



Definitions

Patient: Refers to patients in acute care, residents in continuing care and individuals or clients receiving care in the community.

Routine Practices: The system of infection prevention and control practices recommended by the Public Health Agency of Canada to be used with all patients during all care to prevent and control transmission of microorganisms in all health care settings.

Introduction

Point of Care Risk Assessment (PCRA) is not a new concept, but one that is already performed regularly by healthcare workers (HCWs) many times a day for their safety and the safety of the patients and others in the healthcare environment. It is a systematic process of reviewing work activities, evaluating the possible hazards/risks and implementing suitable control measures to eliminate, reduce or minimize the possible hazards/risks. A PCRA is a part of Routine Practices (RP) that is used with all patients at all times to reduce the risk of transmission of microorganisms to and from the patient.

A Point of Care Risk Assessment must be completed before each interaction with a patient and their environment in **all health care settings**, including acute care, continuing care and community care throughout the Saskatchewan Health Authority (SHA). The purpose of a PCRA is to protect patients, visitors and health care workers by preventing and controlling the spread of infectious diseases throughout health care facilities and community care (Refer to [Appendix A: PCRA Algorithm](#)).

Risk Assessment

The risk assessment should include assessment of the potential risk for the following:

- exposure to blood, body fluids, secretions, excretions, tissues;
- exposure to non-intact skin;
- exposure to undiagnosed/diagnosed rashes;
- exposure to mucous membranes; and
- exposure to contaminated equipment or surfaces

Ask Yourself:

- Is my clothing contaminated from a previous patient or activity?
- Did I wash my hands?
- What task am I going to perform?
- Do I or the patient have any non-intact skin, infection or rash?
- What contact am I going to have with the patient?
- Will I have exposure to blood, body fluids, respiratory secretions, excretions, non-intact skin, mucous membranes, rashes or contaminated equipment?
- What PPE will I need?
- Will the patient be cooperative?
- Will the patient be transported to diagnostic areas of the hospital and how does that affect the risk assessment at the receiving end (i.e., is there information that needs to be sent)?
- Will the patient be transported to hospital, long term care facility or to a physician's office? How will this be completed and by whom?
- Will equipment need to be transported, cleaned, disinfected or stored?
- Are there pets in the home and can they be contained in another area while doing care?



Risk Reduction

Transmission of microorganisms can result from direct transmission from person to person (i.e., coughing, sneezing, hand contact) and indirect transmission (i.e., contaminated equipment or environmental surfaces). Choose the appropriate PPE according to the method of transmission and the risks identified.

In order to reduce the likelihood of the risk of infection, illness or injuries from occurring, the following strategies should be implemented:

- a. Patient screening
- b. Patient education about illness/infection
- c. Placement of infected individuals
- d. Perform hand hygiene according to the [SHA Hand Hygiene Policy](#)
- e. Use of appropriate personal protective equipment (PPE)
- f. Patient care equipment
 - Dedicate to one individual
 - Use single use equipment
 - If shared between patients it should be cleaned and disinfected after each patient use
- g. Handle laundry in a safe manner
- h. Use sharps container appropriately
- i. Handle waste according to [Saskatchewan Biomedical Waste Management Guidelines](#)
- j. Clean the environment
- k. Implement healthy workplace practices (i.e., bending, lifting, etc.)
- l. Implement preventative workplace practices such as staff immunization

Education

Annually, health care workers should review:

- Point of Care Risk Assessment
- Hand Hygiene, Routine Practices, Additional Precautions and Chain of Infection

Health care workers should educate patients and families/visitors regarding appropriate infection prevention and control practices including hand hygiene and proper use of personal protective equipment, when required.

**Additional Resources:**

Saskatchewan Health Authority (SHA). Work Standards for Donning and Doffing PPE. 2021 [cited 2021 July 2]. Available from: <https://www.saskhealthauthority.ca/intranet/about-sha/news/covid-19-information-health-care-providers/ppeinfection-prevention-and-1>

Saskatchewan Health Authority (SHA). Putting on (donning) personal protective equipment (PPE). 2021 [cited 2021 July 2]. Available from: https://www.saskhealthauthority.ca/system/files/2021-06/CV-19-P0011-Donning-PPE-Equipment-Poster_0.pdf

References:

Alberta Health Services. Point of care risk assessment (PCRA) [Internet]. 2018 [cited 2020 April 30]. Available from: <https://albertahealthservices.ca/assets/healthinfo/ipc/hi-ipc-acute-care-pcra.pdf>

Public Health Agency of Canada. Routine practices and additional precautions for preventing the transmission of infection in healthcare settings [Internet]. Ottawa, ON: Government of Canada; 2013 [cited 2020 April 20]. Available from: http://publications.gc.ca/collections//collection_2013/aspc-phac/HP40-83-2013-eng.pdf

Saskatchewan Health Authority (SHA), former Regina Qu'Appelle Health Region. Point of Care Risk Assessment. Work Standard. 2018 [cited 2020 April 20].

