

Management of Blood and Other Body Fluid Spillages Policy and Procedure



(an element of Standard Infection Control Precautions)

Date of issue: February 2007

Date of review: February 2008

Introduction

Occupational exposure to blood, other body fluids, secretions and excretions through spillages poses a potential risk of infection, particularly to those who may be exposed while providing health and social care. The safe and effective management of such spillages is, therefore, essential in order to prevent transmission of infection via this route, and to comply with health and safety.

It must always be assumed that every person encountered could be carrying potentially harmful microorganisms that might be transmitted and cause harm to others. As such, safe and effective management of blood and other body fluid spillages, in particular, is a precaution that must be applied as standard. Management of blood and body fluid spillages is one of the nine elements of Standard Infection Control Precautions which are particularly concerned with the spread of organisms that might be present in blood or other body fluids.

This policy contains information on:

	page
• Why manage blood and other body fluid spillages?	2
• What are the underpinning elements for the management of blood and other body fluid spillages?	3
• Who should manage spillages?	4
• How to prepare to deal with a spillage?	5
• When and how to manage a spillage of blood or similar body fluids safely and effectively?	6-7
• When and how to manage spillages of other body fluids safely and effectively? <ul style="list-style-type: none">◦ pus, sputum, faeces, vomit	8
• When and how to manage a urine spillage safely and effectively?	9
• What to do once a spillage has been cleared up?	10
• What to do if contamination with blood or other body fluids occurs while managing a spillage?	11

For further background information, see associated literature review on
the management of blood and other body fluid spillages.

Management of Blood and Other Body Fluid Spillages Policy - Why manage blood and other body fluid spillages?

- Exposure to blood and other body fluids, such as faeces, vomit, pus and urine, poses a potential risk for transmission of infection to those providing care
- Exposure to viruses such as HIV, hepatitis B and hepatitis C through blood or other body fluids can be the most consequential of transmissions
- Therefore, quick and effective management of spillages, regardless of the setting, is essential for the health and safety of all

Management of Blood and Other Body Fluid Spillages Policy - What are the underpinning elements for the management of blood and other body fluid spillages?

- **Responsibilities:**

All staff

- Have a responsibility to manage the potential for occupational exposures, including sharps injuries, which can and do occur while delivering care in any setting
- Training should be provided on all aspects of the management of blood and other body fluid spillages including the use of personal protective equipment to avoid exposure incidents as far as possible
- Have a responsibility to display posters, clearly demonstrating the actions when dealing with spillages. Where these are not already available, the local infection control team can be contacted for support in providing these

Staff

- Have the responsibility to report any exposure incidents that occur and to take appropriate measures to avoid these in the first instance, including safely disposing of the sharp that they have used

Managers

- Have the responsibility to ensure local risk assessments are carried out where necessary, e.g. to identify the use of appropriate personal protective equipment (PPE), adherence to safe practices, including the provision of resources to ensure this, immunisation programmes are offered appropriately and any incidents that occur are reviewed and subsequent actions taken where appropriate
- Have the responsibility to ensure training is available and staff have the responsibility to attend such training sessions

- **Other General Good Practice Points:**

- Spillages should be dealt with immediately
- Gather all equipment required to deal with a spillage including personal protective equipment and spillage kits. Appropriate solutions must be used for the safe and effective management of spillages
- All items used during a spillage must be disposed of or decontaminated appropriately (see **Safe Disposal of Waste Policy and Control of the Environment Policy**)
- Hand hygiene should be performed following management of spillages (see **Hand Hygiene Policy**)
- Laboratories may require their own more specific spillage policies, with more detail pertaining to the infectious agents they encounter
- Control of Substances Hazardous to Health (COSHH) sheets and Material Safety Data Sheets (MSDS) should be referred to ensure safe management of spillages, e.g. disinfectants being used in accordance with manufacturers instructions for storage, contact times and expiry dates
- In community settings where clinical waste facilities are not specifically used, waste that is generated during the management of spillages should be disposed of safely, e.g. by wrapping it in paper or plastic before putting it into the domestic waste (see **Safe Disposal of Waste Policy**)

- **Incident reporting:**

- Consider local incident reporting of spillages to ensure future incidents or exposures to blood and other body fluids from spillages can be avoided and appropriate measures can be put in place

Management of Blood and Other Body Fluid Spillages Policy - Who should manage spillages?

- Those trained in the safe and effective management of blood or other body fluid spillages
 - All those working in health or social care who may be exposed to spillages of blood or other body fluids should receive training, e.g. through mandatory training, information updates or by being guided to the contents of the management of blood and body fluid spillages policy, to ensure they are safe and effective in the management of such spillages. Training records should be held to reflect this
- Responsibilities for the cleaning of blood and body fluid spillages should be clear within each area/care setting

Management of Blood and Other Body Fluid Spillages Policy - How to prepare to deal with a spillage?

