

Infection Control Policies for Speech-Language Pathology

Angela Johnson

Standard Precautions

Hand Hygiene

- This is the first line of defense against germs and is the most effective way to prevent transmission of infection from contaminated surfaces and between people.
- Hand Hygiene should be performed before and after each patient to minimize transmission.
- Hand Washing Protocol
 - Wet hands with warm running water
 - Lather your hands for at least 20 seconds, making sure to scrub the backs of your hands, between your fingers and under your nails
 - Rinse off soap under clean water
 - Dry your hands with a single-use towel
 - Turn of the faucet with the towel and properly dispose of it
- Hand Sanitizer
 - Alcohol based (at least 60%) hand sanitizer can be used as an alternative to hand washing

Personal Protective Equipment (PPE)

- PPE serves as a barrier between the clinician and any broken skin, mucous membranes or bodily fluids to protect both the clinician and the patient.
- Gloves
 - Wearing gloves does not replace hand hygiene, rather they should be used in combination with frequent hand washing and sanitation
 - Gloves should be put on upon entering the patient room and should be changed when moving between procedures/activities or after touching a contaminated item. Gloves should be removed before exiting the patient room.
 - Glove Removal: remove the first glove by grasping the outside of the glove and peeling it off, turning it inside out. Crumple the first glove in your still gloved palm and remove the second glove by sliding one finger into the glove and turning it inside out. The first glove should now be inside of the second glove and they can be disposed of in the trash.
- Face Protection (Surgical Mask, Face Shield, Goggles, Glasses)
 - Protects clinician from airborne pathogens, bodily fluids and other potentially infectious liquid that could spray or splash the clinician.
- Gowns
 - Protects the clinician from anything that could potentially contaminate clothing. Gowns are disposable and should be thrown away immediately after use.

Disinfection and Sterilization

- Reusable equipment (e.g., endoscopes) needs to be sterilized using proper supplies after each use to prevent disease transmission.
- Equipment and surfaces that are shared by patients need to be disinfected using proper cleaning supplies between uses.

- You should always be wearing proper PPE when disinfecting or sterilizing equipment/surfaces.

Waste Disposal

- Waste should be disposed of in designated garbage bins. There will be clear labeling and color-coding systems for the waste so you know which one to use for different types of waste.
- When disposing of any biohazardous or soiled material, proper PPE should be worn.

Transmission Precautions

- Patient rooms should be clearly marked for transmission-based precautions and proper PPE should be worn upon entry.

Contact Precautions

- Whenever you enter an area of potential contact transmission, meaning transmission can occur through physical interactions, gloves and a gown need to be worn.
- Possible contact infections/diseases: MRSA, HIV, VRE, etc.

Airborne Precautions

- Whenever you enter an area of potential airborne transmission, meaning transmission can occur through inhalation, gloves, gowns and masks need to be worn

COVID-19

- Diseases and illnesses, such as COVID-19 or the flu, spread through droplets produced in a sneeze cough, or speech.
- Due do COVID-19 a mask needs to be worn at all times and any time you are in contact with a patient you need to be wearing a new pair of gloves and if possible, a face shield.