

Best Practice Guideline	Selection, Placement and Cleaning and Disinfection of Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) Carts in Long-Term Care and Assisted Living
Date	January 3, 2023
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Revised Date	

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Site Applicability

All Vancouver Coastal Health owned, operated and contracted Long-Term Care and Assisted Living providers.

Scope of Practice

All Staff

Purpose

Provide guidance on selection, placement and frequency of cleaning and disinfection of Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) carts and other PPE holders.

Background

PPE carts and PPE holders provide point-of-care access to necessary equipment that promotes safety for staff, residents and visitors. Commercially manufactured carts reduce the risk of cross contamination. PPE carts should only be stocked with required personal protective equipment and isolation supplies (e.g. alcohol-based hand rub (ABHR) and cleaning and disinfection wipes).

Selection Criteria (see appendix A)

1. Cart Selection:

- Commercially manufactured carts and holders that have recommended cleaning and disinfection instructions from the manufacturer.
- Carts able to withstand frequent cleaning and disinfection using health authority and/or Health Canada approved product(s).
- Smooth surfaces that are easily cleaned and disinfected.
- Solid, non-shedding, non-porous shelving and/or drawers.
- Avoid carts that are comprised of open shelving as this leave supplies exposed to contamination as PPE stored in open areas are at risk of becoming soiled.

2. Cart Size:

Consider the ergonomic design of the isolation carts for purchase including:

- Ease of mobilization.
- Carts should be at least waist height.
- Carts should have a designated handle to help staff maneuver the cart.
- Consider the available space where carts will be placed when evaluating the size of the cart.
- Consult occupational health and safety for recommended mounting heights if selecting wall



mounted PPE holders to avoid musculoskeletal injury.

3. Cart Storage Space:
 - Adequate storage space for PPE to prevent contamination.
 - Has the ability to hold multiple different pieces of PPE, including gloves, gowns, medical masks and eye protection.
 - May also hold alcohol-based hand rub (ABHR), cleaning/disinfectant wipes and signage.
4. Consider purchasing carts with locking mechanisms for memory care areas to avoid unauthorized access and contamination of supplies.
5. Do not repurpose other equipment for use as an isolation cart (i.e. over-bed tables, chairs, tables).
6. See Appendix A for an overview of recommended isolation carts and PPE holders.

Cart Placement

1. Consult the Infection Control Practitioner to determine the placement and number of carts required.
2. Depending on the site layout and size of the cart, it may be acceptable to place one isolation cart for up to 3 resident rooms.
3. For homes with limited floor space or narrow corridors, consider wall mounted storage designs.
4. Maintain a clear separation of clean (e.g. PPE cart) and soiled items (e.g. garbage, soiled linen).

Stocking and Supplies

1. Hand hygiene must be performed prior to accessing any items on the PPE cart.
2. Place only alcohol-based hand rub and cleaning disinfection wipes on the PPE cart.
3. Stock only enough supplies on the cart for each instance of additional precautions to avoid contaminating items.
4. Do not top up glove/mask boxes and ABHR dispensers.
5. Consider placing a cleanable (e.g. laminated) checklist of supplies on the cart to aid in daily re-stocking.

Cleaning and Disinfection

1. Clean carts according to manufacturer's instructions for use.
2. Designate staff responsibility to clean and disinfect isolation cart(s).

Routine Cleaning

1. Clean and disinfect PPE carts used for routine care daily

Residents on Precautions

1. During cluster or outbreak activity, clean and disinfect the exterior of the carts twice daily.

Additional Precautions Discharge Clean

1. Clean and disinfect cart as part of the additional precautions discharge clean

Storage of Carts

1. When not in use, clean and disinfect the interior and exterior of the carts prior to being stored.
2. Store clean carts in a designated area for clean equipment. Cover the cart if not stored in a designated clean equipment area.
3. Isolation cart must be cleaned and disinfected upon removal from storage prior to first use.






References




1. Alberta Health Services (2020). Selection and Management (Maintenance, Handling and Cleaning) of Isolation Carts. Retrieved December 2, 2022 from <https://albertahealthservices.ca/assets/healthinfo/ipc/hi-ipc-selection-management-isolation-carts.pdf>
2. B.C. Ministry of Health, (2011). Best Practice Guidelines for Cleaning, Disinfection and Sterilization of Critical and Semi-critical Medical Devices in BC Health Authorities
3. Canadian Standards Association Group. (2018). CSA Z8000-11: Canadian Health Care Facilities- Planning, Design and Construction (2nd ed).
4. Canadian Standards Association Group. (2021) CSA Z317.1. Special Requirements for Plumbing Installations in Health Care Facilities.
5. Fraser Health Authority (2021). Infection Prevention and Control Guidance for the Selection, Placement and Cleaning of Isolation Carts in Long-term Care and Assisted Living. Retrieved December 2, 2022 from [Guidance for the Selection Placement and Cleaning of PPE Holders in LTC and AL Guidelines Oct19.pdf \(fraserhealth.ca\)](#)
6. PICNet, (2016). British Columbia Best Practices for Environmental Cleaning for Prevention and Control of Infections in All Healthcare Settings and Programs.
7. WorkSafeBC (2021). [Controlling Exposure: Protecting Workers from Infectious Disease](#).



Appendix A

Type of Isolation Cart/PPE Holder	Product Benefits	Product Drawbacks	Recommended Yes/No	Example
Metal Isolation Carts with wheels	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ergonomic • Lockable to prevent unauthorized access • Smooth and non-porous • Mobile • Easily cleaned and disinfected • Sturdy 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Costly up-front investment 	Yes	
Wall-Mounted Metal or Plastic PPE Holders	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Suited for small or narrow spaces with limited floor space • Easily cleaned and disinfected • Ergonomic when mounted at standing height or as per occupational health and safety recommendations 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • May not be suitable for spaces with limited wall space • Cannot be moved to suit needs • Requires installation by FMO/ maintenance • May not be suitable for memory care units as PPE is exposed • Costly up-front investment 	Yes	
Plastic Storage Drawers on Wheels	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Inexpensive and easy to obtain 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Not commercially manufactured for PPE storage • May break down due to frequent cleaning/disinfection • May not stand up to frequent use • Smaller height may lead to musculoskeletal injury for HCP's • Initial investment may be less expensive but over time may be more costly 	No	



Type of Isolation Cart/PPE Holder	Product Benefits	Product Drawbacks	Recommended Yes/No	Example
Door-Mounted Metal or Plastic PPE Holders	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Commercially manufactured for PPE storage Easy to clean and disinfect Easy to install Can be moved, but may be awkward May be suitable for sites with limited wall and floor space 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Cannot adjust height to meet ergonomic requirements May not be suitable for memory care units as PPE is exposed 	Consult ICP	
Multi-Purpose Open Rolling Carts without Drawers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Easy to clean and disinfect Ergonomic handles and overall height Mobile 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Does not provide sufficient protection from unauthorized handling of supplies Does not provide sufficient protection from contamination with dust and debris 	No	
Door Caddies (e.g. nylon or fabric material)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Commercially manufactured for PPE storage Easy to install Mobile Inexpensive 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Fabric material makes regular cleaning and disinfection difficult Unable to adjust height to meet ergonomic requirements 	No	
Tables, Chairs, Over-Bed Tables		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> PPE supplies are not protected 	No	