

# IPAC Core Competencies - Administrative Controls

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# Introduction to Routine Practices

*Welcome to the Infection Prevention and Control Core Competency Routine Practices Module “Administrative Controls”.*

*Routine Practices are infection prevention and control practices that must be used routinely during all activities with all clients, patients or residents, to help prevent and control the spread of infectious agents in all health care settings. No matter what health care setting you work in, routine practices always apply.*

## Overview

An important element of Routine Practices is Administrative Controls.

Administrative Controls are built into the operations or the “day-to-day” work of every health care setting.

In this component, you will learn about how Administrative Controls help protect health care providers and clients, patients or residents from infection. The effectiveness of Administrative Controls depends on their consistent implementation by management and health care providers.

## Objectives

After finishing this component, you will be able to identify Administrative Controls in your health care setting and describe the role of Administrative Controls in the prevention and control of infection.

You will also learn how you can use Administrative Controls in **your** role and in **your** setting.

Note that in **your** workplace, you may be referred to as staff, health care worker or health care provider. In this component, we’ll use the term health care provider.

## Introduction

Administrative Controls are measures that the administration of a health care setting puts into place to help protect health care providers and clients, patients or residents from infection.

Administrative Controls include:

- infection prevention and control policies and procedures
- healthy workplace policies such as work exclusion and visitor restriction

- health care provider education
- education of clients, patients or residents
- healthy workplace initiatives, such as: immunization programs, occupational health and hygiene

## Policies & Procedures

Effective infection prevention and control policies and procedures will give you the knowledge you need to carry out your tasks safely.

When policies and procedures are evidence-based and consistent with legislation and standards, they promote best practice and ensure a consistent approach to infection prevention and control.

Policies and procedures (or “P and Ps”) for infection prevention and control must also be:

- established by the employer to guide safe care and practices
- relevant to the health care setting and accessible, and
- followed by all health care providers (compliance must be monitored)

Policies and procedures should be current, with a plan in place to review and update on a regular basis.

All health care providers should receive training on the policies and procedures that are relevant to their work.

Remember that infection prevention and control “policies and procedures” should be developed in conjunction with Infection Prevention and Control, Occupational Health and Safety and the Joint Health and Safety Committee.

## Infection Prevention and Control Education and Training

All health care providers need to know about Routine Practices so they can incorporate them into their daily work.

Education in Routine Practices should be included in your initial orientation program and ongoing staff development.

## Health Care Provider Education

Employers should provide training on Routine Practices and Additional Precautions, which includes:

- chain of transmission
- hand hygiene
- risk assessment
- the use of personal protective equipment, or PPE
- cleaning and disinfection, and
- healthy workplace policies

### **Stop & Think**

Now it is time to stop and think about education in your health care setting.

What educational sessions related to infection prevention and control have you attended in the last year?

## Client/Patient/Resident Education

Clients, patients and residents should be educated, too.

Important topics for them to understand include learning about correct hand hygiene technique and basic hygiene practices that prevent the spread of infectious agents.

Everyone should learn about respiratory etiquette.

Clients, patients and residents should be taught not to share personal items when they are in a health care setting.

It is important to involve clients, patients and residents in the infection prevention and control precautions and practices related to their care.

### **Stop & Think**

Now it is time to stop and think about education in your health care setting.

What materials are available to help your clients, patients or residents learn about how to protect themselves from infection?

## Healthy Workplace Polices

Healthy workplace policies establish clear expectations that encourage the wellness and safety of health care providers as well as clients, patients and residents.

They include work exclusion policies, policies restricting visitors who are ill and immunization programs.

## Healthy Workplace - Work Exclusion

Your health care setting should have a healthy workplace policy that reinforces not going to work when you are ill with a potentially communicable disease. This is known as a work exclusion policy.

It is important for health care providers to know what to do when they are ill with an infectious agent.

Make screening yourself for infection a habit before each shift.

