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Policy: Risk Assessment

Date:

Revised Date:

Purpose: A point-of-care risk assessment (PCRA) is performed by healthcare workers to determine the appropriate infection prevention and control measures for safe patient care (i.e. to protect the patient from transmission of microorganisms) and to protect the healthcare worker and other patients from exposure to microorganisms (e.g. from sprays of blood, body fluids, respiratory tract or other secretions or excretions and contaminated needles and other sharps).

The following shall apply to risk assessment of patients in the clinic setting:

1. A point-of-care risk assessment is applied before every interaction with the patient and at all stages of the interaction with the patient, including: at the time of booking (if appropriate, e.g., same day or next day appointment), upon arrival in the waiting room, in the examination room, to evaluate the likelihood of exposure to blood, body fluids or airborne secretions and to choose the appropriate actions needed to minimize the risk of exposure to infectious agents.
2. Passive surveillance will include signage instructing symptomatic patients to follow respiratory etiquette including wearing masks and utilizing provided tissues and hand sanitizer.
3. Appropriate actions shall include hand hygiene, use of additional precautions if required, choosing safe accommodation in waiting or examination/treatment rooms, appropriate environmental cleaning, and appropriate use of personal protective equipment (e.g. gloves, gowns, facial protection, etc.).
4. Coughing, febrile patients who are unable to cover or contain their cough shall be instructed to wear a mask or shall be accommodated at least 2 meters away from other patients or in an examination/treatment room.
5. Employees shall be educated regarding how to perform PCRA and implement routine practices and additional precautions.
6. Cases of notifiable communicable disease shall be reported to the Medical Officer of Health (MOH). A current list of notifiable diseases shall be readily available for reference.

References:

1. Ontario Agency for Health Protection and Promotion, Provincial Infectious Diseases Advisory Committee. Routine Practices and Additional Precautions in All Health Care Settings. 3rd edition. Toronto, ON: Queen's Printer for Ontario; November 2012.
https://www.publichealthontario.ca/en/eRepository/PPAP_All_HealthCare_Settings_Eng_2012.pdf

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2. Ontario Agency for Health Protection and Promotion (Public Health Ontario), Provincial Infectious Diseases Advisory Committee. Infection Prevention and Control for Clinical Office Practice. 1st Revision. Toronto, ON: Queen's Printer for Ontario; April 2015.
https://www.publichealthontario.ca/en/eRepository/IPAC_Clinical_Office_Practice_2013.pdf