

# Providing care in the most appropriate place - Policy and Procedure

(an element of Standard Infection Control Precautions)



**Date of issue:** February 2007

**Date of review:** February 2008

## Introduction

The placement of patients/ clients is an important consideration in standard prevention and control of infection particularly in the healthcare settings but increasingly within primary and social care settings. Patient placement forms one of the nine elements of Standard Infection Control Precautions, which are particularly concerned with the spread of organisms that may be present in blood or other body fluids.

## This policy does not include details of:

- Additional transmission based precautions, as these are based on the mode of transmission of the known/ suspected microorganism and isolation procedures (what was termed barrier nursing). It is recommended that specialist infection control advice may be sought in these situations

## This policy contains information on:

What are the elements underpinning patient placement?

- Responsibilities of individuals
- Incident reporting

**page**

2

2

2

**For further background information, see associated literature review on patient placement**

## Elements underpinning patient placement

- Patient placement as part of Standard Infection Control Precautions means an individual who could potentially contaminate the environment with blood or body fluids is usually within a single room
- There are many demands for single rooms, and patient placement for SICP purposes may have to compete with multiple factors such as the availability of single rooms, the diagnosis of the individual/psychological factors/terminal care rather than clinical need
- Therefore, under the auspice of standard infection control precautions it is important to consider each individual/ or groups of patient/client(s). Local risk assessments of the individual/group, the environment and the suspected/actual infection before placement will often be required
- Initial and ongoing assessment of patient placement is important because patients/clients may not show any signs or symptoms of infection but via transmission from blood or body fluids pose a risk to others
- Communication between multidisciplinary teams and laboratories is key to ensuring patient placement is appropriate

### Responsibilities:

#### All staff are required to:

- Have details of their roles and responsibilities in preventing and minimising the risk of transfer of microorganisms from blood and other body fluids
- Follow the requirements of SICP as a minimum set of infection and prevention standards
- Have the responsibility to consider patient placement when a patient/client is admitted to an area and throughout their stay

#### Managers are required to:

- Have the responsibility to ensure local risk assessments are carried out where necessary
- Ensure that safe practices are adhered to at all times
- Ensure all staff are trained in SICP and given regular updates

#### Incident Reporting:

- Incidents regarding patient placement should be reported locally to ensure future incidents can be avoided and appropriate measures put in place