# SECTION 7.5 INFECTIOUS AND COMMUNICABLE DISEASES

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### 7.5 INFECTIONOUS AND COMMUNICABLE DISEASES

#### 7.5.1 SUMMARY PAGE

**Summary**

| Policy Overview | Corrective Services NSW is committed to the prevention and control of infectious and communicable diseases in correctional centres, during transport, and in other areas under its control. The spread of infectious and communicable diseases can be prevented or controlled by implementing a multi-modal strategy that includes:
| - governance  
| - awareness and assessment  
| - reporting  
| - cleanliness  
| - the use of standard precautions and additional precautions (when required)  
| - treatment and vaccination.  

Governance requires all managers and officers to understand and implement their responsibilities as described in this policy. Awareness and assessment require inmates to be encouraged and assisted to promptly report to the Health Centre for assessment when an infectious/communicable disease is suspected; and for managers and officers to be mindful that they can also be a source of infections/communicable diseases being brought into a centre.

Reporting requires clear communication within Corrective Services NSW, and between Corrective Services NSW and Justice Health and Forensic Mental Health Network.

Cleanliness requires a high level of hygiene in both the workplace and living quarters within correctional centres. This includes clean hands, clean clothing, clean equipment, clean accommodation, clean workplaces, clean food and clean water.

All staff are required to use standard precautions to reduce the risk of transmitting micro-organisms. When advised that an inmate (or inmates) has an infectious/communicable disease, General Managers must take additional precautions that are consistent with the recommendations of Justice Health and Forensic Mental Health Network for the prevention and control of the infectious/communicable disease. All staff are required to use the Quick Action Kits when managing spills of blood or other body substances.

General Managers must facilitate access to the Health Centre for inmates to participate in immunisation and vaccination programs, and encourage staff to consult with their General Practitioner regarding immunisation and vaccination.

| Purpose | To delineate the transfer of information from health to custodial and other authorised staff for inmates with some infectious/communicable diseases. This transfer of clinical information embraces the duty of |
care of health professionals, custodial staff and other authorised employees and visitors.
To provide Corrective Services NSW procedures that are to be implemented to reduce the risk of infectious/communicable diseases in correctional centres.

**Scope**
This policy applies to all correctional centres and other places of detention. It affects all staff and visitors who work in such centres and places of detention.

**Strategic Focus**
- State Priorities – NSW Making it Happen
- Department of Justice Strategic Plan
- Corrective Services NSW Business Plan

**Legislation**
- Crimes (Administration of Sentences) Act 1999
- Crimes (Administration of Sentences) Regulation 2014
- Public Health Act 2010
- Food Act 2003 (NSW)
- Food Regulation 2010 (NSW)
- Protection of the Environment Operations (Waste) Regulation 2014

**Related Policies and Documents**
- Operations Procedures Manual:
  - section 6 Escorts
  - section 7.11 HIV/AIDS/Hepatitis
  - section 7.24 Inmate Hairdressing
- Justice Health & Forensic Mental Health Network:
  - 1.231 Health Problem Notification Form
- Corrective Services Industries Food Policy and Procedures
- Corrective Services NSW Sharps Safe Handling & Disposal Policy

**Acronyms**
- CSNSW: Corrective Services NSW
- CSI: Corrective Services Industries
- HPFN: Health Problem Notification Form
- JH&FMHN: Justice Health & Forensic Mental Health Network
- OIC: Officer In Charge
- PPE: Personal Protective Equipment
- QAK: Quick Action Kit

