

BSBWHS332X

**APPLY INFECTION
CONTROL
PREVENTION
AND CONTROL
PROCEDURES
TO OWN WORK
ACTIVITIES**

BSBWHS332X

Apply infection prevention and control procedures to own work activities

Release 1

Learner Guide

Aspire Version 1.1

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Before you begin

This Learner Guide is based on the unit of competency *BSBWHS332X Apply infection prevention and control procedures to own work activities*, Release 1. Your trainer or training organisation must give you information about this unit of competency as part of your training program. You can access the unit of competency and assessment requirements at: www.training.gov.au.

How to work through this learner guide

This Learner Guide contains a number of features that will assist you in your learning. Your trainer will advise which parts of the Learner Guide you need to read, and which Practice Tasks and Learning Checkpoints you need to complete. The features of this Learner Guide are detailed in the following table.

Feature of the Learner Guide	How you can use each feature
Learning content	Read each topic in this Learner Guide. If you come across content that is confusing, make a note and discuss it with your trainer. Your trainer is in the best position to offer assistance. It is very important that you take on some of the responsibility for the learning you will undertake.
Examples	These highlight key learning points and provide realistic examples of workplace situations.
Practice Tasks	Practice Tasks give you the opportunity to put your skills and knowledge into action. Your trainer will tell you which practice tasks to complete.
Summaries	Key learning points are provided at the end of each topic.
Learning Checkpoints	There is a Learning Checkpoint at the end of each topic. Your trainer will tell you which Learning Checkpoints to complete. These checkpoints give you an opportunity to check your progress and apply the skills and knowledge you have learnt.

Foundation skills

As you complete learning using this guide, you will be developing the foundation skills relevant for this unit. Foundation skills are the language, literacy and numeracy (LLN) skills and the employability skills required for participation in modern workplaces and contemporary life.

The following table provides definitions for each foundation skill.

Foundation skill area	Foundation skill description
Oral communication	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Explains an infection hazard or non-compliance to required personnel, using suitable words and terms and responding clearly to specific enquiries Listens to and interprets information relevant to own role in relation to infection prevention and control
Reading	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Interprets information in a range of workplace procedures essential to infection prevention and control in own role
Writing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Records easy-to-read information relating to workplace hazards and incidents, using words and terms appropriate to audience and purpose
Initiative and enterprise	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Identifies both obvious and less evident hazards to self and others
Problem solving	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Identifies and applies infection prevention and control measures suited to own role and work environment

What do you already know?

Use the following table to identify what you may already know. This may assist you to work out what to focus on in your learning.

Topic	Key outcome	Rate your confidence in each section
Topic 1: Prepare for work by supporting infection prevention and control	1A Identify job requirements	<input type="checkbox"/> Confident <input type="checkbox"/> Basic understanding <input type="checkbox"/> Not confident
	1B Identify infection prevention and control procedures	<input type="checkbox"/> Confident <input type="checkbox"/> Basic understanding <input type="checkbox"/> Not confident
	1C Identify and control hazards and risks	<input type="checkbox"/> Confident <input type="checkbox"/> Basic understanding <input type="checkbox"/> Not confident
Topic 2: Complete work activities to support infection prevention and control	2A Use resources according to procedures and manufacturer requirements	<input type="checkbox"/> Confident <input type="checkbox"/> Basic understanding <input type="checkbox"/> Not confident
	2B Clean and maintain work areas	<input type="checkbox"/> Confident <input type="checkbox"/> Basic understanding <input type="checkbox"/> Not confident
	2C Respond to hazards, non-compliances and exposure to infection	<input type="checkbox"/> Confident <input type="checkbox"/> Basic understanding <input type="checkbox"/> Not confident
Topic 3: Finalise work activities	3A Maintain and store resources	<input type="checkbox"/> Confident <input type="checkbox"/> Basic understanding <input type="checkbox"/> Not confident
	3B Dispose of waste	<input type="checkbox"/> Confident <input type="checkbox"/> Basic understanding <input type="checkbox"/> Not confident
	3C Report infection incidents	<input type="checkbox"/> Confident <input type="checkbox"/> Basic understanding <input type="checkbox"/> Not confident



Topic 1 | Prepare for work by supporting infection prevention and control

- 1A Identify job requirements
- 1B Identify infection prevention and control procedures
- 1C Identify and control hazards and risks

1A Identify job requirements

The first step in working safely around potential infections is to understand your job role.

When you begin a new role, you will need to understand the requirements of the job, including your range of tasks, responsibilities and objectives. This will vary according to your position and the type of organisation you work for.

For example, an administrative assistant role may include some basic office tasks such as answering the telephone and taking messages, attending to customers or visitors, processing mail, photocopying, scanning and preparing simple documents.

Working in a small organisation means you might have a wide range of job tasks and work across different areas. In a larger organisation, you might find that different people take responsibility for specific tasks, and you might spend most of your time in just one area, such as in reception.

Clarifying job requirements

Learn about your job requirements during the initial induction process, and by following your workplace policies and procedural documents.

There are a number of different ways you can learn about your job requirements. These will be specific to your job role and the organisation that you work for.

Examples include:

- job/position description document
- information from your supervisor or colleagues
- the induction when you first begin a new job and tasks are described to you
- policies and procedures outlining how work tasks are to be completed
- work processes describing the steps to follow to complete a task
- your company intranet/portal that stores organisational documents.

Reviewing your job description

Your job description is a valuable source of information that outlines the duties and requirements of your position.

One of the best places to learn about your tasks and responsibilities is your job description document. Most established organisations have a formal job or position description attached to each job.

If you are unsure about your job requirements, speak with your supervisor or manager.

Job details outlined in the position description

- The job title
- The tasks and responsibilities of the job
- The skills you are expected to have in order to complete the tasks
- The manager/supervisor that you will report to
- Key results areas (KRAs)
- Key performance indicators (KPIs)

Listen to your supervisor

Listen actively to other team members and to your supervisor if you are unsure about any aspects of your role.

The best way to clarify your role or task depends on the type of job you do, and the policies, procedures and management structures in place. If you are unsure about your job role, you can ask your direct supervisor. Where staff work in teams, other team members may offer to show you examples, explain processes or show where documents and other information is stored.

When asking for information about your job role, use active listening skills. The ability to listen properly is often referred to as 'active listening' because it requires you to concentrate on what your supervisor or team member is saying. By listening carefully, you can take in the information more quickly and ask the right questions to clarify any concerns or confusion you may have.

Active listening ensures you understand what the person is saying and minimises misunderstanding.

Elements of active listening

- Look at the person when they are speaking.
- Keep eye contact.
- Eliminate all distractions by stopping any work that you are doing.
- Show you are listening by smiling, nodding, or using phrases such as 'of course', 'I understand' etc.
- Paraphrase, summarise and ask follow-up questions.
- Do not interrupt or make assumptions.
- Take notes if the information is lengthy.

Example

Job descriptions

Jobs in the business services sector can be broad, covering a wide variety of different tasks that require a range of different skills. Administrative workers may need some level of formal or informal training after being asked to complete these new tasks. Or, similar tasks can be completed in different parts of the business by a person with a key set of skills.

The following table presents sections from two different position descriptions. The first is for Michelle, who is an office assistant at a library. The second job description is for Brian, who works as a customer service representative at a large auto-mechanic workshop.

Job description for Michelle	Job description for Brian
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Complete administrative duties ▪ File documents and retrieve documents from the filing system ▪ Organise storage of new publications and maintain a stockpile ▪ Prepare simple documents; for example, letters, notices, minutes ▪ Order stationery and other office supplies, and monitor stationery stock ▪ Prepare, send and distribute mail by post or courier ▪ Photocopy, scan and organise printing of meeting documents 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Answer customer phone enquiries about the services ▪ Print off tax invoices, receipts and service records for customers ▪ Keep customer 'loyalty program' records updated ▪ Print off advertising content that will be handed to customers ▪ Collect customer satisfaction surveys and relay them to the marketing manager

Both roles are clerical as they involve printing, organising and filing tasks. Brian's role also requires some level of customer service skills as he must respond to customer queries on the phone and face-to-face. He will need to be aware of the organisation's customer service policies and he may need to complete some customer service training.

Michelle's role is more focused on staff operations. The tasks that she must complete are similar to Brian's but include far fewer interactions with customers.

Practice Task 1

Question 1

Which of the following people can confirm your job requirements? Tick all that apply.

- Manager or supervisor
- Department heads
- Your colleagues
- Your family
- Your employer

Question 2

List five pieces of information you would normally find in your job description.

Question 3

List five examples of active listening skills.



1B Identify infection prevention and control procedures

An infection occurs when foreign and harmful micro-organisms enter the body and multiply, causing disease.

Infections can be acquired through direct contact with an infectious person, via contaminated food, water or even objects that contain harmful micro-organisms, called pathogens.

As a result, a person's health and wellbeing can be adversely compromised, leading to low grade illnesses such as the common cold. Infections may also cause high-grade illnesses such as autoimmune deficiency syndrome (AIDS), and in some cases may even result in death.

In many cases, however, an infection may cause no symptoms, depending on the health state of the person and the level of micro-organisms that enter their body.

Infection prevention and control

Infection prevention and control is required to stop the spread of pathogens and reduce the risk of infection.

Infection prevention is about taking proactive steps to reduce the likelihood of infectious disease being spread from one person, object or animal, to another. Infection control is the process that is used to manage existing hazards and incidents and reduce the risk of an infection.

Three common sources of infection are outlined below.

Viruses

Viruses infect and take control of host cells. Viruses can spread through person-to-person contact, body fluids, food, and the air.

Viruses typically cannot be treated with medication (with the exception of antiviral drugs). In most cases, the body's immune system is responsible for dealing with viruses.

Examples of viruses include the coronavirus (COVID-19), human immunodeficiency virus (HIV), sexually transmitted infections, the common cold, influenza and rubella.

Bacteria

Bacterial diseases can spread in the same ways as viral diseases. Unlike viruses, bacteria multiply. The human body hosts a wide range of bacteria that can affect it in both beneficial and harmful ways.

Bacterial infections, if they are severe, are typically treated with antibiotics.

Examples of bacterial disease include whooping cough, tuberculosis, gastroenteritis and a range of sexually transmitted infections, such as chlamydia.

Fungi

Fungi include moulds and yeasts. Fungi are made up of larger cells than viruses and bacteria. They are typically multicellular.

A fungus usually spreads through contact with infected skin or nails, or through bare skin contact with wet areas such as toilets and bathroom surfaces. Fungi are treated with topical creams.

Examples of fungal infections include athlete's foot, candidiasis, cryptococcosis and ringworm.

Vulnerable people

While every person is susceptible to infectious disease, some people are more vulnerable than others.

The human body has numerous mechanisms that act as a powerful shield against a range of infectious diseases and harmful micro-organisms. In particular, the immune system consists of cells that specifically fight infection. White blood cells remember the type of infections that a person has previously had and can quickly overcome them if they encounter them again.

Some people with a strong immune system may show little to no signs and symptoms when they come into contact with pathogens; however, others can experience severe and even fatal symptoms.

A person with a compromised or weakened immune system is less able to fight an infectious disease efficiently – in some cases, they cannot fight it at all. In such cases, the infection can cause death.

People who are more susceptible to an infectious disease are those with compromised (weakened) immune systems. Common examples include the elderly, young children, pregnant women and those who have chronic medical conditions like HIV, diabetes or arthritis.

People who are taking immunosuppressive medications for diseases such as lupus, rheumatoid arthritis (RA) and multiple sclerosis (MS) are also more susceptible to contracting an infectious disease.

Newborn babies, too, are considered at high risk of contracting disease as their immune systems have not yet developed. They rely on their carers to protect them from harmful infections.

Chain of infection

The chain of infection represents the series of steps that must occur to enable pathogens to cause an infection in a person.

A series of events has to occur for a person to contract an infectious disease. This series of events enables micro-organisms to cause harm. Each part of the process is a separate link in what is referred to as 'the chain of infection'. Infection prevention and control procedures can be used to break any link at any part of the chain. It only takes one link to be broken and the infection can be stopped or inhibited.

There are six links in the chain of infection, as outlined below.

The infectious agent

The infectious agent is the micro-organism that causes the infection. These are in the environment and inside our bodies, and many have important roles in keeping us healthy. The problem occurs when these beneficial micro-organisms leave their normal place and go elsewhere in the body. For example, the bacteria that sit on your skin and which usually cause no harm can get inside the body through a cut and cause infection.

The reservoir

The 'reservoir' refers to the place where pathogens can live and multiply. These reservoirs occur when a person, animal or pest comes into contact with a surface or an object. Contamination (infection) can occur through air droplets (aerosols) such as those caused by sneezing, or contact from waste, such as faeces, that contains harmful micro-organisms.

For example, a reservoir might be the surface of a table or floor, or an elevator button or toilet seat that an infectious person has touched.