- Gather all necessary equipment to deal with the spillage:
 - Personal protective equipment – gloves are essential, goggles, masks/visor, apron or gown should be worn if there is a risk of splashing to eyes, mouth and/or body
 - Waste receptacle – check the correct waste bag is available particularly in clinical/care settings, e.g. yellow or orange for clinical waste
 - Items to manage the spillage:
 - Disposable towels
 - Disinfectant (approved, appropriate solution or granules containing sodium hypochlorite or sodium dichlorisocyanurate with a concentration of 10,000ppm available chlorine (av))
 - Water and general purpose neutral detergent
 - Many of the items used are often contained within 'spillage kits'. Spillage kits might also contain 'single incident use' disposable scoops
 - If necessary, a sign which can be displayed or the use of a physical barrier to ensure all other persons avoid the spillage while it is being dealt with

Management of Blood and Other Body Fluid Spillages Policy - When and how to manage a spillage of blood or similar body fluids safely and effectively?

Body fluids should be managed in the same way as managing a blood spillage and include: cerebrospinal fluid, peritoneal fluid, pleural fluid, pericardial fluid, synovial fluid, amniotic fluid, semen, vaginal secretions, breast milk, any other body fluid with visible blood (except urine, refer to **How to manage a urine spillage safely and effectively?**). There should be no evidence of organic matter such as faeces in these fluids, if there is refer to **How to manage a spillage of other body fluids safely and effectively?**

- **Spillages should be dealt with immediately**

Preparation and Staff Protection:

- Gather all necessary equipment (see How to prepare to deal with a spillage?)
- Personal protective equipment must be donned (see Personal Protective Equipment Policy)

Procedures:

- Containment of spillages may be necessary in the first instance
 - This should be done using disposable towels. If the spillage is large, first use disposable towels to absorb/contain the fluid. Care must be taken to avoid splashing during this time, especially as the spillage has not yet been inactivated with disinfectant

Hard surfaces:

- Apply an approved disinfectant to the spillage, ensuring that the spillage is completely covered/towels are completely saturated
 - Approved disinfectants should be those containing a solution or granules of sodium hypochlorite or sodium dichlorisocyanurate, with a concentration of 10,000ppm available chlorine (av). Manufacturers' instructions should be followed to ensure the correct contact time is achieved. This is usually a few minutes
- Clean towels/disinfectant up from the area, placing disposable towels immediately into a (clinical) waste receptacle. The waste receptacle should be close to hand for doing this immediately and safely. Never leave these contaminated towels on any other surface
- The area should then be cleaned, using fresh disposable towels and a solution of water and general purpose neutral detergent (see **Control of the Environment Policy**)
- All remaining items used should be disposed of into a (clinical) waste receptacle
- Personal protective equipment worn should then be removed and disposed of into the waste (see **Safe Disposal of Waste Policy**)
- Hand hygiene should then be performed (see **Hand Hygiene Policy**)

Soft furnishings:

- If soft furnishings have been used during delivery of care the steps described for managing hard surfaces can be applied to soft furnishings. However, for those items that may become damaged by this process (e.g. through the use of disinfectants), a solution of detergent and water can be used to clean the area thoroughly
- Soft furnishings can also be wet vacuumed
- Following cleaning of soft furnishings, every effort must be made to air the room to allow drying in order that the furnishing will dry before reuse

NB Chlorine releasing agents, such as those disinfectants described, inactivate blood borne viruses
The concentration described represents a 1:10 dilution of household bleach, however, strengths of brands can differ and deterioration may occur during storage
Alcohol solutions should not be used to clear spillages

Management of Blood and Other Body Fluid Spillages Policy - When and how to manage a spillage of other body fluids safely and effectively?

Other body fluids include: faeces, pus, sputum, vomit

- **Spillages should be dealt with immediately**

Preparation and Staff Protection:

- Gather all necessary equipment (see **How to prepare to deal with a spillage?**)
- Personal protective equipment must be donned (see **Personal Protective Equipment Policy**)

Procedures:

- Containment of spillages may be necessary in the first instance
 - This should be done using disposable towels. If the spillage is large, first use disposable towels to absorb/contain the fluid. Care must be taken to avoid splashing during this time. These towels should then be disposed of into (clinical) waste receptacles (see **The Safe Disposal of Waste Policy**)
- If visible blood is present, manage the spillage as per **How to manage a spillage of blood or similar body fluids safely and effectively?**
- Where matter such as faeces is present, the area where the spillage has occurred should:
 - Be managed by first absorbing the spillage using disposable towels. These should then be disposed of into a (clinical) waste receptacle (see **The Safe Disposal of Waste Policy**)
 - Then clean using water and a general purpose neutral detergent, as organic matter will inactivate the recommended disinfectants
 - Then disinfect, if deemed necessary, as described in **How to manage a spillage of blood or similar body fluids safely and effectively?**
- Treat all other spillages of pus, sputum, vomit by:
 - Using disposable towels to absorb the spill. These should then be discarded into a (clinical) waste receptacle
 - Cleaning the area using fresh disposable towels and a solution of water and general purpose neutral detergent (see **Control of the Environment Policy**)
 - Disposing of all items used either into a (clinical) waste receptacle
 - Removing personal protective equipment that has been worn and disposing of this into the waste (See **Safe Disposal of Waste Policy**)
 - Perform hand hygiene (see **Hand Hygiene Policy**)

