Infection Prevention Quick Guide: Personal Protective Equipment

Personal protective equipment (PPE) is equipment (like gowns, gloves, eye protection, and respirators) that protects healthcare workers from exposures in the workplace. PPE provides physical barriers that prevent the hands, skin, clothing, eyes, nose, and mouth from coming into contact with infectious agents.

Infection Prevention Checklist

1. **PPE selection**: Select and use PPE based on the nature of the resident interaction and potential for exposure to blood, body fluids, and/or infectious material: https://www.cdc.gov/infectioncontrol/guidelines/core-practices/index.html

2. **PPE availability**: Make sure PPE supplies (e.g., surgical masks, N95 respirators, face shields, goggles, gowns, gloves) are available and in appropriate sizes based on staff needs.
   a. Example of PPE supplies observation tool: https://www.cdc.gov/infectioncontrol/pdf/QUOTS/Standard-Precautions-PPE-Provision-P.pdf

3. **Training and competency:** Ensure all healthcare personnel have appropriate training and competency on when to use PPE and how to put it on (don) and take it off (doff)
   a. CDC resource that describes when and how to wear gloves, gowns, and mouth/nose/eye protection: https://www.cdc.gov/infectioncontrol/guidelines/isolation/index.html
   b. Educate about PPE and validate competency on hire, annually, and with any changes to policy or available PPE products.
      - Sample competency: https://www.vdh.virginia.gov/content/uploads/sites/174/2023/12/PPE-Comp-Template_Fillable-Final_508c.pdf
      - Sample competency validation tool (one step doffing process): https://www.vdh.virginia.gov/content/uploads/sites/174/2023/12/PPE-Competency-Validation_OneStepDoffing_Fillable-Final_508c.pdf
      - Sample competency validation tool (two step doffing process): https://www.vdh.virginia.gov/content/uploads/sites/174/2023/12/PPE-Competency-Validation_TwoStepDoffing_Fillable-Final_508c.pdf
      - VDH donning poster: https://www.vdh.virginia.gov/content/uploads/sites/174/2023/08/Donning.pdf
      - VDH doffing poster: https://www.vdh.virginia.gov/content/uploads/sites/174/2023/08/Doffing.pdf

4. **Auditing**: It is important to routinely check that healthcare personnel are wearing PPE correctly and provide feedback to staff. Provide direct feedback to staff in real-time so that practices can be adjusted as needed and in summary to staff and leadership. Example of PPE monitoring tool: https://www.vdh.virginia.gov/content/uploads/sites/174/2023/01/Hand-Hygiene-and-PPE-Monitoring-by-Precaution-Type.xls

Personal Protective Equipment: How to Share the News

1. To the resident and those authorized to receive health information: To keep everyone safe, doctors, nurses, and other healthcare personnel need to wear certain equipment like gowns, gloves, masks, and eye protection (also called "personal protective equipment" or "PPE") to prevent the spread of germs.

   Sometimes, we may ask you ask you to wear PPE to prevent germs from spreading.

2. To healthcare workers: Wearing the right PPE at the right times is one of the most important things we can do to prevent the spread of infection. PPE helps protect you from exposure to germs and can prevent you from spreading germs to others. We all need to do our part and help keep each other accountable. Please speak up to your peers if you see someone forget to wear PPE (or wear it incorrectly) and be open to feedback about your PPE use.

Additional Resources

CDC Guideline for Isolation Precautions:
https://www.cdc.gov/infectioncontrol/guidelines/isolation/index.html
- Outlines when to wear gloves, gowns, and mouth/nose/eye protection