The portal of exit from the reservoir

The 'portal of exit' refers to the means by which the micro-organisms move from the reservoir and come into contact with a person. For example, a person touching the elevator button will come in contact with the micro-organisms. The person's hands are now the 'portal of exit' – the means by which the pathogens can move from one place to another.

Other examples of 'portals' include excretions (faeces, vomit and urine), body fluids (blood, saliva) and the air we breathe from our lungs, especially in a cough. Tiny skin cells that peel off our bodies and form part of the dust that settles on surfaces can also function as portals.

Non-human portals of exit for germs include surfaces – such as door handles, buttons, desks, benchtops and office equipment – that have not been properly cleaned.

The mode of transmission

The mode of transmission is how pathogens travel from one place to another.

This refers to how the pathogens move, or spread, from one place to another.

Transmission can be through:

- direct contact, such as touching contaminated equipment or surfaces
- airborne aerosols (tiny air droplets found in sweat, breath, coughs and sneezes)
- physical contact such as a kiss or hug, when one person is carrying an infection.

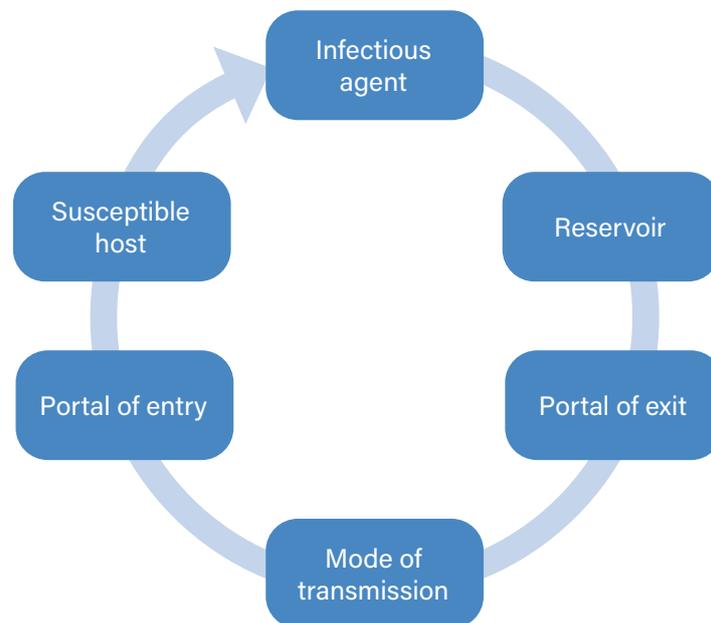
The portal of entry into the 'host'

A pathogen enters the body via a 'portal of entry' such as an opening in the skin from a cut or injury.

This is the stage when the pathogens move from the reservoir to the person (the 'host'). Portals of entry include pathogens entering via an opening in the skin from a cut or injury, being swallowed via infected food, or inhaled.

The susceptible host

People with good health and strong immune systems are often able to fight an infection. Some people, however, have weakened immune systems and are unable to fight infection effectively.



The incubation and contagious stages

Harmful micro-organisms can be transferred from a host to another person, potentially causing an infectious disease.

An infection occurs when a carrier (also known as the 'host') passes on pathogens to another person and the micro-organisms enter their body, causing disease.

Once the infectious micro-organism is passed from the carrier (through air droplets, penetrating injuries, contact with a contaminated surface or inhalation), the pathogens need time to develop, spread and potentially cause harm to the new host. This lag-time is known as the incubation period. This is a medical term that explains the time from the moment of exposure until the time the person shows signs and symptoms of the disease.

The risk of passing on an infection and the time of the incubation period can vary significantly depending on the source of the infectious agent, the dose of infection, the route of infection and the health of the host.

The contagious stage refers to the period of time when the host can pass the disease onto others. These two stages often overlap, meaning a person is generally contagious during the incubation phase and in many cases, a person may be infectious well before any symptoms are present.

Not all people who are infected or carry infections show signs and symptoms. Some people may be in the incubation stage, have mild symptoms that are not obvious, are not aware of a disease that is present, or, they may choose not to disclose it.

Procedures that prevent and control the spread of infection

Following organisational procedures to prevent and control the risk of infection is essential in protecting everyone's health and safety, including your own.

These procedures are outlined below:

Hand-washing	<p>The proper hand-washing technique includes washing your hands with soap and warm water for at least 20 seconds. You should include the backs of your hands, wrists, between your fingers and under your fingernails. You must thoroughly dry your hands immediately after you wash them. Always dry your hands with a clean towel, disposable paper towel or under an air dryer, not on a tea towel and never on your clothes.</p> <p>In some cases, alcohol-based hand sanitisers are required when you are exposed to high doses of harmful bacteria. You may use hand sanitiser when working with infectious people, handling waste, administering first aid, or when soap and clean water are unavailable.</p>
Personal hygiene	<p>Bacteria are everywhere – on our skin, in our bodies and on surfaces. Even healthy people can carry infectious bacteria and other pathogens. To reduce the risk of infection, it is essential that you follow your organisation's personal hygiene policies and procedures.</p> <p>These may include the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Bathe at least once a day, including washing your hair and brushing your teeth. ▪ Regularly wash your clothes. ▪ Reduce the amount of jewellery you wear, as much as possible. ▪ Remove jewellery, wrist bands and watches that may act as a reservoir for harmful micro-organisms. ▪ Fingernails can also act as a reservoir and may carry harmful pathogens – they must be trimmed regularly and kept clean and short. ▪ Maintain clean and trimmed facial hair. ▪ Wash your hands thoroughly and on a regular basis throughout your shift. ▪ Cover any cuts or open wounds with correct dressings, such as a band aid.
Respiratory hygiene and cough etiquette	<p>Harmful micro-organisms can be transferred from one host to another through water droplets contained in fluids that are secreted from the mouth and nose.</p> <p>When you need to sneeze or cough, you must:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ cover your mouth and nose using a tissue or your elbow, not your hands ▪ throw the tissue out immediately after use ▪ wash your hands using soap and water or alcohol-based hand sanitiser, if you coughed or sneezed into your hands.

<p>Checking for and reporting indicators of poor health</p>	<p>If you observe signs and symptoms of an infectious disease in another person, check with the person and ask if they feel ill, or if they know whether they have a disease.</p> <p>Signs and symptoms vary based on the type of disease present in the person. Common indicators include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ breathing issues, such as shortness of breath ▪ constant coughing and sneezing ▪ dizziness and lack of energy ▪ dry or sore throat ▪ loss of taste ▪ constant sweating or chills ▪ fever ▪ body aches and pains ▪ gut problems ▪ headaches.
<p>Reporting personal health matters</p>	<p>If you are unwell and are experiencing viral or other disease-like symptoms, or you have come into direct close contact with a person who has an infectious disease, you are at risk of passing on an infection to others.</p> <p>In these cases, you must:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ immediately report the matter to your supervisor ▪ go home and isolate yourself from others that you may infect ▪ book an appointment to visit your general practitioner for an assessment. <p>Isolation should occur for up to 14 days under Australian Government guidelines (COVID-19), until your health is restored and you are not infectious, or it is confirmed via a medical assessment that you do not have an infectious disease.</p>
<p>Social distancing</p>	<p>Social distancing involves preventing direct close contact with an infectious or potentially infectious person. This procedure is an effective way of stopping and slowing the spread of infectious disease, by reducing the amount of contact between people.</p> <p>As a general rule, the more space between two people, the better. The Department of Health recommends maintaining a distance of at least 1.5 metres from another person.</p> <p>In addition to social distancing, you can also stop the spread of infectious disease by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ avoiding any direct contact with people; avoid using a handshake or hug to greet someone ▪ limiting the amount of people in small rooms, such as a kitchens or toilet areas ▪ avoiding gatherings at break times ▪ separating workstations using barriers, such as chairs or empty tables ▪ using video and phone calls to contact clients and team members, instead of visiting them in person.

Hand-washing procedures

Hand-washing is one of the most effective ways of preventing the spread of infectious disease, including viruses and bacteria.

It is important to follow your organisation's hand-washing procedures, to ensure you are being proactive in preventing the spread of bacteria and viruses, as well as other harmful micro-organisms.

If you are unsure about the requirements or whether you are doing the right thing, speak with your supervisor. Failing to follow standard operating procedures for hand-washing can have serious health consequences for you and those who come into contact with your workplace.

Follow these steps when washing your hands:

- Wet your hands thoroughly with warm water.
- Add soap or skin cleanser.
- Vigorously rub your hands together covering all surfaces of your hands and wrists for at least 20 seconds:
 - palm to palm
 - palm over the back of each hand
 - palm to palm with interlaced fingers
 - tips and back of fingers to each palm
 - clean your thumbs
 - clean your wrists.
- Rinse your hands thoroughly.
- Dry your hands dry using paper towel or automatic dryer.

When to wash your hands

Wash your hands at key times to protect yourself and others.

Your organisation's policies and procedures will explain when to wash your hands, according to best practices.

In general, hand-washing should occur at the following times:

- before and after touching clients and other workers
- after going to the toilet
- after handling animals, waste or other contaminants
- before and after handling or consuming food
- before starting a new shift, and following a break
- after accidentally sneezing or coughing into your hands.

Watch this video for more information about when to wash your hands:
<https://aspirelr.link/coronavirus-hygiene>

Accessing policies and procedures

Policies and procedures will explain your roles and responsibilities for preventing and controlling the risk of infection.

Organisational policies and procedures can usually be accessed from your staff portal, intranet or in a policy and procedures manual. Consult your supervisor for the best way to access relevant documents.

The requirements in these documents must be followed at all times to ensure you are protecting the health and safety of others. By following workplace policy, you will also ensure your own health and safety, by minimising infection-related hazards and risks.

Example

Hand-washing procedure

Sandra is a receptionist at an aged-care facility. Her main duties include administrative tasks and helping families and elderly clients with their enquiries.

It is 7.50am and Sandra has just arrived to start her shift. Before starting her job tasks, she completes a thorough hand-washing process to remove any harmful germs from her skin that she may have accumulated driving to and entering the workplace.

Sandra follows her workplace hand-washing procedure that she learnt in her induction training. There is also a poster that sits above the sink area as a reminder. The poster describes the process:

- Wet hands thoroughly (use warm water).
- Use the approved soap or soap cleanser.
- Rub hands together: palm to palm, palm over the back of each hand, palm to palm with interlaced fingers, tips and backs of hands to each palm, then clean thumbs and wrists.
- Rinse hands thoroughly.
- Use paper towel to pat hands dry and place the used paper towel in the foot pedal bin next to the sink.

After she has washed her hands, Sandra is now prepared to start her day safely.

GOOD HAND WASHING TECHNIQUE

Vigorously rub and rotate your hands together

STEP 1
Wet all surfaces thoroughly with warm water

STEP 2
Apply soap or skin cleanser

STEP 3
Palm to palm

STEP 4
Palm over back of each hand

STEP 5
Palm to palm with interlaced fingers

STEP 6
Tips and backs of fingers to each palm

STEP 7
Clean thumbs

STEP 8
Clean wrists

STEP 9
Rinse your hands thoroughly

STEP 10
Pat dry your hands thoroughly using a disposable paper towel

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Practice Task 2

Question 1

Draw a line to match each term about the chain of infection to its definition.

- | | |
|---|--|
| » The mode of transmission | » The micro-organism that causes the infection |
| » The portal of exit from the reservoir | » The place where micro-organisms can live and multiply |
| » The infectious agent | » The means by which the micro-organisms escape from the reservoir and come into contact with a person |
| » The susceptible host | » How the micro-organisms move, or spread, from one place to another |
| » The portal of entry into the 'host' | » The stage when micro-organisms move from the reservoir to the host |
| » The reservoir | » A person who is elderly, pregnant, newborn or has a weakened immune system |

Question 2

Which of the following statements are correct? Select yes or no for each one.

- a) A person who is in the incubation stage is not infectious. » Yes » No
- b) If you are coughing, sneezing, showing a fever or constantly sweating, you must report the matter to your supervisor and book in a medical appointment. » Yes » No
- c) The incubation phase is the time the host shows signs and symptoms of an infectious disease. » Yes » No
- d) The risk of acquiring an infectious disease is dependent on the dose, the source of infection and the person's immune system. » Yes » No
- e) Social distancing requires you to stay at least 1.5 metres from others who are at risk of acquiring or passing on an infectious disease. » Yes » No
- f) It is important to always cough into your hands. » Yes » No
- g) Workplace procedures will require you to remove jewellery, watches and other items that may contribute to the risk of infection. » Yes » No

Question 3

Which of the following are correct hand hygiene procedures? Tick all that apply.

