



Team Name: Regional Infection Prevention and Control Team	Reference Number: CLI.8011.SG.003
Team Lead: Regional Director Staff Development/Infection Prevention and Control	Program Area: Infection Prevention and Control
Approved by: Vice President - Human Resources	Policy Section: Infection Prevention and Control
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**STANDARD GUIDELINE SUBJECT:**

Guidelines for Selection and Management of Isolation Carts

**PURPOSE:**

The purpose of this guideline is to provide consistent Infection Prevention and Control (IP&C) recommendations for the selection and management of isolation carts, inclusive of maintenance, handling and cleaning, to ensure they are appropriate for use within Southern Health-Santé Sud. Isolation carts are to be used by staff in a way that prevents contamination of the supplies and to reduce the risk of transmitting micro-organisms while caring for patients on additional precautions (isolation).

**DEFINITIONS:**

Disinfectant: Product used on inanimate objects to reduce the quantity of microorganisms to an acceptable level. Hospital-grade disinfectants require a drug identification number (DIN) for sale in Canada.

**PROCEDURE:**

Section A of this guideline is to be used by IP&C Practitioners, Logistics and Supply Chain Management staff, and others in Southern Health-Santé Sud when assessing isolation carts for purchase. Section B is to be used by IP&C Practitioners, Environmental Services staff, clinical staff and others in Southern Health-Santé Sud when using isolation carts while caring for clients on additional precautions.

**A. SELECTION GUIDELINES**

1. Choose commercially manufactured isolation carts that have cleaning instructions from the manufacturer that:
  - are mobile
  - have smooth surfaces
  - have solid, non-shedding, non-porous shelving or drawers
  - are easy to clean.
  - can be cleaned with a Southern Health-Santé Sud approved disinfectant.

Do not choose isolation caddies, which are usually made of launderable material and hung on the patient door. Caddies are not preferred because they are made of nylon or other material that cannot be wiped if soiled; instead, they would have to be emptied of all supplies, and then sent to Linen Services to be

laundered.

2. Do not repurpose other equipment for use as an isolation cart unless all the criteria in this guideline are met and in consultation with IP&C, the repurposed item is in good repair with no damage to surfaces.
3. Choose carts that have adequate storage space for personal protective equipment (PPE) and prevent contamination of this equipment.
4. Choose carts that can hold the following:
  - Variety of sizes of gloves appropriate to the Additional Precautions implemented
  - Gowns
  - Masks appropriate to the Additional Precautions implemented
  - Eye protection (consider size, e.g. full face shields, goggles)

Carts may also hold:

- Southern Health-Santé Sud approved alcohol-based hand rub (ABHR)
  - Southern Health-Santé Sud approved disinfectant wipes
  - Isolation signs and donning/doffing of PPE posters
5. Consult the Regional Standardized Equipment List to view the regionally approved isolation cart. This list is available on the Regional portal or from Logistics and Supply Chain Management.

## **B. MANAGEMENT GUIDELINES**

1. Place isolation cart outside the client room door.
2. Clean hands before accessing supplies on the isolation cart.
3. Only place items required for additional precautions on the cart, i.e., PPE and ABHR. Do not place inappropriate items such as water bottles, lab samples, paperwork, etc. on the cart.
4. Stock only enough supplies on the cart for each instance/shift of additional precautions.
5. Place a cleanable (i.e. laminated) checklist for supplies on the cart to aid in stocking the cart.
6. Do not refill or top-up boxes and dispensers (e.g. gloves boxes ABHR dispensers, etc).
7. If carts are in short supply, units may share one cart between two rooms.
8. If the additional precautions room has an anteroom, store PPE supplies in the anteroom, if adequate space is available. If there is a hand hygiene sink in the anteroom, keep supplies in closed cabinets or out of splash zones.
9. Clean carts according to cart manufacturer's instructions, at least weekly while in use, between patients, or if visibly soiled. Discard any supplies that are visibly soiled.
10. Designate responsibility to clean and disinfect cart. Follow manufacturer's cleaning instructions and principles of cleaning and disinfecting. Start with a clean, damp cloth, clean each surface proceeding from clean to dirty and top to bottom. Casters or surfaces in contact with the floor should be cleaned last. Rinse as recommended by approved cleaner/disinfectant. Dry isolation cart using a lint-free soft absorbent towel. Inspect to ensure cart is free of visible soil.
11. Discard unused supplies and clean/disinfect the isolation cart following discontinuation of additional precautions or patient discharge.
12. Store clean isolation carts in an area designated for clean equipment, when not in use. If the cart is not stored in a designated clean equipment area, it must be covered.

### **REFERENCES:**

Alberta Health Services. October 2014. Infection Prevention & Control (IPC) Guidelines for Selection and Management (Maintenance, Handling, and Cleaning) of Isolation Carts  
Manitoba Health, Healthy Living and Seniors. April 2012. Routine Practices and Additional Precautions: Preventing the Transmission of Infection in Health Care.