Best Practice Guideline	Cleaning and Disinfection of Electronic Information Technology (IT) Equipment
Date	
Reviewed Date	
Revised Date	

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Site Applicability

All VCH sites.

Scope of Practice

All VCH staff, medical staff, volunteers, students, and other persons acting on behalf of VCH.

For reasons of safety and liability, VCH environmental service staff do not clean electronic equipment. The user/owner is responsible for routine cleaning and disinfection.

Televisions, remote controls, and client telephones are not within the scope of these guidelines.

Purpose

To provide information on cleaning and disinfection of electronic information technology (IT) equipment (including telephones) used in clinical and non-clinical areas.

Electronic IT equipment includes items that:
- Stay with the health care worker in clinical areas (e.g., smart phones, portable phones)
- Are used for client teaching or that may stay with the client in clinical areas (e.g., tablets)
- Are in a fixed location in clinical areas (e.g., wall and desktop mounted computers or telephones)

Routine Practices are used at all times and include a **Point-Of-Care Risk Assessment**, **Hand Hygiene** and necessary **Personal Protective Equipment**.

Follow Manufacturer's Instructions for Use (MIFU) when selecting cleaning/disinfection products. Follow MIFU and Material Safety Data Sheets (MSDS) to select appropriate personal protective equipment for use during cleaning and disinfection.

Hand Hygiene is the most important factor in preventing transmission of microorganisms.

Access IT equipment with clean hands. Convenient access to alcohol-based hand rub products has been shown to increase hand hygiene compliance.

Staff should not routinely wear gloves when using IT equipment.

In rooms where additional **Transmission-Based Precautions** (i.e. isolation including **Airborne**, **Airborne & Contact**, **Contact**, **Contact Plus**, **Droplet**, **Droplet & Contact**) are in place:

Follow posted signage.

Dedicate equipment to a single patient/client* or clean and disinfect shared IT equipment after each use.

Consider:

Use of waterproof/water-resistant barriers/covers for IT equipment.

Staging mobile IT equipment outside the room.

Procedure

The following recommendations provide detailed guidance. For a summary of these recommendations, refer to: Table 1 Cleaning and Disinfection of IT Equipment.

1. **General Recommendations for Cleaning and Disinfection**

   IT equipment in both clinical and non-clinical areas becomes contaminated with microorganisms, which are transmitted via contaminated gloves or hands. Take these steps when cleaning and disinfecting equipment:

   - Follow MIFU for both the IT equipment and the cleaner or disinfectant.
   - Use a soft, non-abrasive, lint free cloth. Avoid abrasive cloths, towels, paper towels, and similar items that may cause damage.
   - Do not use cloths saturated with liquid. For example, use ready to use disinfectant products (wipes) with excess moisture squeezed out of the wipe or a cloth dampened with disinfectant.
   - Never spray or pour disinfectant directly onto IT equipment. Do not get moisture into openings. Keep liquids away from the equipment.
   - Clean IT equipment prior to disinfection.
   - Allow surfaces to dry before reuse.
   - Do not use compressed air to clean IT equipment i.e. keyboards. Keyboards are cleaned and disinfected in the same manner as other IT equipment. Replace keyboards with visible soil that cannot be removed by cleaning.

2. **Recommendations for Clinical Areas**

   IT equipment in clinical areas may pose an infection risk to clients.

- Clean and disinfect IT equipment regularly and if it becomes contaminated.
    - Use established cleaning and disinfection frequencies and processes as per **the Master Equipment Cleaning & Disinfection Manual**. Generally, the frequency for cleaning and disinfection is determined by the risk of cross-contamination, the proximity of the equipment to the point-of-care, and the usual amount of soiling (i.e. dust and debris).
- Consider all areas used for patient/client care as clinical areas (i.e. Telehealth/computer rooms or spaces used by patients/clients).
- Choose IT equipment for purchase that is easily cleaned and disinfected with VCH approved products.
- Do not take IT equipment into patients/clients' rooms if it cannot be cleaned and disinfected.
- A waterproof or water-resistant barrier may be used to limit soiling and make cleaning easier.
- Position any mobile IT equipment taken into a clients' room at least two metres away from the client. Perform hand hygiene between contact with the client and contact with mobile IT equipment.
- Use a Vancouver Coastal Health approved surface cleaning and disinfection product with a Health Canada Drug Identification Number (DIN) or Natural Product Number (NPN) and an MSDS sheet.

Table 1: Cleaning and Disinfection of IT Equipment Guidance

Equipment	Minimum Frequency	Product
Portable IT equipment taken into the client's room, but not directly in the clients environment (point-of-care), for activities such as charting in an electronic health record, order entry, or data collection (i.e. computer or workstation on wheels, tablets, wireless laptops)	- Daily - If visibly soiled - After direct contact with a client or their environment	Follow manufacturer's instructions for use (MIFU) for specific equipment recommendations. Use a disposable damp cloth or wipe, pre-moistened with a ready to use facility approved cleaner/disinfectant. Squeeze out excess liquid before use. Never spray products directly on to IT equipment.
Fixed IT equipment used at point-of-care (i.e. PCIS computers wall mounted in patients/client rooms)	- Daily - If visibly soiled - At discharge	Examples of Disinfectant Products that may be indicated in the MIFU:
IT equipment used near the point-of-care (i.e. systems that remain in the hallway outside the patient's/client's room)	- Daily	• Alcohol – swabs and wipes (sometimes used for telephone equipment, mouse, pagers)

All other fixed IT equipment located in clinical areas (i.e. nursing station)	• Daily	• Accelerated hydrogen peroxide (AHP) – wipes, or liquid on cloth.
IT equipment in public areas for patient/client use	• Daily	Check **MASTER EQUIPMENT CLEANING & DISINFECTION MANUAL**
Personal IT equipment (i.e. pager, smart phone, cell phone, personal digital assistant) and hard plastic casings	• Daily • If visibly soiled • After direct contact with a client or their environment	
Desk phones	• Daily	Use Alcohol – swabs and wipes. Other cleaning wipes may leave a residue that can compromise the keys and affect the internal electronics.

3. Recommendations for Non-clinical Areas

While IT equipment in non-clinical areas can become contaminated, it does not pose the same risk to patients/clients as in clinical areas (i.e. office/computer areas and Telehealth rooms with no patient access).

- Clean IT Equipment in non-clinical areas weekly or as needed.
- Use IT-approved screen cleaning products compatible with MIFU.

4. Education and Training

Equipment damage and staff injury can result from improper cleaning and handling of IT equipment. Refer to the following resources for further information and training:

- **Hand Hygiene Policy and Procedure**
- **Best Practice Guidelines for Cleaning, Disinfection and Sterilization of Critical and Semi-Critical Medical Devices in BC Health Authorities**
- **British Columbia Best Practices for Environmental Cleaning for Prevention and Control of Infections in all Health Care Settings and Programs**

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