**Definitions**
- **Infectious**: Any disease produced by the action of a microorganism in the body,
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<th><strong>disease</strong></th>
<th>which may or may not be communicable.</th>
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<td><strong>Communicable disease</strong></td>
<td>An illness caused by an infectious agent or its toxins that occurs through the direct or indirect transmission of the infectious agent or its products from an infected individual or via an animal, vector or the inanimate environment to a susceptible animal or human host.</td>
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<td><strong>Standard precautions</strong></td>
<td>Standard precautions refers to the practice of assuming that everyone may be infectious, and so avoiding contact with other peoples’ body substances by the means of wearing non-porous protective equipment as barriers.</td>
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<td><strong>Additional precautions</strong></td>
<td>Additional precautions may be used in addition to standard precautions when dealing with people suspected or known to have an infectious condition, and may vary depending on the condition and the control necessary.</td>
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<td><strong>Hand washing</strong></td>
<td>Wherever procedures call for hand washing, this means using liquid soap (not a communal bar of soap) and warm water, washing all surfaces of both hands thoroughly, rinsing and then drying with paper towels.</td>
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### 7.5.2 PROCEDURES

#### 7.5.2.1 Standard precautions

Staff can protect themselves and other people from exposure to many microorganisms by using standard precautions. Standard precautions will reduce the transmission of microorganisms from both recognised and unrecognised sources of infection. Adherence to standard precautions reduces the transmission of most communicable diseases, including most respiratory, gastroenteritis and blood-borne illnesses.

Standard precautions require that you:
- assume that everyone (inmates, staff, visitors, contractors) may be infectious
- work safely, as if everyone is infectious
- maintain barriers between yourself and other people’s blood and body substances.

Use standard precautions to avoid contact with:
- blood
- all body fluids, secretions and excretions (except sweat), regardless of whether or not they contain visible blood
- non-intact skin
- mucous membranes.

Standard precautions involve safe work practices, and protective barriers, including:
- hand washing (this requires staff and inmates to wash and dry their hands frequently with liquid soap and warm water, and dry them on paper towels)
- hands should be washed and dried, even if gloves are to be worn
- safe handling and disposal of sharps
- safe handling of soiled clothing and linen (Australian/New Zealand Standard Laundry Practice 4146:2000)
- wearing clean uniforms
• providing inmates with clothing that has been cleaned and dried to the Australian Standard
• keeping workplaces and transport vehicles clean and dry, and providing resources for inmates to clean their cells
• cleaning of equipment such as handcuffs and other restraints after each use
• wearing disposable gloves if coming into contact with blood or body substances is anticipated. This also requires that gloves are removed and discarded as soon as that task is completed, and hands are washed. Staff and inmates are not to continue to wear contaminated gloves, because those gloves will contaminate the workplace. When gloves are worn for body searches, a clean pair of gloves must be used for each inmate.
• protecting the eyes, nose and mouth from splashes of blood or body fluids. This may be achieved by:
  o keeping your distance from splashes and sprays of blood and body fluids
  o wearing a mask and eyewear if splashes or sprays are anticipated
  o not touching your eyes/nose/mouth with uncleaned hands or used gloves.
• protecting the body and clothing from contact with blood and body fluids. This may be achieved by:
  o keeping a distance from splashes and sprays of blood and body fluids
  o wearing protective disposable overalls when contact with blood or body fluids is anticipated
  o not touching clothing or the body with uncleaned hands or used gloves.

7.5.2.2 Respiratory hygiene
Staff and inmates should be encouraged to use respiratory hygiene, such as:
• cover a cough or sneeze with a tissue, discard it, and wash hands
• if a tissue is not available, cough or sneeze into the elbow so that the hands do not become contaminated
• when possible, keep one to two metres away from people who are coughing, sneezing or spitting
• wash hands before touching the eyes, nose or mouth.

7.5.2.3 Vaccination
Many infectious/communicable diseases can be prevented by vaccination.
General Managers should assist inmates to access the Health Centre for routine vaccinations.
General Managers should also develop, with the Nurse Unit Manager of the Health Centre, a plan to facilitate access to inmates for the annual Winter Immunisation Program.
All staff are encouraged to consult their General Practitioner about immunisation against diseases such as influenza and Hepatitis B.

7.5.2.4 Additional precautions
Staff are required to use standard precautions at all times with all people.
In addition Justice Health & Forensic Mental Health Network (JH&FMHN) will issue a Health Problem Notification Form (HPNF) to advise Corrective Services NSW (CSNSW) if additional precautions are to be implemented to reduce the risk of staff or inmates being
exposed to a particular infection. Additional precautions are used when standard precautions alone would not interrupt the transmission of a particular infection. One or more additional precautions may be required and this will be recorded on the HPFN.