Examples of possible communicable diseases include influenza-like illness, acute respiratory infection (fever, new cough), gastroenteritis (vomiting, diarrhea), rashes and conjunctivitis (or pink eye).

You should know the work exclusion policy in your health care setting, how to report an illness and the process for returning to work after a communicable illness.

## Healthy Workplace - Visitor Restriction Policy

A healthy workplace policy should discourage people who are ill with a communicable disease from visiting. It is important to provide education about the visitor exclusion policy to both visitors and health care providers.

Be alert to visitors with symptoms of infection and provide direction and education about how to prevent the transmission of infection.

Health care providers should advise family members and visitors to postpone their visit if they are ill with symptoms of infection such as fever, new cough, vomiting or diarrhea.

## Healthy Workplace - Immunization Policies

PIDAC (Provincial Infectious Diseases Advisory Committee) says: “One of the most effective preventive measures to protect clients/patients/residents and staff from acquiring communicable diseases is immunization. All health care settings should have an age-appropriate immunization program in place.”

Both you and your employer have responsibilities related to immunization.

## Healthy Workplace - Immunization Programs

Front-line health care providers should have up-to-date immunizations or evidence of immunity.

Annual influenza immunization is strongly recommended as it protects health care providers, their clients/patients/residents and family members.

Different health care provider roles may require different immunizations. For example, housekeepers may need different immunizations than medical laboratory technologists. Refer to your occupational health and safety resources for more information.

If your health care setting does not have an Occupational Health department, you will need to know where to go to get the immunizations you require.

### **Stop & Think**

Now it's time to stop and think about immunizations.

What immunizations do you need to protect yourself and your clients, patients or residents, and where will you receive those immunizations?

## Healthy Workplace - Occupational Health & Hygiene

Occupational health and hygiene includes restricting the areas where food and drinks may be eaten.

Respiratory protection programs and “respiratory etiquette” are important to help protect health care providers and others from respiratory infections.

A sharps injury prevention program is essential to help protect health care providers and others.

## Healthy Workplace - Eating and Drinking

Care areas are more likely to harbour infectious agents. If you eat or drink in areas such as a patient/resident environment, a nursing station or a charting area, you are at increased risk for acquiring gastrointestinal infections.

Institutional outbreaks of infections such as hepatitis A and norovirus involving health care providers have been reported.

Food and drink should only be consumed in dedicated “clean” areas such as a staff lounge or conference room.

## Healthy Workplace - Respiratory Protection Program

If you need to wear an N95 respirator, then your workplace is required to have a respiratory protection program. This is a Ministry of Labour requirement.

A respiratory protection program includes:

- a health assessment
- N95 respirator fit-testing, according to Canadian Standards Association or CSA standards, and
- training in the use of an N95 respirator

If your work requires you to wear an N95 respirator, you should undergo fit-testing at least every 2 years to make sure you know the type and size of N95 respirator you need, and be trained in its use.

You are responsible for using the type and size of N95 respirator you have been fitted for, using the N95 properly as you were instructed (such as performing a seal check each time you wear one) and being assessed by Occupational Health for alternative protection if you can't wear one.

Even if your health care setting does not have an occupational health department, your employer is still responsible for ensuring that you are fit-tested and you have received training in respiratory protection.

### **Stop & Think**

Now it's time to stop and think about respiratory etiquette and protective strategies.

In your health care setting, how would you get respirator fit-testing and training?

What respiratory protection strategies do you use?

## Healthy Workplace - Respiratory Etiquette

Everyone should follow and promote respiratory etiquette. It helps prevent the spread of bacteria and viruses that cause acute respiratory infections.

All health care providers need to practice respiratory etiquette and help clients, patients and residents to learn and practice it, too. This is another good habit everyone should follow.