- Rub your hands using warm water and soap or use alcohol-based sanitisers to remove dirt and grime from your fingernails and skin.
- Cover any cuts or open wounds with correct dressings.
- Wash your hands thoroughly with soap for at least five seconds.
- Keep your fingernails trimmed and clean to minimise the number of pathogens carried in this area.
- Wash your hands before and after coming into contact with people.
- Use a hand towel to dry your hands and place it neatly so it is ready for others to use.

1C Identify and control hazards and risks

A hazard is any source of danger. A risk is the likelihood and consequence of harm if a person comes into contact with the hazard.

Workplace health and safety procedures are developed so you can be aware of the hazards that exist in your workplace and how to protect yourself and others from harm, including the risk of infectious disease. These procedures include how to identify infection-related hazards, assessing the risk of harm and methods used to remove or minimise hazards and risks. These procedures form the hazard management process.

It is important that you follow these procedures to ensure infection-related hazards are appropriately managed according to the requirements of the workplace and the WHS laws.

Hazard management covers four main steps as explained below.

Hazard identification	Find the dangers and understand what can cause harm to people in the workplace.
Risk assessment	Determine the likelihood and level of harm that can be caused if a person is exposed to the hazard.
Risk control	Remove the hazard or put things in place to reduce the level of harm.
Follow-up action	Follow up to see that the controls are doing their job properly by speaking with the supervisor and other workers and asking for their feedback.

Types of infection hazards

The infection hazards identified in your workplace will depend on the kind of activities, people and industry that your organisation operates within.

There are many hazards that pose infection risks in the workplace environment. Since every workplace is different based on the industry, the nature of work and the people who come into contact with the workplace, the types of hazards will vary.

Examples of common hazard categories that may exist in a workplace are described below.

Sharps and penetrating injuries

Sharps include razor blades, hypodermic needles and syringes with needles that can penetrate the skin's surface, allowing an infection portal for bloodborne diseases such as human immunodeficiency virus (HIV) and several types of hepatitis. Cuts and open wounds allow bacteria to enter the body, which can result in septicaemia (blood poisoning).

Sharps that are not properly disposed of in special sharps bins can cut a person and put them at risk of infection if the sharp contains pathogens.

General waste and rubbish

General waste can include items such as tissues, incontinence pads, bandages and disposable PPE like gloves, face masks and aprons.

General waste can pose an infection risk if the items:

- contain liquid; that is, there is a smaller risk if any body fluids have dried
- have come into contact with a person who has an infectious disease
- have come into contact with a person who is using cytotoxic drugs, such as those used for cancer treatment.

Direct contact with human tissues, secretions and human waste

Human tissue, including skin, can act as both a reservoir and a portal for infection.

Direct contact with human secretions and waste, including saliva, mucous, faeces, urine and vomit, can transmit pathogens such as salmonella, hepatitis, E. coli and candida.

Aerosol transmission

Aerosols are microscopic droplets that are able to be suspended in the air for long periods of time. It has been proven that transmissible diseases such as influenza, COVID-19, meningitis, pertussis (whooping cough) and tuberculosis can travel through the air in droplets of saliva, sweat, breath, mucous and humidity. These bodily secretions can result from sneezing, coughing, laughing, exercising, singing or shouting and can carry harmful pathogens that can infect other people. The risk of infection increases in poorly ventilated and enclosed areas. Workers must take the appropriate precautions such as wearing face masks or social distancing, as working with people who have these diseases can put you at a high risk of infection.

Personal skin-to-skin contact with infectious hosts

Skin-to-skin contact includes shaking or holding hands, high fives, hugging and kissing. Regardless of whether a person is symptomatic, personal contact with co-workers, clients and other people can increase the risk of airborne and bloodborne diseases being transmitted from one person to another. Personal contact also increases the risk of contracting skin-borne infections such as scabies, staphylococcus aureus, cellulitis and herpes.

Food

Food can be a reservoir for infection. Consuming contaminated food allows the bacteria to reach the gastrointestinal system, which can lead to adverse effects such as diarrhoea, vomiting, dehydration and even death. Food that is past its use-by date, has been contaminated by other food items (for example, cooked food standing next to raw food or different meat products stored together), or has not been stored appropriately can present a reservoir for bacteria to form and multiply, presenting an infection risk. This is dangerous for anyone, but especially for older people and people with compromised immune systems.

Cooked foods should be reheated before consumption. Heating food to an appropriate temperature can kill the bacteria that causes food poisoning.

Animals, insects and vermin

Animals, insects and vermin can carry diseases, some of which can be transmitted to humans. They can affect human gastrointestinal, integumentary (skin, hair, nails etc.), respiratory and sensory systems. Vermin may leave droppings in food items or contaminate food items through direct contact. Other pests can spread disease through direct contact with people. There are a number of diseases that can be spread or aggravated by animals, insects and vermin.

These diseases include:

- asthma
- encephalitis
- dengue fever
- giardiasis
- Ross River fever.

Methods of identifying hazards

Workplace hazard management procedures include instructions for identifying hazards.

Procedures for identifying hazards include performing scheduled workplace inspections, carrying out hazard hunts in small groups, checking in with clients and co-workers who demonstrate signs and symptoms of infectious disease and reviewing documents and incident reports in team meetings.

The most valuable information you can provide about hazards in your work environment will come from having a daily awareness of your work environment and the common infection hazards that you and your work team are exposed to when carrying out your work tasks.

This will require you to observe your environment, talk to your team members and clients, complete your safety checklists (housekeeping) as part of your daily work routine, and implement your daily work practices.

Workplace inspections

Workplace inspections are conducted on a regular basis and may involve the assistance of the health and safety representative (HSR) or health and safety committee member. The purpose is to identify and control infection hazards before they cause harm. This is a way of being proactive about hazards, rather than reacting after an infection has occurred.

Evidence needs to be gathered to show that workers are following relevant health and safety laws and the organisation's policies and procedures. Site and workplace inspections provide an opportunity for workers to raise their WHS concerns.

Examples of inspections

- Inspect existing and known hazards such as spilled waste or uncovered wounds.
- Inspect the work processes; that is, how the tasks are performed. These can be routine inspections at specific times of the month or year.
- Inspect any new processes or equipment to assess hazards.
- Inspect work practices or equipment after complaints or concerns are raised by workers or customers.
- Make follow-up inspections after processes have been changed as a result of recommendations, to determine if the changes have been effective.

Risk assessment

The first step in implementing the hazard management process is hazard identification.

Once an infection hazard has been identified, the risks must be assessed. Assessing the risk associated with each hazard is important for determining what control measures need to be put in place and how quickly something needs to be done to manage the hazard. To correctly assess risks, you need sound analytic skills:

- Be objective and methodical.
- Use a system and criteria so you know what you are assessing against.
- Never accept the first conclusion you make.
- Look at all the data, ask questions and reinterpret if necessary.

Risk assessment means considering the likelihood of the hazard occurring and the potential impact of exposure to the hazard. The combination of these produces a risk level.

A risk assessment can be completed using the following tool.

First, consider the most likely outcome (consequence) of a potential accident:

Insignificant	No injuries or financial loss
Minor	First aid treatment, on-site release immediately, medium to low financial loss
Moderate	Medical treatment required, on-site release contained without outside assistance, high financial loss
Major	Extensive injuries, loss of productivity, off-site release with no detrimental effects, major financial loss
Catastrophic	Death, off-site release with detrimental effect, huge financial loss

Second, estimate the likelihood that the accident will occur:

Almost certain	Is expected to occur in most circumstances
Likely	Will probably occur in most circumstances
Possible	Might occur at some time
Unlikely	Unlikely to occur, but history of event exists within the business
Rare	May occur only in exceptional circumstances

		Consequences				
		Insignificant	Minor	Moderate	Major	Catastrophic
Likelihood	Almost certain	High	High	Very high	Very high	Very high
	Likely	Moderate	Moderate	High	Very high	Very high
	Possible	Low	Moderate	High	High	Very high
	Unlikely	Low	Low	Moderate	Moderate	High
	Rare	Low	Low	Low	Low	Moderate

1 – Very high, 2 – High, 3 – Moderate, 4 – Low (monitor)

The level of risk

Each infection hazard should be carefully assessed with the aim of determining which are more likely to cause injury or harm to people, and how serious the injuries or harm might be. It is important to focus on the situations likely to cause the most/worst injuries or harm to health. These should have high priority. If something is high risk, do something about it immediately.

Each risk will have a different chance of happening and will have a different effect. Some events, such as spreading a pathogen, may have relatively high risk but might only affect a few people. For example, an older person who is coughing in the reception area near a newborn baby is at a very high risk of affecting the child.

Implementing appropriate controls

Once a hazard has been identified and its risks have been assessed, action must be taken to either eliminate or control the hazard before it results in injury or illness.

Hazard control is the process of determining and implementing the best way to control hazards. The best way to control a hazard is to eliminate it. It will never be possible to remove all infection hazards from your workplace. However, you must take all reasonable steps to control the risk of harm, within the scope of your job role. If you are unsure about what to do about a hazard, then report it immediately to your supervisor.

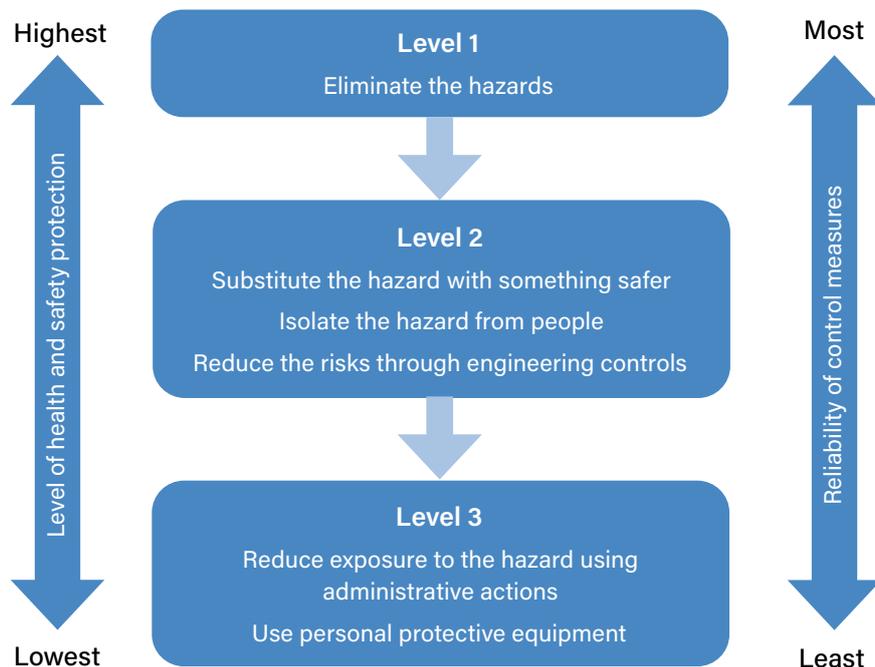
The hierarchy of control

The hierarchy of control provides a framework for the development of control measures.

For the greatest level of reliability and effectiveness, elimination of the infection hazard should be the goal; however, if this is not possible then the risk should be minimised using other strategies such as engineering or administrative controls. PPE, a level three control, is the lowest level of protection from the risk of infection.

The model WHS Regulations state that risks should be managed using the hierarchy of control. As the name suggests, the controls are measures that should be applied in sequence. This means that if the first option is not available, choose the next. For example, if you cannot eliminate a piece of contaminated equipment because it is fixed to the building, choose the next best option (isolation). You may find that in many cases, a combination of controls may be the best method.

This is the hierarchy of control, starting from the best option and working down to the least preferred options, as described in the Code of Practice.



The following table outlines examples of measures within each level of the control hierarchy.

Elimination	<p>This aims to eliminate the risk at its source and should always be the first choice. The source of the risk is the hazard, so this usually means removing hazardous materials or abandoning hazardous work practices. For example:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Clean up a spill straightaway to avoid anyone else coming into contact with the hazard. • Throw away rotten or mouldy food. • Dispose of tissues and gloves after use.
Substitution	<p>If it is not reasonably practicable to eliminate the hazards and associated risks, you should minimise the risks using a level 2 approach, beginning with substitution. Substitute the hazard with something safer. For example:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Replace latex gloves with non-latex gloves for workers with latex allergies. • Replace bar soap with liquid soap. • Replace hand towels with a dryer or paper towels.
Isolation	<p>The second level 2 approach, isolating the hazard from people, involves physically separating the source of harm from people by distance or using barriers. For example:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Remove items away from the hazard to prevent contamination. • Contain the hazard and prevent people from coming into contact with it using barriers and warning signs. • Store chemicals in a specialised hazardous chemicals cabinet. • If a worker is sick, they should stay at home and away from other people.
Engineering	<p>The next best level 2 solution is to implement engineering controls that involve changing equipment. Remember, if you cannot eliminate the hazard, then eliminate as many of the risks associated with the hazard as possible. For example:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Set up hand sanitiser stations throughout the building. • Install sharps containers in toilets. • Improve or maintain air conditioning systems.
Administration	<p>These control measures do not control the hazard at the source, but rely on human behaviour and supervision. Used on their own, they tend to be least effective in minimising risks. For example:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop policies and procedures to minimise the risks. • Reduce the time the person is exposed to the infection hazard (for example, job rotation). • Supervise workers and observe people for signs and symptoms of ill health. • Provide safety awareness signage for hand-washing and social distancing. • Provide training in infection control procedures.