The HPFN may advise that certain types of Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) are to be worn, such as masks or coveralls.

The required additional precaution is used to protect staff, other inmates and visitors while one or more inmates are infectious. A new HPFN will be issued by the Health Centre after the inmate(s) have been assessed as no longer being infectious.

### 7.5.2.5 Transfer of information between Justice Health & Forensic Mental Health Network (JH&FMHN) and Corrective Services NSW

If an inmate reports a possible exposure to an infectious/communicable disease, the General Manager or Officer-in-Charge (OIC) of the correctional centre should be notified, and the inmate referred to the Health Centre for assessment of the risk. After hours, the OIC should contact the JH&FMHN After Hours Nurse Manager on tel: 1300 076 267 (13000 ROAMS).

If an inmate is suspected or confirmed to have an infectious/communicable disease or any sickness that presents a threat to the welfare of any person, JH&FMHN staff will notify the JH&FMHN Clinical Nurse Consultant Infection Prevention or the JH&FMHN After Hours Nurse Manager and follow advice regarding patient management, and inform the General Manager or OIC of the advice.

JH&FMHN clinical staff have a duty of care to advise custodial and other staff about any infectious/communicable disease-related health problems of inmates under their care, using the HPFN. Under duty of care and confidentiality, only necessary information will be made available unless inmates give their informed documented consent. Information on the precautions that need to be implemented to protect staff and other inmates will be provided on the HPFN for that inmate.

In the ensuing report, the senior JH&FMHN staff member should give advice on the management of the inmate. General Managers must take action that is consistent with the recommendations of JH&FMHN staff.

These actions may include some or all of the following:

- assisting JH&FMHN to have access to other inmates to assess the risk of infection
- restricting movement of inmates with an infectious/communicable disease, and the use of additional precautions (as advised to CSNSW on the HPFN) when in contact with those inmates
- restricting movement of inmates who have been assessed as susceptible to, or who have been exposed to, that particular infectious/communicable disease
- transfer of inmates to hospital
- assisting JH&FMHN to implement a mass vaccination program for susceptible inmates
- liaising with JH&FMHN and other authorities for the mass vaccination of susceptible staff
- ensuring that staff and inmates have access to appropriate hand washing facilities (liquid soap, warm water and paper towels) at all times; communal bars of soap should never be used
• increased frequency of cleaning in the accommodation areas
• regular teleconferences between CSNSW and JH&FMHN senior managers to share current information and coordinate appropriate management
• establishing communication strategies for inmates, staff and visitors.

The General Manager must also report the incident in line with Operations Procedures Manual (OPM) section 13.1 Serious Incident Reporting.

7.5.2.6 Provision of approved disinfectant product (FINCOL)

Within the correctional centre environment there are general cleaning products available for everyday use. However, FINCOL is the only approved disinfectant and must be used for the cleaning of:

• blood and bodily fluid spills
• handcuffs, anklets and other restraints
• cells
• bartering and hairdressing equipment
• equipment used in skin penetration processes
• any other situation which may prevent the spread of blood-borne infections.

FINCOL must be dispensed at the correct concentration from approved locked dispensers only.

FINCOL dispensers should be located in all accommodation, industrial and common areas of correctional centres in locations that allow free and unhindered access by all inmates and staff.

Placing of FINCOL containers in any location other than inside a locked dispenser, or pouring FINCOL directly from the container, is dangerous and a breach of this policy.

Posters describing the use of FINCOL and safety precautions must be displayed next to dispensers. These posters can be obtained from the FINCOL supplier Jasol, or the Manager Safety in the Safety and Staff Support Unit.

Centre management is responsible for the purchase and installation of FINCOL dispensers, and for monitoring and ensuring the availability of FINCOL.