Soft furnishings:

- If soft furnishings have to be used/in place during delivery of care, the steps described for managing hard surfaces can be applied to soft furnishings. However, for those items that may become damaged by this process (e.g. through the use of disinfectants), a solution of general purpose neutral detergent and water can be used to clean the area thoroughly
- Soft furnishings can also be wet vacuumed
- Following cleaning of soft furnishings, every effort must be made to air the room to allow drying in order that the furnishing will dry before reuse

NB Chlorine releasing agents, such as those disinfectants described, inactivate blood borne viruses
Alcohol solutions should not be used to clear spillages.

For information on the management of blood and other body fluid spillages (besides those named in this section) refer to **How to manage a spillage of blood or similar body fluids safely and effectively?**

Management of Blood and Other Body Fluid Spillages Policy - When and how to manage a urine spillage safely and effectively?

Chlorine releasing agents, such as the disinfectants described in [How to manage a spillage of blood or similar body fluids safely and effectively?](#) Must not instantly be used to deal with urine spillages as chlorine gas may then be released. This process should be followed:

- **Spillages should be dealt with immediately**

Preparation and Staff Protection:

- Gather all necessary equipment (see [How to prepare to deal with a spillage?](#))
- Personal protective equipment must be donned (see [Personal Protective Equipment Policy](#))

Procedures:

- Absorb the spillage with disposable towels. These should then be disposed of into the (clinical) waste
- If blood is present in the urine spillage, the area should be disinfected using an approved disinfectant containing a solution or granules of sodium hypochlorite or sodium dichlorisocyanurate, with a **concentration of 1000ppm** available chlorine (av). NB This concentration differs from that used to manage a spillage of blood and body fluids (which is 10,000ppm av)
- If blood is not present, carry on with the further steps described
- The area should then be cleaned using fresh disposable towels and a solution of water and general purpose neutral detergent (see [Control of the Environment Policy](#))
- All remaining items used should be disposed of into a (clinical) waste receptacle
- Personal protective equipment that has been worn should then be removed and disposed of into the (clinical) waste (See [Safe Disposal of Waste Policy](#))
- Hand hygiene should then be performed (see [Hand Hygiene policy](#))
- Where any organic matter (e.g. faecal) is present, the area should be managed following [How to manage a spillage of other body fluids safely and effectively?](#)

Soft furnishings:

- If soft furnishings have to be use/in place during delivery of care, the steps described for managing hard surfaces can be applied to soft furnishings. However, for those items that may become damaged by this process (e.g. through the use of disinfectants), a solution of detergent and water can be used to clean the area thoroughly
- Soft furnishings can also be wet vacuumed
- Following cleaning of soft furnishings, every effort must be made to air the room to allow drying in order that the furnishing will dry before reuse

NB Chlorine releasing agents, such as those disinfectants described, inactivate blood borne viruses
Alcohol solutions should not be used to clear spillages.

For information on the management of blood or similar body fluid spillages (besides urine) refer to [How to manage a spillage of blood or similar body fluids safely and effectively?](#) and [How to manage a spillage of other body fluids safely and effectively?](#)

Management of Blood and Other Body Fluid Spillages Policy - What to do once a spillage has been cleared up?

- Ensure the area is decontaminated and is safe, with all items that have been used to clear the spillage removed and disposed of into (clinical) waste or cleaned where appropriate
- Personal protective equipment worn should be removed and disposed of into a waste receptacle (See **Safe Disposal of Waste Policy**)
- Hand hygiene should be performed (see **Hand Hygiene policy**)
- Consider completing a local incident form if the spillage incident should be addressed to avoid a future incident
 - Consider implementing measures to prevent spillages, such as available safety medical devices
- Any exposure incidents should be managed as per **Occupational Exposure Management, Including Sharps, Policy**. This includes reporting the incident and performing first aid immediately

Management of Blood and Other Body Fluid Spillages Policy - What to do if contamination with blood or other body fluids occurs while managing a spillage?

- Any exposure incidents should be managed as per **Occupational Exposure Management, Including Sharps, Policy**. This includes reporting the incident and performing first aid immediately