Saskatchewan Health Authority (SHA), former Saskatoon Health Region. Point of Care Risk Assessment. 2010 [2020 April 20]. Available from: <https://www.saskatoonhealthregion.ca/about/IPCPolicies/20-25.pdf>

Ontario Agency for Health Protection and Promotion (Public Health Ontario), Provincial Infectious Diseases Advisory Committee. Routine practices and additional precautions in all health care settings. [Internet]. 3rd ed. Toronto, ON: Queen's Printer for Ontario; 2012 [cited 2020 April 20]. Available from: <https://www.publichealthontario.ca/-/media/documents/b/2012/bp-rpap-healthcare-settings.pdf?la=en>



Adapted from Alberta Health Services

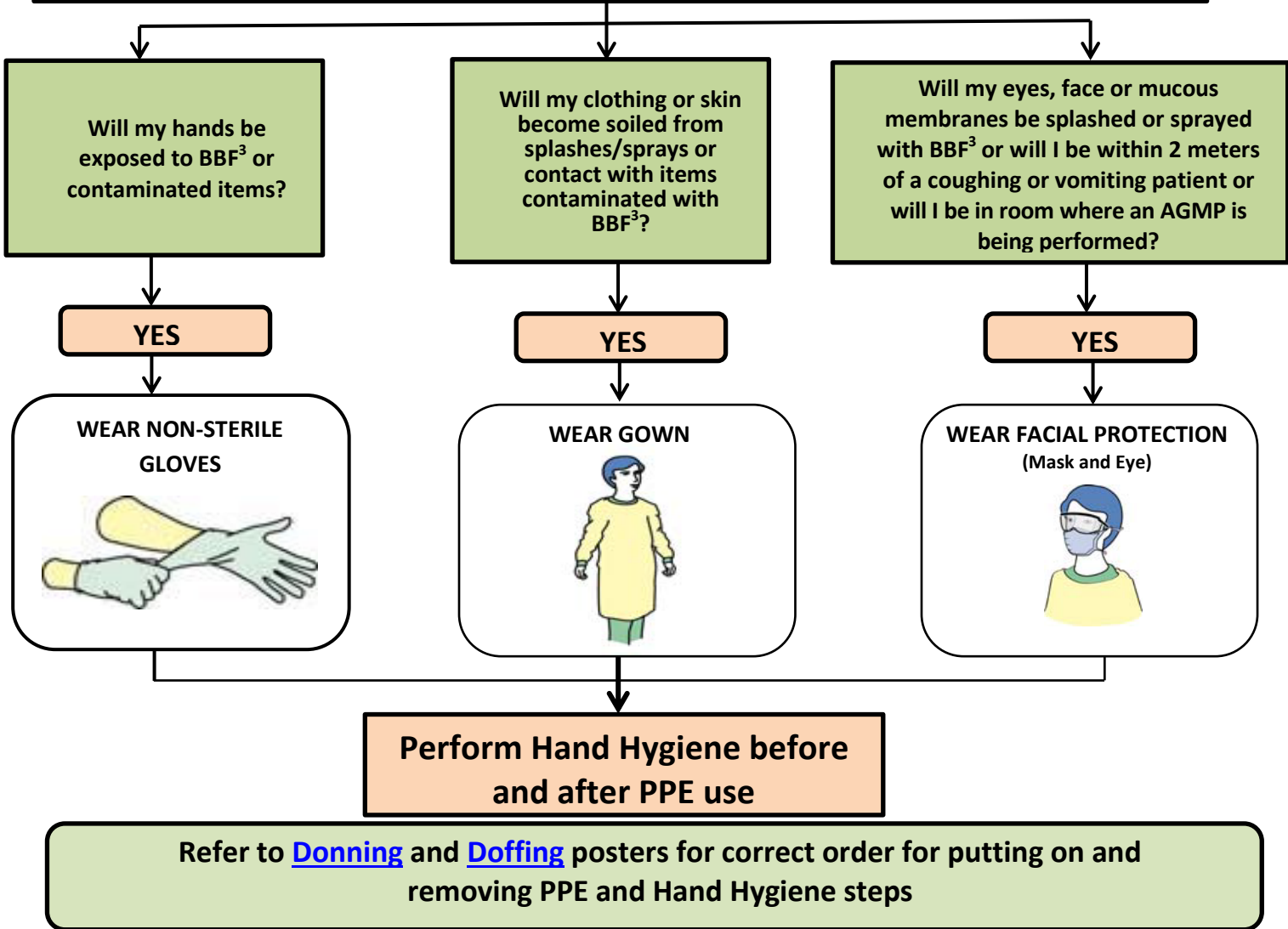
Appendix A: Point of Care Risk Assessment (PCRA)

ASSESS the TASK, the PATIENT¹ and the ENVIRONMENT²

Prior to EACH PATIENT INTERACTION

This will help you decide what, if any, **personal protective equipment (PPE)** you need to wear to protect yourself and to prevent the spread of germs.

A **PCRA** is to be performed prior to contact with every patient, every time even, if the patient has been placed on **Additional Precautions** as more PPE may be required.



Notes

¹**Patient** = patient, resident or client

²**Environment** = any area within 2 meters of the patient as well as their belongings and bathroom or the immediate space around a patient that may be touched by the patient AND may also be touched by the health care provider when providing care or performing tasks

³**BBF** = Blood and Body Fluids (includes: urine, feces, wound drainage, saliva, vomit, CSF, sputum, nasal secretions, semen, vaginal secretions)