7.5.2.7 Disinfecting and cleaning of cells, toilets and shower areas by inmates

Centre management or authorised OIC of an accommodation area will ensure that:

• cells are cleaned and disinfected by inmates on a weekly basis
• cells are thoroughly cleaned and disinfected by inmates when accommodation arrangements are altered
• all showers and toilets are cleaned and disinfected on a daily basis.

To allow proper cleaning and disinfecting of cells, toilets and shower areas:

• FINCOL must be used at the correct concentration from the dispensers provided
• dishwashing liquid is not suitable and should not be substituted for FINCOL
• FINCOL must be freely available at all times to inmates for general cleaning purposes.

7.5.2.8 Catering and kitchen safety and hygiene standard

CSNSW has a duty of care to comply with the Food Act 2003 (NSW) and Food Regulation
2010 (NSW).

General Managers are to ensure that all officers and inmates involved in any part of the food preparation chain are:

- familiar with and adherent to the safety and hygiene standards as set out in the Corrective Services Industries (CSI) Policy Manual section 1.6 Offender Food Services
- particularly reminded of the following:
  - all kitchen employees must have access to hand basins, liquid soap, and paper towels so that they can comply with the requirement to wash and dry their hands
  - all kitchen employees are to wear clean uniforms, consisting of long white trousers, a clean white T-shirt and a clean white apron every day
  - footwear is to consist of a rigid sole with leather uppers (gym boots, thongs or athletic shoes are not acceptable).

Staff working in CSI kitchens must ensure:

- food handlers wash their hands whenever there is any risk that they might contaminate food
- food handlers must do everything they can to make sure they do not contaminate food, for example, they must not cough, sneeze or eat over unprotected food
- food handlers must tell their supervisor if they believe they may have contaminated food.

At the beginning of each day’s work inmates are required to self-declare to the OIC if they have an illness that could contaminate food:

- food handlers must tell their supervisor if they have any of the following symptoms: diarrhoea, nausea, abdominal pain, vomiting, sore throat, cough, fever, or jaundice, unless they know their symptoms are not related to an infectious/communicable disease (for example, a food handler may be vomiting at work because of pregnancy), or have been assessed in the Health Centre that this symptom does not relate to a food-borne illness
- food handlers must tell their supervisor if they have any infected skin lesions on their hands or arms or discharges from their ears, nose or eyes, as these could contaminate food. Any cuts, abrasions or skin lesions must be covered with a waterproof occlusive covering. Any cuts or wounds on hands must be covered with blue band-aids. Any bandages or dressings must be completely covered by clothing
- food handlers must notify their supervisor if they suspect they have, or have been diagnosed as having, an illness that can be transmitted through food
- inmates who are declared temporarily unfit for work in the kitchen are to return to work only after they have been assessed and provided with a certificate of clearance from JH&FMHN staff. JH&FMHN staff will manage and monitor the health condition until it is resolved
- all long-term kitchen workers need to be screened for Hepatitis A through the JH&FMHN Health Centre. CSNSW is responsible for the cost of vaccines if any worker has been identified by JH&FMHN staff as being recommended for Hepatitis A vaccine.
7.5.2.9 Distribution and collection of disposable razors to inmates within correctional centres

To limit the transmission of infectious/communicable diseases, the following procedures are to be implemented:

- disposable razors should be issued to inmates on an exchange basis (i.e. old for new). An inmate should place their old razor in a suitable sharps container before being issued with a new razor
- inmate accommodation area officers are responsible for depositing the sharps container into a sharps bin located at the Health Centre
- inmates employed as hygiene workers within correctional centres should be issued with appropriate gloves and sharps containers when they are required to clean showers and toilet blocks. This should ensure the inmates' safety and allow for safe disposal of used razors left in these areas
- educational material on infection control and safe use and disposal of such equipment (posters and pamphlets) is to be displayed and made available to all inmates regardless of classification
- if an inmate requests to exchange razors without a replacement but does not have a reasonable excuse, the monetary cost of the razor may be deducted from the inmate’s private cash.