Here are some respiratory protection strategies:

- turn your head away from others when coughing or sneezing
- keep a 2-metre separation between you and others when coughing or sneezing
- cover your nose and mouth with tissue and then dispose of tissues into waste immediately after use
- clean your hands immediately after disposal of tissues
- provide masks for coughing clients, patients or residents

## Healthy Workplace - Sharps Handling

Sharps are devices that can cause occupational injuries, such as punctures or cuts, to staff. Some examples of sharps are needles, lancets, blades and clinical glass. A sharps injury prevention program must be in place wherever health care is provided.

The law requires all health care settings to provide safety-engineered needles and puncture-resistant sharps containers at point-of-care. Refer to the component “Control of the Environment” for more information about sharps and sharps disposal.

## Healthy Workplace - Sharps Handling

Training and education about the proper use of needles and other sharp objects is essential for health care providers to help eliminate occupational injury from sharps.

Always make sure a puncture-resistant sharps container is available at point-of-care before you use a sharp.

Routinely use the safety-engineered medical devices that are required in all health care settings in Ontario.

Sharps containers should not be filled beyond the fill line (which is three-quarters full).

## Healthy Workplace – Occupational Health and Hygiene

When a safety-engineered sharp is not available, never re-cap a needle. Never pick up a sharp with your bare hands. Always sweep up a sharp or use tongs to pick up a sharp.

Be sure you know the procedures to follow in case of a sharps injury.

Our goal is ZERO sharps injuries!

### Stop & Think

Now it's time to stop and think about sharps handling.

How do you handle sharps in your health care setting?

## Monitoring of Compliance with Feedback

Why do we need to monitor our infection prevention and control practices? Audits of infection prevention and control practice and education provide input towards quality-improvement initiatives and accountability in the health care setting. Audits help to identify areas for improvement to ensure the safety of health care providers and clients, patients and residents.

Assessment needs to be ongoing.

Feedback and evaluation is important to inform you about your practice, and highlight areas where you and your organization can improve.

Our goal is to provide a safe environment for health care providers and for clients, patients and residents.

## Practice Activity

We have now completed the content for this Administrative Controls component.

Let's see if you know how to apply this information in your everyday work.

Here is a practice activity.

Before you start this practice activity, you will have to choose the sector that best fits your workplace setting.

Click on the links below to access a practice activity that is relevant to your workplace setting:

[Acute Care](#)

[Community Care](#)

[Long-Term Care](#)

## Acute Care

### Acute Care Part 1 of 4

In an acute care facility, staff members are meeting about policies. Find a follow-up response to match each question.

“Are we going to introduce the policy in our staff orientation and annual staff development?”

**Answer:** “There should be ongoing continuing education about policies.”

“Are we going to print policy manuals and keep them at each nursing station?”

**Answer:** “Policies must be easily accessible”.

“Where did you get the information to develop this policy?”

**Answer:** “Policies must be evidence-based and consistent with legislation and standards.”

“When was the last time we reviewed this policy?”

**Answer:** “Policies need to be current and updated on a regular basis.”

“How will we know if the policy is being followed?”

**Answer:** “Practice will be routinely monitored, and timely feedback will be provided.”

### Acute Care Part 2 of 4

You are talking to another health care provider who is coughing and sneezing, and is covering her nose with a facial tissue. What would be your best response?

“I feel like I’m coming down with the flu. I’m feeling feverish, I am coughing and sneezing, and my nose is dripping like a tap.”

“Go home! You shouldn’t be here. Our policy says you should stay home when you are sick with

a communicable disease.”

“We’re short-staffed. Don’t you dare go home.”

“If you feel worse, maybe you should go home.”

**Answer:**

“Go home! You shouldn’t be here. Our policy says you should stay home when you are sick with a communicable disease.”

Health care providers should not work when ill with a potentially communicable disease.

If you stay at work when you are sick, you can spread the infectious agent.

### Acute Care Part 3 of 4

What response from health care provider 1 shows she knows the influenza immunization policy?