Personal Protective Equipment (PPE)	<p>Wearing and using PPE is the least effective hierarchy of control method. PPE should be used as the last resort or to provide back-up for higher level control measures. The type of PPE that you wear will vary depending on the job role that you are performing and the infection risks that are present.</p> <p>Your policies and procedures may require you to wear the following PPE:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ apron ▪ hair net ▪ disposable gloves ▪ full length protective suit ▪ face mask or face shield ▪ breathing apparatus ▪ safety glasses ▪ enclosed footwear ▪ rubber boots.
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Accessing and checking PPE

Ensure you are familiar with your workplace PPE protocols, and consult your supervisor or a colleague if you need further guidance.

PPE provides basic protection from the risk of infection by acting as a barrier between your body and reservoirs for infection such as body fluids.

The effectiveness of PPE is highly dependent on its quality. PPE that is torn, exposed, dirty or infected will not protect you or others from infection hazards and risks.

Ensure you are informed about where to access a PPE item, and where you need to put it once you have finished using it. Your workplace may have a designated PPE cupboard or room that is used to store all items for your work area.

You should receive training in the correct way to wear PPE during your induction, but if you have forgotten, ask a colleague or your supervisor. Some critical points regarding the use of PPE are outlined here.

The following procedures must be followed to ensure PPE remains safe and effective in protecting people from harm:

- Inspect the item for any damage or signs of infection (such as dirt, mould, grime or stains), before you wear it.
- Report any issues with quality, such as splits, cracks, dirt, or signs of misuse or infection, using your workplace reporting procedures.
- Ensure the item fits correctly and adjust the item if required.
- Throw out any disposable PPE, such as hair nets and gloves, following the completion of each task.
- Ensure damaged and faulty PPE is disposed of immediately by following your organisation's procedures.
- If you notice any damaged PPE, notify your supervisor immediately.

Reporting infection hazards

Depending on the organisation's WHS procedures, there may be different methods of reporting infection hazards.

As a worker, you must understand the organisation's hazard reporting procedures. It is essential that any infection hazard or risk to clients and workers is reported immediately to the relevant personnel and recorded in the correct form. This is every worker's responsibility and is part of everyone's job role.

A hazard report form may be used as official notification that a hazard exists and to determine the type of action to be taken. This form should have space to identify the hazard, assess the risk and report the action required. Signatures and dates are required to document that the report has been acted on.

Your organisational WHS policies and procedures for hazard identification and reporting should include details about the process you must follow when verbally reporting a hazard. Hazard reporting procedures should be available on your organisation's intranet or printed copies available in the WHS manual for your work area. If unsure, ask your supervisor.

Consider the following when documenting hazards and risks:

- Use words every worker can understand.
- Remove legal jargon and complex terms.
- Keep the content short, simple and to the point.
- Edit, proofread and format the document.
- Check that all fields have been filled in.
- Have at least two other people check the form before distributing it to your supervisor.

Example

Infection control response procedure

Procedure for spills of body fluids

- Isolate the area.
- You must wear appropriate PPE, including goggles, gloves and a plastic apron. You may need to wear disposable shoe coverings if there is massive blood contamination on floors.
- Soak up the fluid with paper towels.
- The spill area must be covered with a granular chlorine-releasing agent for a minimum of 10 minutes. The granules and any waste should be removed using cardboard, placed in a plastic bag and disposed of.
- Spills of human waste in bathrooms and toilets can be hosed off into the sewerage system and the area flushed with water and detergent. The area should then be disinfected with an appropriate product.
- Broken glass and sharps should be removed using forceps.
- A mixture of one-part bleach to 10 parts water should be applied for 10 minutes.
- The area should be washed with hot water and detergent.
- Dry the area using paper towel. The affected area must be left clean and dry.
- Paper towelling and gloves should be disposed of appropriately.
- Wash your hands.
- Contaminated clothing should be rinsed in cold running water, soaked in bleach solution for half an hour, and then washed separately in hot water and detergent.

Example

Hazard report form

Part 1

Hazard report number		Area of work	
Date		Specific hazard location	
Reported by		Contact phone number	
		Contact email	

Hazard description:

Risk assessment:

Risk likelihood legend	Grade	Level of likelihood
	A	Almost certain (will occur regularly)
	B	Likely (will occur at some stage)
	C	Possible (could occur)
	D	Unlikely (could occur but unlikely)
	E	Rare (may occur but in limited situations)

Risk impact/ consequence legend	Grade	Level of impact
	1	Insignificant
	2	Minor
	3	Moderate
	4	Major
	5	Catastrophic

Hazard report form continued...

Risk categorisation matrix

Likelihood	Consequences				
	Insignificant	Minor	Moderate	Major	Catastrophic
Almost certain	High	High	Very high	Very high	Very high
Likely	Moderate	Moderate	High	Very high	Very high
Possible	Low	Moderate	High	High	Very high
Unlikely	Low	Low	Moderate	Moderate	High
Rare	Low	Low	Low	Low	Moderate

Suggested controls (apply the hierarchy of control):

Immediate actions taken

Having completed Part 1, forward the original to the health and safety representative (HSR) for the area, who will forward it on to the relevant manager.

Hazard report form continued...

Part 2

Action required (apply the hierarchy of control):

Recommended control/s:			
Job request raised: Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>	Job no. (insert as appropriate)		
Person responsible			
Controls to be completed by:			
Approved by organisational unit head/officer	(name)	(signature)	(date)
Completion verified by health and safety representative (HSR)	(name)	(signature)	(date)

Practice Task 3

Question 1

Match the hazard management term to the correct description.

- | | |
|-------------------------|--|
| » Follow-up action | » Find the dangers and identify what can cause harm to people in the workplace. |
| » Risk control | » Determine the likelihood and level of harm that can be caused by an infection hazard if a person is exposed to the hazard. |
| » Hazard identification | » Remove the infection hazard or put things in place to reduce the level of harm. |
| » Risk assessment | » Check to see that the controls are doing their job properly by speaking with other workers and asking for their feedback. |

Question 2

Number each step in the hierarchy of control, starting from the best option (number 1) and working down to the least preferred option (number 6).

- Engineering controls: use engineering methods to control the hazard at its source.
- PPE: introduce PPE such as glasses, face masks, face shields, gloves and footwear to reduce exposure to an infection hazard.
- Elimination: eliminate the infection hazard from the workplace entirely.
- Isolation: isolate the hazard by physically removing it from the workplace or by securing the area involved.
- Substitution: substitute or modify the hazard by replacing it with something less dangerous.
- Administrative controls: these are management processes that are introduced to ensure workers' health and safety.

Question 3

List and briefly describe three infection hazards.

Question 4

Which of the following statements are correct? Tick all that apply.

- A hazard report form is used to report infection hazards.
- Workers must report infection hazards immediately to their supervisor.
- PPE must be checked for damage and signs of infection before using it.
- PPE can be taken home to be thoroughly cleaned.
- Workers need to support the organisation's WHS policies and procedures.

Summary

- Understand your job role, including the hazards, risks and safety procedures that are required to protect yourself and others from infectious disease.
- An infection occurs when foreign and harmful micro-organisms enter the body and multiply, causing disease.
- Infections can be acquired through direct contact with an infectious person, via contaminated food, water or even objects that contain harmful micro-organisms.
- Infection prevention is about taking proactive steps to reduce the likelihood of infectious disease being spread from one person, object or animal, to another.
- Infection control is the process that is used to stop the spread of infection.
- The chain of infection represents the series of steps that must occur to enable harmful micro-organisms to cause an infection in a person.
- Incubation and contagious periods may cause a person to develop mild to severe symptoms, which risks infecting others.
- Organisational procedures include hand-washing, personal hygiene, respiratory hygiene and cough etiquette, checking for and reporting indicators of poor health, reporting personal health matters and practising social distancing.
- Infection hazards must be identified, assessed and controlled on a day-to-day basis. Infection hazards include food, sharps, infectious people, vermin, waste and aerosol transmission.
- The hierarchy of control provides a framework for the development of these measures.
- For the greatest level of reliability and effectiveness, elimination of the infection hazard should be the goal; however, if this is not possible then the risk should be minimised using other strategies such as engineering or administrative controls.
- PPE, a level three control, is the lowest level of protection from the risk of infection, but can provide some form of protection against infectious disease transmission.
- It is essential that any infection hazard or risk to clients and workers is reported immediately to the relevant personnel and recorded in the correct form.

Learning Checkpoint 1

Prepare for work by supporting infection prevention and control

Part A

1. List three sources that you can access to learn about your job requirements.

2. Match each infection prevention and control procedure to its definition.

» Respiratory hygiene and cough etiquette

» If you observe signs and symptoms of an infectious disease in another person, check with the person and ask if they feel ill, or if they are aware whether they have a disease.

» Reporting personal health matters

» Use soap and warm water to remove dirt, grime and bacteria from your hands and nails. Keep your fingernails short and clean.

» Social distancing

» If you are ill, report the matter to your supervisor, book an appointment to see your doctor and isolate yourself from others.

» Personal hygiene

» Cover your mouth and nose using a tissue or your elbow and throw the tissue out immediately after use. Wash your hands if you coughed or sneezed into your hands.

» Checking for and reporting indicators of poor health

» Regularly wash your hair and brush your teeth daily. Remove jewellery and watches and cover any cuts or open wounds with correct dressings.

» Hand hygiene

» Stay at least 1.5 metres from an infectious or potentially infectious person and avoid direct contact.

3. Which of the following are hazards because they are potential sources of infection?
Tick all that apply.

- Bacteria
- Fungi
- Food
- Virus
- People who are carriers of an infection

4. Which of the following statements relate to a mode of transmission for infection?
Tick all that apply.

- Aerosols
- Coughing and sneezing
- Direct contact with infectious people
- Penetrating injuries
- Social distancing

5. List four population groups who are more susceptible and at risk of carrying an infection.

6. Which of the following factors impact on the risk of infection? Tick all that apply.

- The source of the infectious agent
- The dose of infection
- The type of infection
- The route of infection
- The health of the host
- The climate, including temperature and amount of moisture in the air

7. Match each term about infectious disease to its description.

- | | |
|-----------------------------------|---|
| » Infection hazards | » The time the host shows signs and symptoms of an infectious disease |
| » Hazard reporting procedure | » The period of time when the host can pass the disease onto others |
| » Contagious period | » Sneezing, dry mouth, dizziness, loss of energy, constant sweating |
| » Incubation period | » Sharps, personal contact with infectious people, animals, vermin and food |
| » Signs and symptoms of infection | » Advising a supervisor about a person showing signs and symptoms of an infection and completing a hazard report form |

8. Provide three examples of how PPE – such as gloves, eye protection, protective clothing, footwear and masks – must be sourced and checked before being used.

9. Which of the following are ways to listen carefully to instructions on infection control procedures? Tick all that apply.

- Look at the person when they are speaking.
- Stop any work that you are doing.
- Look out the window but still listen carefully.
- Interrupt at the best moment to ask questions.

Part B

Read the case study then answer the questions that follow.

Case study

Raphael works for a large building company. His role involves scheduling appointments for the contractors, dealing face-to-face with customers, receiving deliveries and signing in tradespersons as they enter the reception area.

During his initial induction training, Raphael learned about the organisation's WHS infection control and reporting policies and procedures. The training involved learning how to identify and address hazards and explained the procedure to report hazards. Any hazards need to be reported immediately to a supervisor and followed up with a written report, using the workplace hazard report form.

While Raphael is entering some information into the booking system, a courier walks into the reception area and sneezes, spraying saliva into his hands. As the courier drops off the parcel, he wipes his hands on the counter where Raphael is working, then leaves.

1. Which of the following describes the main infection hazard? Tick all that apply.

- Aerosol transmission
- General waste and rubbish
- Direct contact with human secretions
- Personal contact with infectious hosts
- Food

2. Complete a risk assessment of the hazard. Describe the likelihood and consequence and provide a risk rating.

3. Using the hierarchy of control, outline one way that Raphael can address the hazard.

4. Explain what Raphael must do to report the hazard, according to workplace procedures.

5. Which of the following types of PPE must Raphael wear when attending to this hazard?
Tick all that apply.

- Face mask
- Face shield
- Enclosed shoes
- Disposable gloves
- Full body protective suit
- Safety glasses

6. List five guidelines Raphael must follow when documenting the hazard and its risks.





Topic 2 | Complete work activities to support infection prevention and control

- 2A Use resources according to procedures and manufacturer requirements
- 2B Clean and maintain work areas
- 2C Respond to hazards, non-compliances and exposure to infection

2A Use resources according to procedures and manufacturer requirements

A resource is something that helps you to meet the requirements of your job role.