7.5.2.10 Management of blood and body substance spills

Quick Action Kits (QAKs) must be kept in each area of every correctional centre, police/court cell complex and other places of detention. QAKs contain gloves, setting granules, scrapers and scoops (to be assembled) masks and protective eyewear. QAKs can be ordered via the Safety and Staff Support Unit page of the intranet (using the Personal Protective Equipment Order Form). QAKs that have been used should be replaced in their entirety, rather than have individual items replaced.

In the event of spills of blood or body substances, staff involved in the management of spills should immediately:

- put on protective clothing, including eyewear, mask, overalls, booties and three pairs of disposable gloves
- sprinkle granules over the spill (leave for 2 minutes to set)
- assemble scoop & scraper
- scoop up solidified spill, place into contaminated waste bag
- mop floor with FINCOL
- empty the bucket, refill with FINCOL
- mop the floor again
- remove one pair of gloves, place in contaminated waste bag
- empty the bucket, refill with FINCOL
- disinfect the mop & bucket
- remove the second pair of gloves, place in contaminated waste bag
- remove the mask, overalls and booties and place into contaminated waste bag
- secure the neck of the contaminated waste bag and place it into another contaminated waste bag
- place the contaminated waste bag into a yellow contaminated waste bin
- remove the last pair of gloves and place them into the bin
- wash and dry hands.

Perform first aid immediately, if any exposed skin becomes contaminated with blood or body substances, by washing the area thoroughly with liquid soap and water (after removing gloves).

### 7.5.2.11 Environmental health

JH&FMHN and CSNSW employ a Senior Environmental Health Officer who works with General Managers to assess and address environmental health issues such as:
- clean water, clean air and clean food
- infestations of pests
- incidents with sewers
- barbershops and hairdressers
- food safety
- maintenance of swimming pools
- microbiological testing of air-conditioner cooling towers and warm water systems.

The authorised officer/responsible post of barbershop/hairdressing activities is to ensure that activities are conducted as described in OPM section 7.24 *Inmate Hairdressing*.

### 7.5.3 MONITORING AND EVALUATION

#### 7.5.3.1 Checking

- FINCOL is dispensed at the correct concentration from approved locked dispensers only.
- Posters describing the use of FINCOL and safety precautions must be displayed next to dispensers.
- FINCOL dispensers are located in all inmate accommodation areas, industrial areas and common areas of correctional centres in locations that allow free and unhindered access by all inmates and staff.
- Centre management or staff in charge of accommodation areas should check that all cleaning procedures are performed regularly.
- Kitchen overseers are to check that kitchen uniforms meet the criteria.
- Kitchen overseers are advised to sight an inmate’s certificate of clearance from the JH&FMHN if they are returning to work after being sick.
- OICs of accommodation or work areas are to check that both staff and inmates practice proper infection prevention and control procedures during the course of their duties.
- Disposable razors are issued to inmates on an exchange basis (i.e. old for new) with used razors placed in sharps container.
- QAKs are available in each area of the correctional centre or police/court cell complex or other place of detention.

#### 7.5.3.2 Responsibilities

**General Managers** are responsible for ensuring that safety and hygiene standards are maintained in all food preparation areas.

**Centre management or staff** in charge of inmate accommodation areas are responsible
for ensuring that the cleanliness of cells, toilets, showers and common areas is maintained.

**Overseers** in food preparation areas are responsible for inmates working under their supervision:

- maintaining safe, hygienic work habits
- not resuming work until they have been declared fit for work by JH&FMHN.

**Officers** are accountable for the safe distribution, collection and disposal of razors within their areas of responsibility.

### 7.5.4 DOCUMENT HISTORY

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<td>1.0</td>
<td>October 2002</td>
<td>Initial publication</td>
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<td>August 2012</td>
<td>Amendments as per DCOMO 2012/134 and COPM 2012/59</td>
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<td>2.0</td>
<td>November 2015</td>
<td>Review including update of format, legislation, position and location titles, reporting responsibilities and procedures</td>
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<td>2.1</td>
<td>January 2016</td>
<td>Inclusion of new telephone contact for JH&amp;FMHN After Hours Nurse Manager (Commissioner’s Memorandum 2016/01)</td>
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