“Do you think you might have the “flu”? Did you get your flu shot this year?”

“I have never had the flu, so I don’t get a flu shot.”

“I get my flu shot every year.”

“I should be OK. I got one a few years ago.”

**Answer:**

“I get my flu shot every year.”

Influenza immunization is strongly recommended annually for health care providers to protect themselves and their patients. Influenza immunization is strongly recommended annually because the circulating strains change.

### Acute Care Part 4 of 4

Identify the objects that help promote respiratory etiquette to the coughing patient.

**Options:**

Waste container

Alcohol-based hand rub

Magazines

Box of masks

Box of tissue

Cough etiquette poster

**Answer:**

Waste container

Alcohol-based hand rub

Box of masks

Box of tissue

Cough etiquette poster

Having a waste container available helps promote disposal of soiled items.

Hand hygiene, after discarding tissues or after coughing into your hand, helps reduce the transmission of suspected respiratory infectious agents.

A mask helps block respiratory infectious agents from being transmitted to environmental surfaces and to others.

Covering your mouth and nose with a tissue when coughing and sneezing helps contain respiratory infectious agents, and helps prevent contamination of the environment.

A poster about covering your cough is an educational tool, and is a reminder to perform respiratory etiquette.

## Community Care

### Community Care Part 1 of 4

A community organization is having a staff meeting about policies. Find a follow-up response to match each question.

“Are we going to introduce the policy at our staff orientation and annual staff development?”

**Answer:** “There should be ongoing continuing education about policies.”

“Are we going to print policy manuals and keep them at each nursing station?”

**Answer:** “Policies must be easily accessible”.

“Where did you get the information to develop this policy?”

**Answer:** “Policies must be evidence-based and consistent with legislation and standards.”

“When was the last time we reviewed this policy?”

**Answer:** “Policies need to be current and updated on a regular basis.”

“How will we know if the policy is being followed?”

**Answer:** “Practice will be routinely monitored, and timely feedback will be provided.”

## Community Care Part 2 of 4

You are talking to another health care provider who is coughing and sneezing, and is covering her nose with a facial tissue. What would be your best response?

“I feel like I’m coming down with the flu. I’m feeling feverish, I am coughing and sneezing, and my nose is dripping like a tap.”

“Go home! You shouldn’t be here. Our policy says you should stay home when you are sick with a communicable disease.”

“We’re short-staffed. Don’t you dare go home.”

“If you feel worse, maybe you should go home.”

**Answer:**

“Go home! You shouldn’t be here. Our policy says you should stay home when you are sick with a communicable disease.”

Health care providers should not work when ill with a potentially communicable disease.

If you stay at work when you are sick, you can spread the infectious agent.

## Community Care Part 3 of 4

What response from health care provider 1 shows she knows the influenza immunization policy?

“Do you think you might have the “flu”? Did you get your flu shot this year?”

“I have never had the flu, so I don’t get a flu shot.”

“I get my flu shot every year.”

“I should be OK. I got one a few years ago.”

**Answer:**

“I get my flu shot every year.”

Influenza immunization is strongly recommended annually for health care providers to protect themselves and their patients. Influenza immunization is strongly recommended annually because the circulating strains change.

## Community Care Part 4 of 4

Identify the objects that help promote respiratory etiquette to the coughing client.

**Options:**

Waste container

Alcohol-based hand rub

Magazines

Box of masks

Box of tissue

Cough etiquette poster

**Answer:**

Waste container

Alcohol-based hand rub

Box of masks

Box of tissue

Cough etiquette poster

Having a waste container available helps promote disposal of soiled items.

Hand hygiene, after discarding tissues or after coughing into your hand, helps reduce the transmission of suspected respiratory infectious agents.

A mask helps block respiratory infectious agents from being transmitted to environmental surfaces and to others.

Covering your mouth and nose with a tissue when coughing and sneezing helps contain respiratory infectious agents, and helps prevent contamination of the environment.