To achieve deadlines and meet the objectives and outcomes of your job role, you need to access and use a range of resources every day.

The following table outlines the main types of resources you may need to fulfil the requirements of a day-to-day role in business services.

Plant and machinery	<p>'Plant and machinery' comprise all of the tools, machines and equipment in an organisation, including fittings and accessories.</p> <p>Plant and machinery requirements, like all resources, depend on the nature of the business. For example, plant requirements in a printing business include a printing press, collator and scanner. Plant and machinery requirements at a large car manufacturer include presses, robots, spray-painting machinery, drills and equipment such as forklifts.</p> <p>Most plant and machinery have certain workplace health and safety standards. Restrictions, such as required training, may determine the use of plant and machinery.</p>
Stock and supplies	<p>'Stock and supplies' describes almost any resource that an organisation requires to carry out its business. If a business runs out of stock, it jeopardises its future operations.</p> <p>The management of stock may be a specialised function or it may be coordinated by line managers or other staff, depending on the extent to which an organisation relies on stock being on hand and the quantity of stock required.</p> <p>Many organisations that have specialist procurement or purchasing teams have significant or very particular stock requirements.</p> <p>Repercussions of not having stock may include loss of customers, reduction of staff numbers and litigation for not fulfilling contract agreements.</p>
Computers and devices	<p>In business, staff and managers rely on desktop or laptop computers and tablet devices to complete a broad range of tasks, including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ record keeping ▪ communication ▪ research and development ▪ planning ▪ training ▪ client engagement ▪ marketing. <p>The needs of staff determine the computer hardware that is most useful for the organisation.</p>

Computing and IT software applications	<p>Software refers to the programs that are used to run office computers and to perform specific work tasks. There is range of software programs available. The type you use will depend on your organisation, your equipment and the type of work you do. This may include software for:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ operating systems ▪ word processing ▪ spreadsheets ▪ desktop publishing ▪ client databases ▪ presentations ▪ internet browsers ▪ email ▪ web design ▪ accounting.
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Safe use of resources and equipment

Safe and effective use of resources leads to higher productivity, less waste, reductions in errors and fewer safety incidents.

Although materials, equipment and instruments used in a business vary greatly, they are all potential reservoirs of infection. Research has shown that everyday items such as mobile phones and computer keyboards are covered with bacteria.

The key to safely using resources and equipment is to ensure you use the items according to workplace and manufacturer requirements.

The following table outlines examples of these requirements.

Avoid exposure
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Hazardous tasks involve anything that may cause harm to yourself or others. While most office-based equipment and materials are low-risk and safe to use, there are some hazards that you need to be aware of before using the items. ▪ If you accidentally cut yourself, you will expose your body to potential pathogens, which can easily find a pathway into your body. Mucous membrane is a lining of tissue that covers and protects the surfaces of important organs and orifices, such as the eye, mouth, nose, tongue and intestines. ▪ Although specific mucous membranes have specialised functions, their main function is to protect the body from infection and to keep the tissues of the body properly moisturised. ▪ Adequate PPE such as glasses, goggles, gloves and face shields must be worn when completing tasks that may lead to cuts and exposure to the mucous membrane.

Minimise skin contact on equipment, materials and surfaces

- The human body contains billions of bacteria. If you are infected with a virus or other pathogen you may not show any signs and are unaware that you are carrying the virus. Wearing gloves, long-sleeve tops and pants and other relevant PPE can prevent skin-to-surface contact and reduce the risk of spreading an infection.

Practise regular hand-washing and personal hygiene

- Wash and scrub your hands, fingers, nails and wrists before and after handling equipment that is commonly shared with others. Dry your hands with an air dryer or paper towel to remove all residue from your hands. Alcohol-based sanitisers are also acceptable in removing pathogens.
- Personal hygiene (covered in topic 1) is something that every person can control, and along with hand-washing is a highly effective, yet simple way of stopping the transfer of harmful micro-organisms.

Use equipment according to its correct operating procedures

- By following the correct guidelines for using equipment safely, you will not only prevent cuts and open wounds which will reduce the risk of contracting an infection, you will also preserve the longevity and performance of the item.
- Always read and follow your organisation's safe operating procedures and manufacturer's instructions when operating equipment, tools and machinery at work.

Stay home if you are unwell

- If you are feeling sick or are experiencing signs and symptoms of an infection, you are a health and safety risk to others in your workplace. These indicators can include a dry or sore throat, loss of taste, shortness of breath, fever, or constant sweating, coughing or sneezing.
- If you are unwell, follow these requirements:
 - Immediately report the matter to your supervisor.
 - Book an appointment to visit your general practitioner for an assessment.
 - Go home and isolate yourself from others that you may infect.

Isolate contaminated equipment

- Isolation is one of the most effective ways to ensure contaminated materials, equipment and tools are free from the risk of spreading the contamination. Materials and items can be kept in secure areas (such as locked cleaning bays or no-access areas) until such time that they can be properly cleaned and sanitised.

Example

Minimise contamination

Sutherland Smiles Community Dental Clinic Instrument cleaning, disinfection and sterilisation procedure

- Clean all dental instruments in an ultrasonic bath immediately after use.
- Dry the instruments with disposable cloth.
- Place the instruments in sterilisation cassettes or wraps.
- Place the instruments in the sterilisation unit and heat, following the manufacturer's instructions.
- Leave the instruments in their packages.
- Store the packaged instruments in the designated cupboard or drawer.

NB: When this procedure is properly carried out, all instruments will remain protected from splatter and aerosols until they are required.

Practice Task 4

Question 1

Which of the following will reduce the risk of exposure to pathogens when using equipment?
Tick all that apply.

- Wear gloves, safety glasses and face masks.
- Isolate equipment from use or access.
- Regularly wash and sanitise your hands.
- Limit the time an item is in use.
- Maintain high levels of personal hygiene.

Question 2

Why is it important to follow the manufacturer's instructions when using workplace equipment?



2B Clean and maintain work areas

Every job requires that surfaces and equipment be cleaned and work areas be maintained.

Equipment, materials and surfaces, like all other objects, can act as agents for the transmission of infection. Folders, computer devices, door handles, floors, benches, furniture and even blinds can all be reservoirs of infection, as per the chain of infection. The greater the number of reservoirs of infection, the greater the risk of transmission of infection.

As an employee in the business services sector, it is your job to make sure you are taking all reasonable steps and measures to keep surfaces clean in accordance with your workplace cleaning, maintenance and infection control policies and procedures.

As an employee, it is important for you to understand how to clean up and maintain your work areas safely and effectively. You will need to know when cleaning is required as well as what to do and the type of protective clothing you should wear.

Common cleaning and day-to-day maintenance tasks:

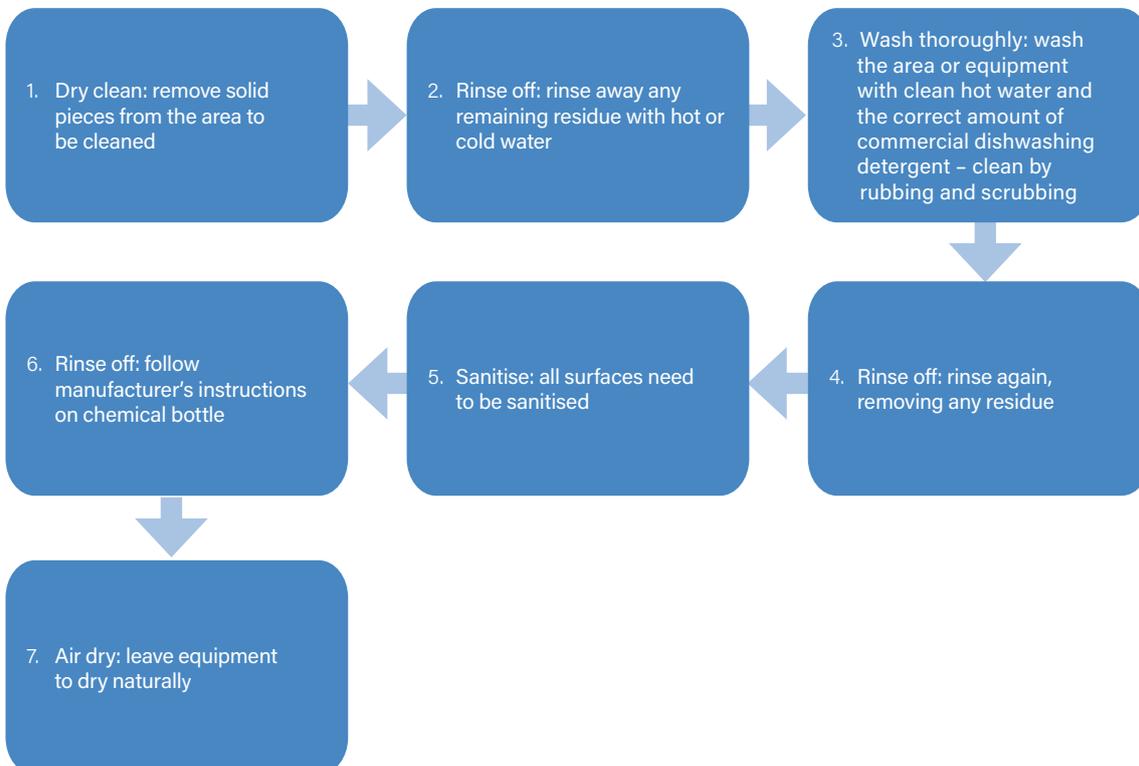
- Removing all dust, dirt and physical debris from work surfaces
- Cleaning all work surfaces correctly before and after a client visits your premises and when visibly soiled
- Sanitising surfaces, tools, materials and equipment to ensure pathogens are properly removed
- Wiping down books, folders and computing devices using alcohol-based sanitisers
- Vacuuming/sweeping and mopping floor areas
- Replacing surface covers where applicable
- Routine surface cleaning procedures at the start and end of each day or shift to make sure the area is ready for use
- Routine surface cleaning done at scheduled times throughout the day to ensure the areas stay clean and meet the requirements of policies and procedures
- Removing blood or a body fluid spill (which could occur at any time of the day)
- Maintaining and storing cleaning equipment

Environmental cleaning and disinfecting procedures

Cleaning is the removal of surface dirt and grime but does not kill harmful bacteria.

Disinfecting or sanitising is the process of killing pathogens by the use of a chemical, heat or a combination of both. Your organisation's cleaning and disinfecting procedures will describe how to prevent the spread of pathogens that may be present on equipment, surfaces and other materials in the workplace. In order to properly remove harmful micro-organisms, the area or item must first be cleaned, then disinfected (sanitised).

Cleaning generally involves seven steps:



Disinfecting or sanitising surfaces, equipment and materials can be done by either using heat or chemicals.

Where possible, surfaces, tools, equipment and materials should be cleaned using hot water and immersing the equipment in water at 77°C for a minimum of 30 seconds. If this is not possible or would damage the equipment, or due to the size of the area or item, appropriate alcohol-based sanitisers and chemicals should be used according to your workplace procedures.

Once the equipment has been cleaned and sanitised, allow it to air dry. This will occur rapidly where hot water has been used. Air drying minimises risk of re-contamination by removing moisture that could encourage new bacteria to grow.

Procedures to remove dust, dirt and debris

The risks of an unsanitised environment are greater in some areas than others, so it is important to follow procedures for removing dust, dirt and debris.

Procedures for removing dust, dirt and debris vary slightly depending on the workplace and the hazards and risks present. While a clean and well-maintained environment is always important, the risks of an unsanitised environment are greater in some areas. For example, the risks associated with an unclean toilet are greater than the risks associated with an unclean entrance area or reception area.

Here are some general procedures for removing dust, dirt and debris.

Wet areas

Wet areas are rooms that have running water. Common examples include communal toilets, kitchens and laundries.

Carefully remove debris from wet areas as these are more likely to carry pathogens. For example, debris in toilets may be infected by spray generated from a toilet flushing.

Wear disposable gloves and group similar items; for example, dirty clothing should be kept together before it is removed for washing.

Clean the higher areas first to prevent double processing. Use a spray, warm water and a cloth to wash down tiles. Never leave floor surfaces wet. Following the removal of dirt, the areas must be disinfected using approved chemicals, such as sanitisers.

Surfaces

Walls and window dressings need to be cleaned regularly. More frequent cleaning is required if the walls are stained or dirty. Any visible dirt should be removed with a damp cloth.

Fittings may need to be dusted and cleaned more frequently, especially those that are used often. Door knobs, light switches, taps and frequently used drawer knobs should be cleaned and sanitised on a regular basis, using alcohol-based cleaning agents.

