Aseptic Technique Policy Directive

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Policy developed by: Infection Control Service, CDCB, PHCS
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Summary
The Aseptic Technique Policy Directive ensures that all hospitals maintain a sustainable, high quality care environment in which all clinical staff are aware of the importance of using the principles of aseptic technique when performing medical procedures on patients.

Keywords
asepsis, aseptic, technique, practice, non-touch, key part, key site, infection, prevention, procedure, Aseptic Technique Policy Directive

Policy history
Is this a new policy? N
Does this policy amend or update an existing policy? Y
Does this policy replace an existing policy? Y
If so, which policies?
Aseptic Technique Policy Directive, V1.0

Applies to
All Health Networks
CALHN, SALHN, NALHN, WCHN, CHSALHN, SAAS

Staff impact
Clinical, Medical, Nursing, Allied Health, Emergency, Dental, Mental Health, Pathology

PDS reference
D0360

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Aseptic Technique
Policy Directive
### Document control information

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### Document history

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1. Objective

The purpose of this policy directive is to:

- establish a uniform approach to the management of an aseptic technique program across the public health sector as required by the National Safety and Quality Health Service Standards:
  > Standard 1: Governance for Safety and Quality in Health Service Organisations
    Criterion 1.4: Implementing training in the assigned safety and quality roles and responsibilities – competency-based training is provided to the clinical workforce to improve safety and quality.
- ensure that all clinical staff consistently adhere to the principles of aseptic technique whilst delivering all relevant health care, such as during insertion and management of therapeutic devices and performing wound care
- provide governance that clearly outlines the responsibilities of individuals and health services in the management of aseptic technique.

2. Scope

All SA Health clinicians and external contractors delivering services to a SA Health healthcare facility who perform any procedures requiring aseptic technique must adhere to this policy.

This policy directive excludes procedures performed in the operating room. Refer to the Australian College of Operating Room Nurses (ACORN) Standards for perioperative nursing 2014 - 2015 and other surgical asepsis guidelines for guidance on the requirements for asepsis within the perioperative environment.

3. Principles

Maintaining compliance with the principles of aseptic technique is one of the most important and effective interventions to reduce the incidence of healthcare associated infections.

SA Health is committed to creating and maintaining a sustainable, high quality care environment in which all clinical staff are aware of the importance of using the principles of aseptic technique when performing medical procedures on patients.

This policy directive is to be read and administered in conjunction with the information provided in:

- SA Health aseptic technique e-learning module
- SA Health aseptic technique resources
4. Detail

With the implementation of this policy, all organisations and services in SA Health will maintain an aseptic technique program which ensures that:

- health services use the Australian Commission on Safety and Quality in Healthcare (ACSQHC) aseptic technique risk matrix to assist in identifying areas where aseptic technique is required and prioritise how the organisation will respond to the risks identified
- clinical staff receive education and training in aseptic technique according to the SA Health Safety and Quality aseptic technique e-learning module and other relevant SA Health aseptic technique resource tools
- competency assessment and feedback of performance occurs in relation to clinical procedures requiring aseptic technique
- competency assessment should be completed once by all clinical staff who perform aseptic technique; as part of orientation/initial training and assessment; and repeated as necessary depending on performance monitoring results. For example a cluster of medical device related infections in an intensive care unit (ICU) would prompt an audit of aseptic technique practices
- a register of staff who have successfully completed the online learning package competency assessment is maintained
- clinical staff who perform aseptic technique adhere to the principles of aseptic technique during all applicable clinical procedures performed outside of the operating theatre environment
- relevant information regarding the prevention of healthcare associated infection is given to patients and the public.

5. Roles and Responsibilities

5.1 Chief Executive SA Health is responsible for:

- ensuring the management of aseptic technique across SA Health is in accordance with this policy.