A poster about covering your cough is an educational tool, and is a reminder to perform respiratory etiquette.

## Long-Term Care

### Long-Term Care Part 1 of 4

In a long-term care home, staff members are meeting about policies. Find a follow-up response to match each question.

“Are we going to introduce the policy in our staff orientation and annual staff development?”

**Answer:** “There should be ongoing continuing education about policies.”

“Are we going to print policy manuals and keep them at each nursing station?”

**Answer:** “Policies must be easily accessible”.

“Where did you get the information to develop this policy?”

**Answer:** “Policies must be evidence-based and consistent with legislation and standards.”

“When was the last time we reviewed this policy?”

**Answer:** “Policies need to be current and updated on a regular basis.”

“How will we know if the policy is being followed?”

**Answer:** “Practice will be routinely monitored, and timely feedback will be provided.”

### Long-Term Care Part 2 of 4

You are talking to another health care provider who is coughing and sneezing, and is covering her nose with a facial tissue. What would be your best response?

“I feel like I’m coming down with the flu. I’m feeling feverish, I am coughing and sneezing, and my nose is dripping like a tap.”

“Go home! You shouldn’t be here. Our policy says you should stay home when you are sick with a communicable disease.”

“We’re short-staffed. Don’t you dare go home.”

“If you feel worse, maybe you should go home.”

**Answer:**

“Go home! You shouldn’t be here. Our policy says you should stay home when you are sick with a communicable disease.”

Health care providers should not work when ill with a potentially communicable disease.

If you stay at work when you are sick you can spread the infectious agent.

### Long-Term Care Part 3 of 4

What response from health care provider 1 shows she knows the influenza immunization policy?

“Do you think you might have the “flu”? Did you get your flu shot this year?”

“I have never had the flu, so I don’t get a flu shot.”

“I get my flu shot every year.”

“I should be OK. I got one a few years ago.”

**Answer:**

“I get my flu shot every year.”

Influenza immunization is strongly recommended annually for health care providers to protect themselves and their patients. Influenza immunization is strongly recommended annually because the circulating strains change.

### Long-Term Care Part 4 of 4

Identify the objects that help promote respiratory etiquette to the coughing resident.

**Options:**

Waste container

Box of tissue

Alcohol-based hand rub

Cough etiquette poster

Respiratory screening poster

Hand Hygiene poster

**Answer:**

Waste container

Box of tissue

Alcohol-based hand rub

Cough etiquette poster

Respiratory screening poster

Hand Hygiene poster

Having a waste container available helps promote disposal of soiled items.

Covering your mouth and nose with a tissue when coughing and sneezing helps contain respiratory infectious agents, and helps prevent contamination of the environment.

Hand hygiene after discarding tissues or after coughing into your hands helps to reduce the transmission of suspected respiratory infectious agents.

A poster about covering your cough is an educational tool and serves as a reminder to perform respiratory etiquette.

A poster about respiratory screening is a prompt for you to tell staff if you have any signs or symptoms of a suspected respiratory infection so that staff can take action.

Hand Hygiene Poster is an educational tool to promote hand hygiene. Clean your hands when contaminated with respiratory secretions and/or after disposing of a contaminated tissue.

## Summary

Administrative Controls are managerial measures, such as effective policies and procedures, put in place to help reduce the risk of infection to staff or to clients, patients or residents.

They guide employers and workers in their roles and responsibilities.

Policies and procedures that reflect evidence-based literature, legislation and best practices need to be in place in all health care settings. They need to be followed by all staff to help keep the workplace safe.

## Challenge Questions

This is the end of the Administrative Controls component.

To show that you have completed this component, there is a test. There are five questions in the test.

You need to answer every question correctly, and then you can print out a certificate.

If you do not answer questions correctly, review the material and retake the test.

If you are ready, please return to the [PHO website](#) and select the Challenge Question document that corresponds with this module.