

Point-of-Care Risk Assessment (PCRA)

The PCRA is a component of routine practice which shall be conducted before every patient/client/resident (hereafter 'patient') interaction by a healthcare worker (HCW) to assess the likelihood of exposing themselves and/or others to infectious agents. This assessment informs the selection of appropriate actions and additional Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) to minimize the risk of exposure in addition to any Infection Prevention and Control recommendations already in place. This is a general tool, and risk assessments may vary from person to person. The questions and actions may need to be adapted for specific health care settings and roles.

1 Before each patient interaction, a healthcare worker must assess the following:



THE PATIENT

- What are the patient's symptoms (e.g., frequent coughing or sneezing, unexplained fever, diarrhea)?
- Are there additional precautions (droplet, contact, airborne) for infectious agents in place?
- Is the patient able to practice respiratory etiquette and perform hand hygiene?
- Has the patient been recently screened for infectious symptoms (e.g., triage, daily symptom screening)?



THE TASK

- What type of task am I carrying out (e.g., providing direct face-to-face care, performing an [aerosol generating medical procedure](#) (AGMP), potential for contacting blood and body fluids, personal care, non-clinical interaction)?
- Is additional equipment required to safely carry out the task (e.g., dressings, emesis basin)?
- Am I trained and ready for the task?



THE ENVIRONMENT

- Are there potential hazards that may impact my task (e.g. ongoing AGMP, physical clutter)?
- Is there a risk to/from other individuals (e.g., shared rooms, mobile patients with infectious symptoms)?

2 Choose appropriate actions and PPE including the following:

- Hand hygiene** (e.g., before donning and after removing PPE items, as per the 4 Moments for Hand Hygiene)
- Respiratory etiquette** (e.g., offer the patient a medical mask, support the patient to use tissues/their elbow to cover coughs)
- Implement additional precautions if required** (e.g., droplet and contact precautions for Viral Respiratory Illness)
- Environmental and equipment cleaning and disinfection** (e.g., clean & disinfect environmental surfaces and reusable equipment after each use)
- Patient placement** (e.g., prioritize patients with risks for infectious agents to single rooms where possible)
- Select PPE items based on required additional precautions and your PCRA** - outlined on the following page.

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Selecting PPE

REQUIRED: Wear a medical mask if provincial medical masking for healthcare settings policy is in effect.
REQUIRED: If additional precautions (i.e., contact, droplet, or airborne) are in place, put on all required PPE
THEN: Add PPE items to those required based on your PCRA, for example:

Could my hands be exposed to blood, body fluids or contaminated items?

Yes



Wear gloves

Could my clothing or skin come into contact with blood or body fluids, including splashes/sprays?

Yes



Wear gown

Could my eyes or face be splashed/sprayed with blood or body fluids? Am I within 2 meters of a coughing or vomiting patient?

Yes



Wear facial protection (medical mask & eye protection or face shield)

Is there a risk of airborne transmission of infectious agents, either from specific pathogens (e.g., TB/measles) or procedures (e.g., AGMP on a patient with VRI)?

Yes



Wear N95 respirator or equivalent*

*HCW must be fit-tested and shall perform a seal check prior to use. Follow additional measures outlined in VCH guidelines to minimize risks.

3

Incorporating PCRA & PPE choices in the care of patients with Viral Respiratory Illness (VRI):

HCW PPE requirements for care of ALL patients

- Use of medical masks in healthcare settings as outlined in the provincial policy on Mask Use in Healthcare Facilities (when policy in effect)

Additional HCW PPE requirements for care of patients with suspected or confirmed VRI

- As a minimum, droplet and contact precautions must be implemented for all patient care
- If a HCW determines that a patient interaction presents an elevated risk of VRI transmission on their individual PCRA, additional PPE (e.g., N95 respirators) are accessible
- Airborne, droplet, and contact precautions must be implemented when performing AGMPs on these patients