5.2 Executive Director Public Health and Clinical Systems through the Director of Communicable Disease Control Branch will:

- establish, maintain and periodically review the effectiveness of the SA Health Aseptic Technique Policy Directive and associated resources

5.3 Local Health Network (LHN) Chief Executive Officers will:

- ensure that the use of aseptic technique is embedded in practice and in a manner consistent with the SA Health aseptic technique online course and other SA Health aseptic technique resource tools
- ensure that sufficient resources are in place to enable effective systems for the management of an aseptic technique program
- ensure that the day-to-day responsibility for establishing and monitoring the implementation of this policy is delegated to the relevant senior managers.

5.4 Executive Directors, Heads of Service and other Senior Managers will:

- develop, implement and monitor local processes to support employees, and other persons providing health services on behalf of SA Health, to maintain effective management of aseptic technique
• ensure that LHNs implement the provision of aseptic technique training as a required component of the orientation process for all new clinical staff, and as part of professional development for all existing clinical staff
• foster a climate which facilitates a standardised approach to aseptic technique
• ensure that processes are in place to collect and report compliance data according to clinical setting, and provide feedback of compliance rates to clinical staff
• ensure that appropriate equipment is made readily available to all relevant clinical staff
• ensure that there is a performance development process in place for correcting consistently poor individual compliance with recommended practice.

5.5 All SA Health employees who perform aseptic technique will:
• adhere to the principles and aims of this policy and ensure they operate in accordance with the principles outlined in the SA Health aseptic technique online course and other SA Health aseptic technique resource tools
• ensure that relevant training is undertaken and competency in performing procedures requiring aseptic technique is maintained

6. Reporting

Process and competency audits must be conducted as per the facility's audit schedule and results reported at appropriate governance committees.

Monitoring of healthcare associated infections such as blood stream infections and surgical site infections will identify potential non-compliance with aseptic technique and should trigger auditing of aseptic practice in the relevant clinical areas.

Facilities should monitor and report to the appropriate governance committees the number of clinical staff who have completed:
• the aseptic technique online learning package
• relevant aseptic technique competencies.

7. EPAS

Relevant documentation must be recorded in the Electronic Patient Administration System (EPAS) system (where available) on completion of all aseptic procedures.

8. Exemption

Staff who do not perform aseptic procedures are exempt from this policy.
9. National Safety and Quality Health Service Standards

The following National Safety and Quality Health Service Standards (NSQHSS) apply:

Standard 1 – Governance for Safety and Quality in Health Service Organisations
Standard 3.10 – Developing, implementing protocols for aseptic non-touch technique.

10. Risk Management

All potential risks and hazards associated with the performance of procedures requiring aseptic technique must be identified, actioned, documented and reported to the Local Health Network’s risk management unit, and the appropriate hazard controls applied. The effectiveness of the risk controls should be regularly assessed.

11. Evaluation

It is important that compliance with all elements of this policy is demonstrated. This will be achieved by completing scheduled audits of the processes addressed within this document. The audit results and an action plan to address identified deficiencies must be reported to the relevant governance committees.

Compliance with this policy directive will be assessed by monitoring the hospital accreditation results for standard 3.10 and addressing any recommendations made in relation to performance of aseptic technique.

The SA Safety Learning System can be used to demonstrate improvement in reporting and management of incidents related to breaches in aseptic technique.

The effectiveness of this policy will be reviewed in May 2020.

12. Definitions

In the context of this document:

**Asepsis** means: free from pathogenic microorganisms
**Aseptic technique** means: to prevent pathogenic microorganisms, in sufficient quantity to cause infection, from being introduced to susceptible body sites by hands, surfaces and equipment.

**Clinical procedure** means: any clinical intervention that requires asepsis.

**Hand hygiene** means: a general term referring to the process of hand decontamination which includes hand washing and/or use of waterless disinfection product.

**Therapeutic devices** means: catheters inserted for drainage (e.g. urinary catheter, wound drainage), intravascular access lines and devices (e.g. central or peripheral venous line, portacaths) or other implantable devices with external access.

13. **Associated Policy Directives / Policy Guidelines**


14. **References, Resources and Related Documents**


SA Health. Aseptic Technique workbook and other resources
www.sahealth.sa.gov.au/infectionprevention