Floors

Carpeted areas should be vacuumed. You should only use vacuums that are well maintained, have no visible signs of damage in the casing, cord or plug, and are fit for use. Vacuums must have a filter to reduce the likelihood of bacteria becoming airborne.

Hard floors should be vacuumed or swept using a brush and a pan. Any dust or debris should be disposed of with general waste unless it has been contaminated with human secretions, tissue or infected waste. Floors should then be mopped using warm water and disinfectant detergent. Always check your organisation's policies and procedures to make sure you are only using approved detergents.

Benches

- Remove any equipment from the bench.
- Use a warm, clean cloth to remove any food or other contaminants from the bench.
- Place debris in the lined waste bin nearest to the bench.
- Use warm water and a clean cloth to wipe the bench and remove all visible signs of dirt.
- Dry the area with a clean, lint-free cloth.
- Apply a food grade sanitiser to kill bacteria and viruses.

Removing spills in accordance with organisational policies and procedures

Spills are hazards that can cause different types of harm to workers, clients and visitors. People can slip on a spill, fall and injure themselves. The risks associated with falling are greater in high-traffic areas such as hallways, walkways and reception areas. In addition to potentially causing falls, some types of spills present an infection risk, particularly if they contain pathogens. Examples include hazardous chemicals and human waste and secretions such as faeces, urine or blood.

The following outlines the steps that should be included in organisational procedures for containing and removing spills.



Isolating infected areas using signage

Signs must be erected when there is a hazard in a work area. For example, if you are cleaning a spill, mopping a floor or an area has become contaminated with pathogens as a result of an infection related-incident, place signs at each entry point of the hazard.

Warning signs are useful for warning people of hazards and can help isolate people from the hazard to control the risks associated with an infection. Signs must be placed at all ends of the entry point to the hazard, to ensure people are properly warned to stay out of the area.

Safety and warning signs can be purpose-made or purchased from a commercial provider of WHS equipment. They must conform to relevant Australian and New Zealand standards. All signs must convey messages clearly, be easy to read and be displayed in an appropriate location.

Example

Remove spills in accordance with organisational policies and procedures

Jamie works as an administration support worker at a school. An elderly visitor named Beatrice walks into the reception area and experiences urinary incontinence, wetting a large area of the floor. Jamie calls for help and asks her co-worker Pamela to help Beatrice to the nurses' office for a wash and a change of clothes. Meanwhile Jamie cleans up the spill. She puts on disposable gloves and an apron.

She collects a mop and fills a bucket with a solution of warm water and detergent. She follows the instructions on the bottle of detergent to make sure she uses a ratio of detergent to water that will be both safe and effective.

Jamie places a sign to alert staff, students and visitors that the floor is wet and may be slippery. She mops the wet area thoroughly with the water and detergent solution. When the area is clean, she leaves the sign in place and disposes of the water, her gloves and apron according to the standard operating procedures, then washes her hands thoroughly. She makes sure to return and remove the warning sign when the floor has completely dried.

PPE used in cleaning and maintenance procedures

Cleaning and disinfecting tasks must always be performed with the use of appropriate PPE.

You must always think about the hazards that exist when cleaning and disinfecting equipment, materials and work surfaces. One effective way of protecting yourself from infection is to wear the correct PPE during cleaning and maintenance tasks.

Protective glasses

- Infectious diseases can be transmitted through various modes, entering through the mucous membranes of the eye. Infectious pathogens can enter the eye either directly (through blood splashes, air droplets generated during coughing or suctioning, for example) or from touching the eyes with contaminated fingers.
- Pathogens that enter the eye may result in conjunctivitis and viruses that can cause systemic infections, including bloodborne viruses. These include hepatitis B and C viruses, human immunodeficiency virus, herpes viruses, and rhinoviruses.
- A range of goggles and protective glasses may be worn in environments where workers are exposed to greater levels of infection hazards and risks. Safety eyewear can protect your eyes from ocular exposure by providing a barrier to infectious materials.

Gowns and waterproof aprons

- Gowns and waterproof aprons act as barriers between workers and sources of infection.
- These must be worn if there is a possibility of infection or direct contact through the clothes or skin, or if there is a known presence of pathogens. Some are disposable and others can be washed and re-used.

Disposable gloves

- Disposable gloves are recommended when cleaning equipment, in particular when coming in contact with known or potential sources of infection, such as bacteria, blood, bodily substances and secretions from people.
- Disposable gloves must be changed between tasks, and when coming into direct contact with people. They must be disposed of by turning them inside out and placing them in a lined rubbish bin.
- Hand-washing is still required before and after using disposable gloves.

Enclosed shoes

- Enclosed shoes must be worn to prevent pathogens from coming into contact with the skin of the ankles and feet. Shoes must have adequate grip on the soles to ensure slipping risks are minimised.

Masks or face shields

- Some work areas and even jurisdictions require the use of face masks and shields under governmental health policies and regulation. These items prevent infection through the inhalation of harmful aerosols (water droplets in the air that contain pathogens, as a result of a carrier sneezing, coughing or heavily breathing).
- Face masks must be properly fitted and secured to ensure you can breathe freely and are protected from inhaling harmful micro-organisms.

Cleaning schedules and logs

Cleaning schedules and logs are used by organisations to demonstrate compliance with various regulations and workers use them to make sure they meet organisational and legal requirements for cleaning and disinfecting under health legislation.

Sometimes cleaning schedules contain a cleaning log. Here is an outline of what is included in schedules and cleaning logs.

Cleaning schedules

Most facilities have cleaning schedules for all areas including communal areas, toilets, kitchen areas, staff-only areas and clients' areas, such as reception areas and waiting rooms. These schedules contain information about:

- The cleaning and sanitising tasks that must be completed
- the personnel responsible
- when the tasks must be completed.

Cleaning logs

Cleaning logs are usually in table form and contain information about what must be cleaned and when it must be cleaned. It is the responsibility of each worker to update cleaning logs by placing a tick, initials and the time and date next to the relevant task.

This helps other workers and coordinators establish which cleaning tasks have been completed and which ones still need to be done. It also assists with auditing and quality control activities.

Practice Task 5

Question 1

Which of the following relate to cleaning and maintenance of work areas? Tick all that apply.

- Cleaning procedures will ensure all harmful pathogens are killed.
- Warning signs must be erected around all entry points of the hazard when mopping spills.
- Cleaning is carried out to remove bacteria while sanitising kills bacteria.
- PPE must be worn to protect yourself from exposure to pathogens.
- Warning signs are used to isolate a contaminated area or large piece of equipment.

Question 2

Draw a line to match each term about cleaning spills to its description.

- | | |
|---|------------------------|
| » Personal protective clothing | » Policy and procedure |
| » Placed at entry points of the hazard to warn people of the spill | » PPE |
| » A special kit to clean and remove spills and kill bacteria | » Erect signage |
| » Organisational standards and guidelines for cleaning, sanitising and disposing of the waste | » Spill kits |

Question 3

Number each step from 1 to 7 in the order you would follow to clean a surface or piece of equipment.

Wash thoroughly

Air dry

Sanitise

Dry clean

Rinse off

Rinse off

Rinse off

Question 4

Briefly explain the purpose of a cleaning schedule.

2C Respond to hazards, non-compliances and exposure to infection

In the workplace, no-one's health and safety can be 100% guaranteed. Every workplace has its share of hazards and risks that can lead to infection.

In the business services sector, infections can occur from a range of root causes, known as hazards. Systems can break down, equipment and technology can fail, and people naturally attract viruses and other harmful micro-organisms as they go about their daily lives. In addition, people can act in a reckless or negligent manner that may cause an incident.

A hazard is anything that may cause injury or ill health to anyone in your workplace. For every hazard there are risks, which include the likelihood of a hazard resulting in an injury or disease, together with the seriousness of the injury or disease.

For example, high levels of harmful bacteria on a toilet seat is a hazard. There is a high level of risk that someone may be infected as they sit on the bacteria when using the toilet.

Common examples of infection hazards

- Surfaces and objects that have been contaminated by a carrier
- Contaminated and mouldy food
- Pests and animals, such as cats, dogs, rats, mice and cockroaches
- Used injection needles, bandages or dressings
- General waste and rubbish
- A carrier (any person with a viral, fungal or bacterial infection) who is in the contagious stage can infect others through:
 - skin-to-skin contact
 - contact through body fluids and secretions
 - expelling air droplets (aerosols) through coughing or sneezing

Responding to infection non-compliances

A non-compliance means there is a gap in the safety management system, or a worker has not met their legal obligations under WHS laws.

A non-compliance is slightly different to an incident or a hazard. Although a non-compliance can lead to a hazard and incident, a non-compliance is generally related to a worker, supervisor or other duty holder failing to uphold a requirement of the law, or the organisation's WHS policy and procedures. Some minor non-compliances may be addressed on the spot, for example, asking a client or worker to sanitise their hands. Other cases of non-compliance that are outside of your scope of authority will need to be escalated to a supervisor or manager.

Examples of infection-related non-compliances that you may need to escalate include:

- a worker deciding not to clean an infected piece of equipment according to the designated procedure
- a number of workers failing to carry out infection control and prevention practices
- a client sneezing and coughing without properly covering their mouth
- a client deliberately sneezing and coughing over others
- an unwell worker refusing to follow a 'stay at home' isolation order
- an employer failing to provide enough hand-washing materials for workers.

These types of non-compliances must be treated seriously as they can lead to an infection, or worse, a fatality. Non-compliances must be reported for follow-up and rectification. This enables the manager or WHS person to review and assess the matter, identify trends and make corrective actions to prevent a further breach that could lead to a possible infection.

Reporting infection issues

Once an issue has been identified it is important to ensure that it is reported to the appropriate person and resolved in a timely manner.

Without adequate reporting and follow-up of hazards, incidents and non-compliances, management will be unable to make the right decisions to prevent infections from occurring in the future – nor will management be able to maintain compliance with its legal obligations. The end result is a higher likelihood of a serious infection or fatality.

Based on your organisation's policies and procedures, you may need to report an infection hazard, non-compliance or infection incident to:

- the business owner/s
- officers, such as the general manager, CEO or directors
- WHS manager or coordinator
- manager or supervisor
- team leader.

You must follow your organisation's standard procedures for reporting these issues, which may include completing a non-compliance report, hazard report or incident report. If you are unsure how to report these issues, speak with your supervisor, a senior manager or health and safety representative (HSR).

Reporting guidelines

Ensure that any hazard or non-compliance report that you complete is in the right format and goes to the right people.

Documentation and reporting are critical for many reasons. Information that is not recorded can easily be forgotten or passed on inaccurately, so it is important to record the details as soon as possible after any accident, incident or change in circumstance occurs. Make sure that any hazard or non-compliance report that you complete is in the right format and is received by the right people. This may be in a paper-based form or online. Write clearly and concisely so that your message can be easily understood.

You can also contribute to knowledge about action on infection control issues by attending team meetings, having one-on-one meetings with your manager and talking with your organisation's health and safety representatives.

When reporting infection hazards and non-compliances, provide all available details, including:

- a concise description of the hazard or what happened
- the precise location of where the hazard/incident occurred
- when the hazard was identified or when the incident took place
- who was involved, including witnesses.

Responding to personal infections

An infection is caused when a person comes into contact with an infection hazard and the pathogens enter the person's body.

When a person makes contact with pathogens (harmful micro-organisms) such as bacteria, viruses, parasites or fungi, they can enter the bloodstream of the body. All infections take some level of time before signs and symptoms occur – this is called the incubation stage.

Every infection has its own unique signs and symptoms, which can vary depending on the health of the person, the level of dosage, the route of the infection and the source of the agent. It is essential for the health of other people that as soon as you either display signs and symptoms, or come into direct contact with a known carrier (host), you complete the following three steps:

- Immediately report the matter to your manager or supervisor.
- Go home and isolate yourself from others that you may infect.
- Contact your general practitioner and book an appointment for a health assessment.

If you observe signs and symptoms in another worker, you should carry out the following steps:

- Respectfully tell the worker that you have observed signs and symptoms that they may be carrying an infection and are a potential risk to others.
- Politely ask the worker to report to their supervisor and explain their signs and symptoms.

If the worker refuses to report themselves to their supervisor, you will need to report the matter yourself, as part of your duty of care.

You can find more about infections at: <https://aspirelr.link/infections-explained>

Example

Reporting infection hazards

Kendall works as a receptionist at a real estate agency. When cleaning the reception area, Kendall notices that the hand sanitiser has been removed from its usual location which is on the inside of the main entry.

She decides to report this as an infection hazard to her supervisor as she is concerned that it could lead to infection spreading to other people accessing the area. This is not the first time that Kendall has found that the sanitiser has been removed and she suspects that it has been stolen by a member of the public.

By reporting the matter immediately to her supervisor, she will ensure a proper investigation can be conducted to prevent an infection-related incident from occurring.

