inclusive:

Moment 1 (BEF-PAT/ENV)

- before contact with the patient or their environment
- before positioning the patient
- before taking a patient's vital signs
- before assisting a patient with their personal belongings
- after contacting privacy curtains and before contacting the patient

Moment 2 (BEF-ASP)

- before donning PPE including gloves
- before preparing medications
- before accessing clean linens and supplies
- before starting an IV

Moment 3 (AFT-BFL)

- after doffing PPE including gloves used to contact blood and/or body fluids
- after taking a blood sample
- after removing an IV
- after dressing changes

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Moment 4 (AFT-PAT/ENV)

These examples only apply if they are the last point of contact with the patient/patient environment.

- after contact with the patient or their environment
- after contact with a patient's personal belongings
- after taking vital signs
- after patient contact and before contacting the curtains when leaving the patient environment

Cancer Care - Scenario 1

A radiation therapist enters the vault and performs hand hygiene to begin positioning the patient. A second radiation therapist gets up from the control station, performs hand hygiene and assists in positioning the patient. The second therapist performs hand hygiene and exits the vault. The first therapist goes to exit the room, presses the last-person-out (LPO) button, and sits down at the control station.



HCP – Diagnostic & Therapeutic Technologists (Radiation Therapist 1)

Moment 1 (wash/ABHR); Moment 4 (miss)

HCP – Diagnostic & Therapeutic Technologists (Radiation Therapist 2)

Moment 1 (wash/ABHR); Moment 4 (wash/ABHR)

Rationale:

Radiation Therapist 1

- Moment 1 (BEF-PAT/ENV) is recorded as compliant when the therapist performed hand hygiene before contacting the patient.
- Moment 4 (AFT-PAT/ENV) is recorded as a miss when the therapist did not perform hand hygiene after contacting the patient and before contacting the healthcare environment (i.e. LPO button and control station).

Radiation Therapist 2

- Moment 1 (BEF-PAT/ENV) is recorded as compliant when the therapist performed hand hygiene before contacting the patient.
- Moment 4 (AFT-PAT/ENV) is recorded as compliant when the therapist performed hand hygiene after contact with the patient.

Take Away Message:

- Moment 1 (BEF-PAT/ENV) can only be recorded if the therapist makes contact with the patient or patient's environment.
- Moment 4 (AFT-PAT/ENV) can only be recorded when the therapist has contacted the patient or the patient's environment and then makes contact with the healthcare environment.

Exploring Possibilities:

- If the LPO button was cleaned between patients, Moment 4 (AFT-PAT/ENV) could still be recorded as a miss for radiation therapist 1 because they contacted the control station (healthcare environment) without performing hand hygiene after patient contact.

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Cancer Care - Scenario 2

The radiation therapist enters the vault, performs hand hygiene, dons gloves, and begins to position the patient. The therapist then grabs a positioning block from inside the vault and uses it to reposition the patient. The therapist doffs their gloves, performs hand hygiene, presses the last-person-out (LPO) button, and exits the vault.



HCP – Diagnostic & Therapeutic Technologists (Radiation Therapist)

Moment 2 (wash/ABHR), gloves; Moment 1 (wash/ABHR), gloves; Moment 4 (wash/ABHR), gloves

Rationale:

- Moment 2 (BEF-ASP) is recorded as compliant when the therapist performed hand hygiene before accessing clean supplies (gloves).
- Moment 1 (BEF-PAT/ENV) is recorded as compliant when the therapist performed hand hygiene before contacting the patient (positioning the patient). This is a combined moment with Moment 2 above (see Section 3.4 Combined Moments).
- Moment 4 (AFT-PAT/ENV) is recorded as compliant when the therapist performed hand hygiene after doffing gloves used to contact the patient and before contacting the healthcare environment (LPO button).

Exploring Possibilities:

- If the therapist had doffed their gloves and performed hand hygiene before contacting the positioning blocks no additional moments for hand hygiene would be recorded as the blocks are cleaned and low level disinfected between patients.

Take Away Message:

Positioning blocks are considered part of the patient environment.

Cancer Care - Scenario 3

A registered nurse (RN) is charting at the control station and hears a patient's IV infusion pump alarm beeping. The RN enters the patient's environment and resets the infusion rate on the pump, exits the room and returns to the control station.



HCP – Nurses (RN)

Moment 1 (miss); Moment 4 (miss)

Rationale:

- Moment 1 (BEF-PAT/ENV) is recorded as a miss when the RN contacts the patient's environment (IV infusion pump) without performing hand hygiene.
- Moment 4 (AFT-PAT/ENV) is recorded as a miss when the RN does not perform hand hygiene after contacting the patient's environment (IV infusion pump) and before contacting the healthcare environment (control station).

Take Away Message:

- The IV infusion pump is part of the patient's environment.