

Infection Prevention and Control

For Personal Care/Group/Residential Homes

Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) Carts for Isolation

Objective: to provide consistent infection prevention and control information for the selection and management of PPE carts used in isolation areas.

•the term, “resident” is inclusive of client and participant. The term “PPE cart” is inclusive of isolation carts, PPE stations, wall and door caddies and shelving units intended for PPE storage.

Selection

1. Choose carts that have cleaning instructions from the manufacturer and:

- can be cleaned and disinfected with an approved disinfectant
- have smooth surfaces
- have solid, non-porous drawers/shelving
- are easy to clean

Note: isolation caddies made of nylon are not recommended as they cannot be easily wiped if soiled and would need to be emptied of supplies and sent for laundering.

2. Carts should be stocked with the following:

- variety of sizes of disposable gloves
- gowns
- medical grade masks (include N95s if resident requires an AGMP e.g., CPAP)
- eye protection e.g., face shields, goggles
- disinfectant wipes
- alcohol based hand rub (if not already in place nearby)

Placement of carts

1. Carts should be placed just outside the isolation room door (or just inside the door if it can be located more than two m. from the resident).
2. Determine if the corridor is an egress route – if so, the cart will need to be either stored inside the resident room or an alternate location. (Consult with the Fire Marshall if in doubt.)
3. If the corridor is a ‘dead-end’ corridor, carts can be placed in the hallway; however, ensure egress from residents’ rooms is not hindered.
4. One cart for residents in two separate rooms is acceptable.

Management

1. Perform hand hygiene before accessing supplies on the cart.
2. Ensure all supplies are protected from contamination e.g., stored in original packaging, or in a drawer, NOT on the floor, bagged in non-porous plastic).
3. Only items needed for additional precautions should be on the cart e.g., no water bottles, lab specimens, etc.
4. DO NOT refill or top up boxes or dispensers on the cart.
5. Clean carts according to manufacturers’ instructions, at least weekly while in use, between residents, or if visibly soiled. Designate responsibility for cleaning the cart.
6. Store carts in an area designated for clean equipment when not in use. If it is stocked and ready for use, it should be covered with a clean sheet.

References:

Alberta Health Services. (2020). Recommendations for selection and management of isolation carts. Available from <https://albertahealthservices.ca/assets/healthinfo/ipc/hi-ipc-selection-management-isolation-carts.pdf>

Saskatchewan Health Authority. (2021). Infection Prevention and Control Recommendations: Selection and Management of Personal Protective Equipment Carts. Available from <https://www.saskhealthauthority.ca/system/files/2021-06/CV-19-G0128-IPAC-Recommendations-PPE-Carts.pdf>