Practice Task 6

Question 1

What must you do if you come into contact with a known carrier of an infection?

Tick all that apply.

- Immediately report the matter to your supervisor.
- Go home and isolate yourself from others.
- Report the matter to the state health department.
- Call your GP and book an appointment for an assessment.
- Stay calm and wait until you show signs of an infection.

Question 2

List three examples of non-compliances that you would need to report and escalate to a manager.

Question 3

Which of the following are ways to respond when a worker is showing signs and symptoms of an infection? Tick all that apply.

- Tell the worker that you have observed signs and symptoms that they may be carrying an infection.
- Ask the worker to report it to their supervisor.
- Suggest to the worker that they should go home and book in a time to see their GP.
- Offer the worker some medicine, a blanket and some cool water.
- Share your own experiences with the same set of symptoms.

Question 4

Draw a line to match each term about reporting to its description.

- | | |
|--|--------------------|
| » A worker who fails to report a potential infection incident | » Infection hazard |
| » A worker who refuses to wash their hands after going to the toilet | » Infection hazard |
| » A person who is coughing and sneezing | » Non-compliance |
| » A nest of mice in the kitchen | » Non-compliance |

Question 5

List five key pieces of information you need to include when filling out WHS reports.

Summary

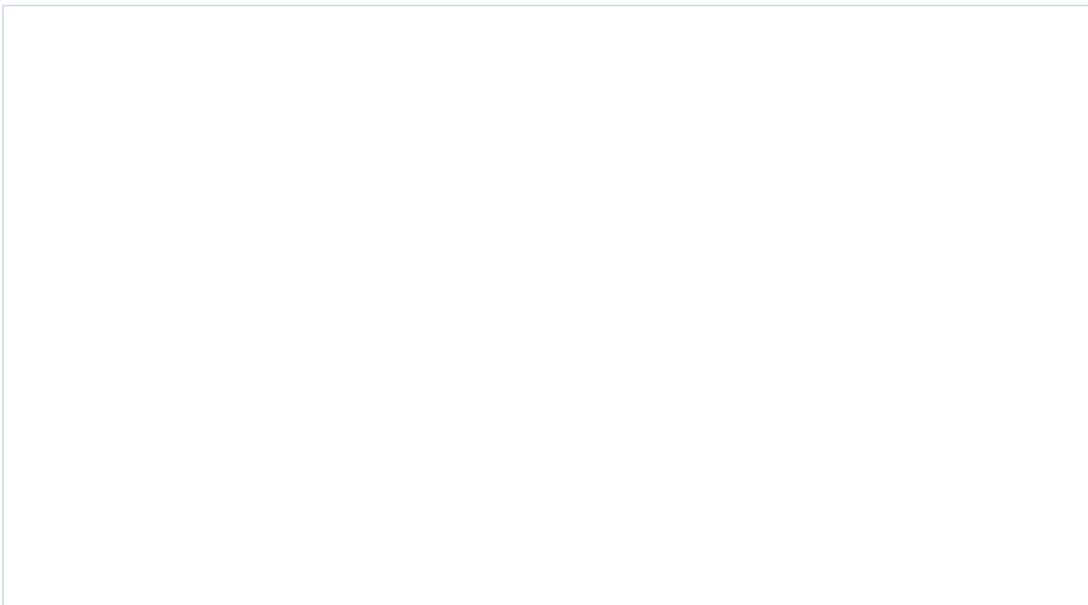
- To use a range of resources safely and efficiently, follow the workplace and manufacturer requirements and instructions.
- Most office-based equipment and materials are low-risk and safe to use, but you need to be aware that every workplace has its share of hazards and risks that can lead to infection.
- PPE such as gloves, long-sleeve tops, pants and other relevant PPE can prevent skin-to-surface contact and reduce the risk of spreading an infection.
- If you are unwell, immediately report the matter to your supervisor, book an appointment to visit your general practitioner for an assessment and go home and isolate yourself from others that you may infect.
- Equipment, materials and surfaces, like all other objects, can act as agents for the transmission of infection.
- Cleaning is the removal of surface dirt and grime, but this process does not kill harmful bacteria.
- Disinfecting, or sanitisation, is the process of killing pathogens by the use of a chemical, heat or a combination of both.
- Spills are hazards because people can slip on a spill and fall and injure themselves. Some types of spills also present an infection risk, particularly if they contain pathogens.
- Signs must be erected at key entry points of a hazardous area to prevent people from coming into contact with the hazard.
- An effective way of protecting yourself from infection is to wear PPE such as disposable gloves, eyewear, face shields and aprons during cleaning and maintenance tasks.
- Cleaning schedules and logs are used so organisational and legal requirements for cleaning and disinfecting under health legislation are followed and recorded.
- Once a hazard or non-compliance has been identified it is important to ensure that it is reported to the appropriate person and resolved in a timely manner.

Learning Checkpoint 2

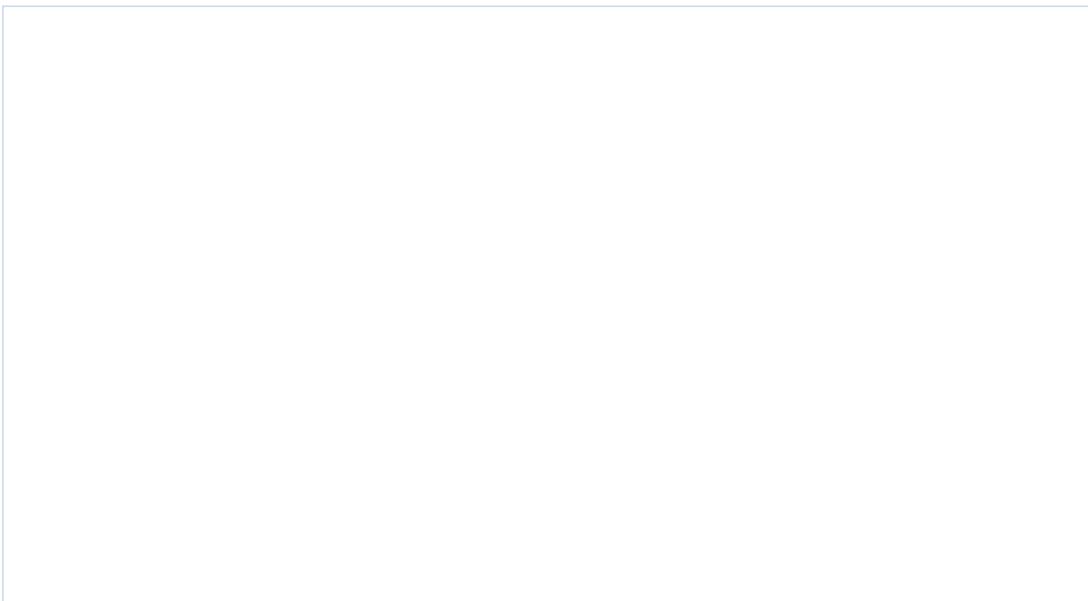
Complete work activities to support infection prevention and control

Part A

1. Why is it important to follow organisational procedures and manufacturer's instructions when using business resources and equipment?



2. List three ways to prevent the risk of transferring pathogens through cuts and open skin when using equipment.



3. List the three steps that must be taken if you show signs and symptoms of an infection, or come into direct contact with a known carrier.

4. Which of the following statements are correct? Select yes or no for each one.
- | | | |
|---|-------|------|
| a) Workplace procedures and schedules must be followed when cleaning spills and work areas. | » Yes | » No |
| b) Warning signs should be placed at each point surrounding a contaminated floor area to warn people of an infection hazard and prevent access. | » Yes | » No |
| c) A cleaning schedule is a document that is used to record cleaning tasks that have been completed. | » Yes | » No |
| d) Disinfectant procedures explain how to remove surface dirt and grime. Cleaning procedures explain how to kill bacteria using heat and chemicals. | » Yes | » No |
| e) When cleaning wet areas, you must remove dirt and grime first, then disinfect the area using approved chemicals. | » Yes | » No |

Part B

Read the case study, then answer the questions that follow.

Case study

Brianna works in a team of customer service representatives at a small call centre. Her team leader is running late for work due to heavy traffic. Peter, another team member, has come to work complaining that he is feeling sick. He is showing signs of sweating heavily and he has an obvious lack of energy.

During the morning tea break, Peter vomits on the kitchen floor. He refuses to go home or do anything about it. Instead, he decides to head back to his desk to continue working, even though workplace policy requires him to report the incident to his supervisor, go home and book in an appointment to see his GP.

1. How would you respond to and report this case of non-compliance?

2. Summarise how would you isolate, clean and disinfect the contaminated area to manage the spill.



Topic 3 | Finalise work activities

- 3A Maintain and store resources
- 3B Dispose of waste
- 3C Report infection incidents

3A Maintain and store resources

Business resources and equipment needs to be regularly maintained and stored to ensure its longevity, quality and safety for other users.

When working in business, you will need to use a range of equipment to complete your daily work tasks. Equipment that is regularly checked, cleaned, maintained and stored correctly will work more efficiently and will last longer. Furthermore, regular cleaning, maintenance and safety checks will allow you to identify and remove reservoirs of harmful pathogens that could otherwise potentially infect other users.

Basic maintenance of office equipment

Regular maintenance practices involve taking the time to clean and sanitise.

As part of your daily work practices, check, clean and maintain the equipment to remove any harmful contaminants that may have come into contact with the equipment. Harmful contaminants that accumulate on the surfaces of equipment can impact on the health and safety of other workers and clients.

Examples of contaminants can include:

- bodily fluids
- stains that have come from human contact
- skin and hair
- food or liquid.

You will need to clean and maintain equipment by following the manufacturer's instructions and your organisation's policies and procedures. Always read the manual carefully and follow the guidelines as there are often variations between different makes and models of the same kind of equipment.

Types of basic maintenance tasks include:

- wiping down monitor screens, keyboards, mice and other computing devices using alcohol-based wipes
- cleaning and disinfecting desks, bench tops and tables
- disinfecting surfaces of equipment, including buttons, handles and switches. using sanitisers or alcohol-based wipes
- changing consumables, such as ink toners and cartridges in printers and photocopiers, or staples in the staple gun
- checking and replenishing the paper supply in printers and photocopiers
- re-charging batteries in hand-held devices, such as label printers and mobile devices.

Checking equipment for damages

Before using an item, it is good practice to check for any damages and signs of infection.

Regular pre-start checks on office equipment can help to identify and manage any safety issues that may be present.

Checks include inspecting the moving parts for damage, such as wheels on portable trolleys, levers on guillotines and adjustable devices on desks. Always check that the safety functions do not show any signs of wear and tear or general damage.

If you identify any issues, follow your workplace procedures – report the matter to a supervisor and isolate the equipment so other staff cannot use it.

Isolation procedures may require you to:

- place a sign or chain around the equipment
- place the faulty equipment in a maintenance bay or in the manager's office.

Once you have finished using an item, it is important to return it to its correct location, and in a timely manner. Leaving equipment in your work area or other random locations can impact on the productivity of other workers and lead to hold-ups in meeting customer and manager requests.

Returning equipment in a timely manner after use ensures other workers have access to resources and equipment when needed, without unnecessary delays.

Practice Task 7

Question 1

Which of the following statements relate to basic equipment maintenance? Tick all that apply.

- Replace consumables when they are empty or low.
- Re-charge batteries on portable devices.
- Repair faulty equipment in a timely manner.
- Check and report any faults and damages to your supervisor.
- Clean and remove any pathogens from the surfaces of equipment.

Question 2

Why is it important to store all resources and equipment in the correct location?



3B Dispose of waste

Waste includes any substances that are no longer needed and must be removed from the site.

Waste can often be a hazard because it is a source of infection and presents a risk to health and safety, including that of workers and clients.

To ensure a safe and healthy workplace, waste removal must be carried out daily, as part of the cleaning and maintenance procedures. It is essential that you know how to safely handle and remove the many types of waste you come into contact with so you can protect yourself and others from harm.

Types of waste

Different types of waste have different recommended removal procedures.

The type, volume and hazardous nature of waste that you may need to remove will vary depending on the type of work that is carried out at your organisation.

Examples of waste that you may need to remove from your workplace are outlined below, as well as the types of PPE that you should use.

Discarded sharps

Sharps such as used needles may be left behind in public toilet areas. They are most likely to injure the hand; however, wearing gloves reduces this risk. Proper footwear should also be used as this will protect your feet if sharps are dropped.

PPE required:

- heavy duty gloves
- work boots or other shoes with thick soles
- designated sharps container.

Human secretions and other bodily forms of waste

Examples include urine, faeces, vomit, skin follicles, hair, blood and saliva. The exact PPE will depend on the situation and the type of human tissue. A range of infections can be transmitted through direct contact with skin, blood and other human tissue.

PPE required:

- gloves
- goggles or glasses
- aprons
- closed footwear.

