



Midwifery & Obstetrics Infection Control Procedure

Procedure Number
WCDHB-IC-0027

Version Nos:
6

1. Purpose

This Procedure outlines the Infection Control requirements for midwifery and obstetrics throughout West Coast District Health Board (WCDHB).

2. Application

This Procedure is to be followed by all clinical staff throughout WCDHB.

3. Definitions

There are no definitions associated this Procedure.

4. Responsibilities

For the purposes of this Procedure:

Clinical Nurse Specialist - Infection Control is required to:

- oversee all aspects of this Procedure
- monitor the performance of WCDHB staff members in relation to this Procedure;

Staff Members are required to:

- ensure they abide by the requirements of this Procedure;
- abide by all WCDHB Infection Control Policy and Procedures;
- abide by all WCDHB Health and Safety Policy and Procedure.

5. Resources Required

This Procedure requires:

- i) Gowns, gloves and masks
- ii) Yellow rubbish bags
- iii) Impervious Linen bags (white with yellow stripe for Infectious linen)
- iv) Impervious Linen bags (white with red stripe for Foul linen)
- vi) Alcohol Hand Gel

6. Process

1.00 Introduction

1.01 Work practices in the midwifery and obstetric wards are to be specifically designed to ensure safe performance of midwifery and obstetric practices during:

- i) Prenatal period.
- ii) Management of labour.
- iii) Postnatal care.

1.02 Standard precautions are necessary where any blood or body fluids are involved.

1.03 The maintenance of good hand washing practice and use of gowns, gloves, mask and eye protection is essential.



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2.00 Standard Precautions

- 2.01 Staff are at risk during the Prenatal Period when undertaking the following procedures
- i) Pap smear.
 - ii) Treatment of a threatened miscarriage and premature labour.
 - iv) Foetoscopy.
 - v) Vaginal examination.
- Staff are to apply Standard Precautions when undertaking these procedures.
- 2.02 All vaginal loss and secretions are to be treated as being potentially infectious.
- 2.03 Staff may be exposed to blood and body fluids during:
- i) Lumbar epidural insertion
 - ii) Rupturing of membranes.
 - iii) Spontaneous rupture of membranes.
 - iv) Delivery of baby.
 - v) Episiotomy.
- Staff are to apply Standard Precautions when undertaking these procedures.
- 2.04 During the post-natal period, staff are to apply Standard Precautions when:
- i) Expressing breast milk / colostrum and when assisting with expressing or dealing with cracked nipples.
 - ii) Conducting postnatal checks.
 - iii) Cutting the umbilical cord (blood spurting), it should be cut when pulsation has ceased using the two clamp method.
 - iv) Obtaining cord blood.
- 2.05 Gloves and impermeable gowns should be worn when handling newborns until their first bath, and all blood and vemix has been removed.

3.00 Placentas

- 3.01 When dealing with the placenta staff members are to carefully examine it with gloved hands and discarded into a double yellow rubbish bag for incineration.
- 3.02 Placentas must not be disposed of in linen bags, down the sluice, or waste disposal units.
- 3.03 Patients taking placentas home are to be advised to wear gloves at all times when handling the placenta.

4.00 Patient Education

- 4.01 Mothers are to be taught about hygiene practices associated with vaginal loss in the shower. Vaginal loss should be treated as a spillage and the shower cleaned with precept as per the requirements of the WCDHB Blood Spillage Procedure located in the WCDHB Infection Control Manual.



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5.00 Waste And Linen Management

- 5.01 All sharps are to be disposed of into an approved sharps container.
- 5.02 All rubbish is to be yellow bagged for incineration.
- 5.03 All instruments are to be placed into a rigid container with a sealable lid and sent to CSSD for sterilisation.
- 5.04 Sanitary pads should be either disposed of into an approved sanitary pad disposal unit or into yellow rubbish bags for incineration. Gloves must be worn when handling PV pads.
- 5.05 Heavily contaminated wet linen should be placed into an Impervious Linen bag (white with red stripe) to prevent leakage of blood and body fluids during transport to the Laundry.

7. Precautions And Considerations

- ➔ Standard precautions are necessary where any blood or body fluids are involved.
- ➔ The maintenance of good hand washing practice and use of gowns, gloves, mask and eye protection is essential.
- ➔ Placentas must not be disposed of in linen bags, down the sluice, or waste disposal units.
- ➔ Sanitary pads should be either disposed of into an approved sanitary pad disposal unit or into yellow rubbish bags for incineration.

8. References

New Zealand Standard – Infection Control (NZS 8142:2008)

9. Related Documents

WCDHB Infection Control Procedure Manual
WCDHB Health and Safety Policy and Procedure Manual
WCDHB Accident/Incident Form

Revision History	Version:	6
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