Chemical waste

Chemicals can be highly toxic and cause significant damage if a person inhales, ingests or absorbs the chemical through direct contact with their skin. Hazardous chemical waste can cause a range of respiratory illnesses and lead to skin irritations, burns and in rare cases, death.

PPE required:

PPE will vary, but may include a combination of gloves, face masks, goggles and protective footwear depending on the type and strength of chemical (gas, liquid or solid).

It is your responsibility to check the relevant safety data sheets for each chemical used in your workplace for specific PPE requirements before disposing of chemical waste.

General waste

Examples include dirt, leaves and other flora, food and drink packaging, materials packaging, used tissues and office stationery.

It is typically the hands that come into contact with general waste and the bins where these materials are held. These must be protected.

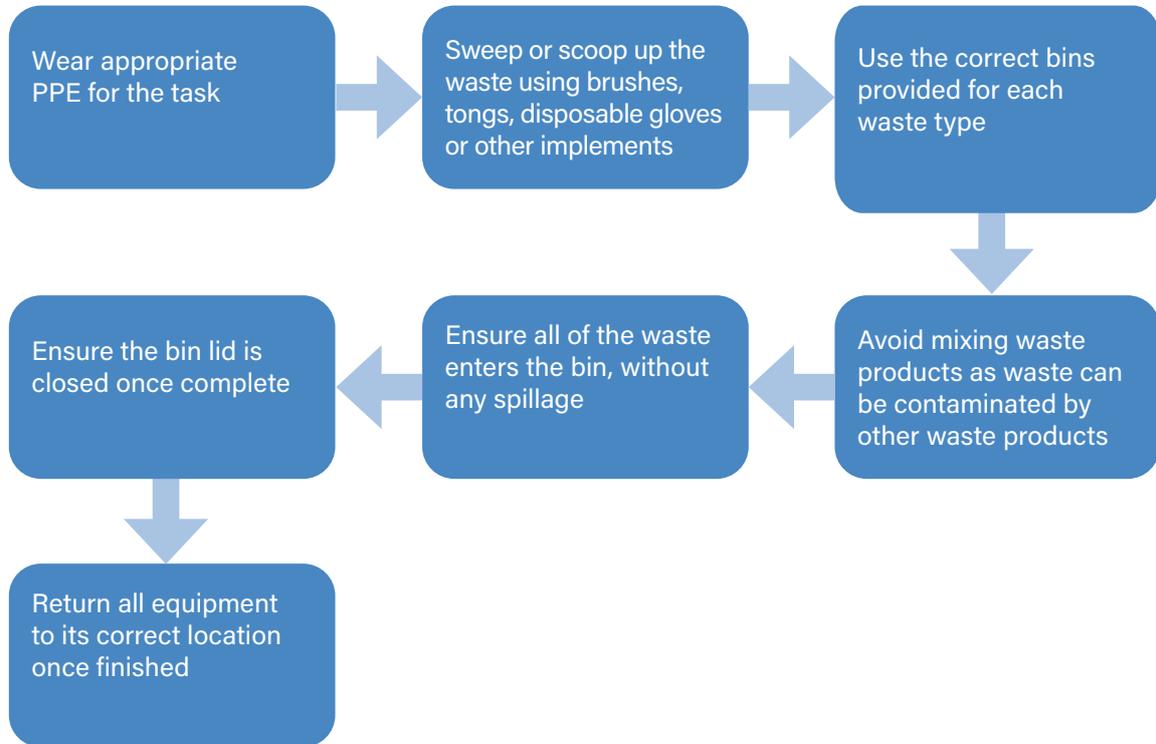
PPE required:

Gloves are appropriate when dealing with unclean general waste. PPE is not needed for clean waste such as paper.

Basic waste removal procedure

Organisational policies and procedures for handling and removing waste, including those relating to PPE, will be provided to you as part of your induction to the workplace. If you are unsure about your responsibilities for disposing of waste, speak with your supervisor or manager.

A basic waste removal procedure is provided below:



Personal contact precautions

When disposing of waste, personal contact precautions are required to ensure you are not at risk of becoming infected by pathogens. This includes following the correct handling techniques for waste, avoiding direct contact and the use of PPE.

Personal contact precautions include the following:

- Wash your hands thoroughly before putting on PPE.
- Wear PPE such as disposable gloves and face shield, enclosed shoes and goggles/glasses.
- Avoid any direct contact between your clothes and torso and the waste.
- Avoid inhaling fumes from the waste.
- On completion of the task, dispose of the PPE in the appropriate bin.
- Wash and disinfect your hands, using the proper hand-washing technique.

Confining contaminated equipment, materials and records

Contaminated equipment, materials and records must be isolated immediately to prevent and control the risk of infection.

A contaminated item is anything in the workplace that contains a pathogen that may lead to an infection. According to the chain of infection, equipment, materials, records and other items can act as a reservoir – a place where pathogens can live and multiply. Items can become contaminated if a carrier passes on the pathogens through direct contact or through air droplets. Vermin, pests and animals carrying pathogens can also contaminate items in the workplace.

Contaminated equipment, materials and records must be isolated immediately to prevent and control the risk of infection. Following this, the item may be disposed of, or set aside for cleaning and sanitising, according to workplace procedures.

Areas may be set up for storing contaminated equipment according to workplace policies and procedures. Contaminated storage zones must be clearly labelled so everyone knows where they are and where to place infected items when required.

If a floor surface or large piece of equipment such as a table becomes infected and cannot be relocated, barriers and signage should be erected to prevent people from coming into contact with the hazard. These signs and barriers must be placed in front of all entry points to ensure people are aware of the dangers present.

If there are significant risks to people's health and safety, supervision may be required to warn people not to enter a contaminated area.

Example

Waste removal in the reception area

Simone is a receptionist at a medical centre that sees many clients each day. She is responsible for carrying out regular cleaning of the floors, chairs, tables and toys and emptying the rubbish. Simone always wears rubber gloves and enclosed shoes when cleaning the reception areas to protect her hands from pathogens and chemicals.

One day Simone is inspecting the reception area when she notices a used band aid on the floor. She puts on puncture-resistant gloves before picking up the band aid. She wraps it in a tissue and throws it in the general waste bin, which has a lid. She then takes off the gloves and disposes of them in the general waste bin.

Her next task is to wash and sanitise her hands, before she can return to her administrative duties.

Practice Task 8

Question 1

Which of the following steps are required when disposing of waste? Tick all that apply.

- Use appropriate gloves and waste handling implements for the task.
- Dispose of all equipment once the task is completed.
- Use the correct bins provided for each waste type.
- Ensure all of the waste enters the bin, without any spillage.
- Ensure the bin lid is open once complete.

Question 2

Briefly explain how you would confine contaminated materials and equipment.

Question 3

Identify two ways you can protect your own health and safety when handling and disposing of infected waste.



3C Report infection incidents

An infection incident is any event that has led, or could have led, to a person becoming infected as a result of the conduct of the business.

Under WHS legislation, employers (Persons Conducting a Business or Undertaking – PCBU) must keep information and records relating to incidents involving the health and safety of their workers and the public, who have been impacted by the work of the organisation.

Organisations use specific forms to record the details of incidents. Practising good reporting and record-keeping practices ensures that the organisation can build valuable reference information. This information can help to prevent further infection incidents, to identify infection hazards and risks, and contribute to maintaining a healthy and safe workplace.

Verbally reporting incidents

An important part of your response to any infection incident is to report the matter to the appropriate person or department.

Your immediate response to an infection incident should be to act quickly to protect your safety and the safety of the people exposed to the hazard, then notify the appropriate person. You need to know what the organisation expects of you in regard to protecting or safeguarding yourself and others.

Your workplace policies and procedures will advise you on the correct person to contact in specific situations. This may include your supervisor, manager, employer or health and safety representative (HSR).

Guidelines for verbally reporting infection incidents

- Speak clearly and calmly.
- Use words the other person will understand.
- Provide specific and factual details only.
- Give accurate information about:
 - the incident location
 - time the incident occurred
 - people involved
 - what happened leading up the incident
 - any immediate injuries or impacts
 - the health condition of people involved.

Infection incident records

Incident reports enable organisations to comply with WHS legislation. Reports assist in identifying the root cause of an infection-related incident, including illnesses, injuries and near misses. It is crucial that incident reports are completed accurately and promptly. You must be familiar with the processes, systems and forms used by your organisation to achieve this and ensure you comply with these requirements at all times.

Your organisation's WHS policy and procedures indicate what forms and systems are to be used to complete and record WHS documents.

Guidelines for filling out an incident report form

- Fill out the form as soon as possible.
- Write neatly and clearly.
- Check that your hands are clean.
- Write on a flat surface.
- Use a black or blue pen.
- Read instructions before writing.
- Use factual information only.
- Complete all required fields.
- Check your work for errors and accuracy before submitting the form to the appropriate person.

Example

Workplace incident report form

Here is an example of a workplace incident report form.

Workplace incident report	Report no:
Casualty surname:	Casualty first name:
Casualty address:	
Casualty telephone no:	Casualty mobile no:
Date of incident:	Time of incident:
Details of injury/illness:	
Bodily location:	
Description of the circumstances of the incident:	
Signature of witness: (please also print name)	Date:
When was the incident verbally reported?	
Date:	Time:
Who was the incident reported to?	
Name:	Position:
Details of immediate measures taken:	
Name:	
Signed:	Date:

Practice Task 9

Question 1

Which of the following are examples of infection incidents that must be reported?
Tick all that apply.

- Serious illness as a result of a person passing on an infection to another
- A worker is exposed to hazardous human waste
- A person coughing into a person's face, which does not lead to an illness or infection
- Dangerous manual handling tasks
- A client is verbally abusive toward a worker

Question 2

List four guidelines to follow when verbally reporting an infection incident.

Question 3

List four guidelines for completing an incident report form.

Summary

- Business resources and equipment needs to be regularly maintained and stored to ensure its longevity, quality and safety for other users.
- As part of daily work practices, check, clean and maintain the equipment to remove any harmful contaminants that may have come into contact with the equipment.
- To ensure a safe and healthy workplace, waste removal must be carried out daily, as part of the cleaning and maintenance procedures.
- It is essential that you know how to safely handle and remove the many types of waste you may come into contact with so you can protect yourself and others from harm.
- When disposing of waste, personal contact precautions are required to ensure you are not at risk of becoming infected by pathogens. This includes following the correct handling techniques for waste, avoiding direct contact and the use of PPE.
- Contaminated equipment, materials and records must be isolated immediately to prevent and control the risk of infection.
- Infection incidents must be immediately reported to a supervisor or health and safety representative and followed up by completing an incident report.
- Your immediate response to an infection incident should be to act quickly to protect your safety and the safety of the people exposed to the hazard, then notify the appropriate person.

Learning Checkpoint 3

Finalise work activities

Part A

1. Which of the following statements are correct? Select yes or no for each one.

- | | | |
|---|-------|------|
| a) Contaminated materials and equipment must be placed in designated isolation areas to prevent people from coming into contact with it. | » Yes | » No |
| b) To safely remove waste you must avoid any direct contact with your skin or clothes and avoid inhaling fumes from the materials. | » Yes | » No |
| c) Once waste has been gathered, you must ensure all materials safely enter the correct bins, without any spillage. | » Yes | » No |
| d) Equipment used for cleaning and removing waste should be returned to the manufacturer after each use. | » Yes | » No |
| e) Workplace records and materials that have become a source of infection must be thrown out. | » Yes | » No |
| f) Once you have finished using office equipment, you must clean the surfaces and other parts you have touched using alcohol-based wipes. | » Yes | » No |

2. List three basic maintenance tasks that you can carry out on office equipment.

3. Briefly explain when equipment should be returned after it has been used.

Part B

Read the case study, then answer the questions that follow.

Case study

Michael works behind the front desk as a receptionist at a medical clinic. It is 3.05pm on Friday 13 July when an elderly client named Diane walks in to confirm her appointment at the clinic. As Michael is taking down Diane's details, the client accidentally sneezes in Michael's face. She apologises and explains that she has Influenza-A and is highly contagious, which is why she is visiting her doctor. Although Michael is a fit and healthy person, he is at risk of being infected. Michael immediately left the reception area to go to the bathroom, where he washed his face with warm water and soap.

1. What is the most appropriate way for Michael to report this incident? Tick all that apply.
 - Complete an incident report form
 - Verbally report the incident to his supervisor
 - Verbally report the incident to his supervisor first, then complete an incident report form
 - Complete an incident report form, then verbally report the incident to your supervisor

2. Which of the following skills would Michael need to use when reporting this incident?
Tick all that apply.

- Speak slowly and remain calm.
- Use terms and phrases that the other person will understand.
- Provide biased information and opinion only.
- Give accurate information about the time, location and condition of the people involved.
- Communicate accurate and factual information.

3. Write a brief description of at least five types of specific information that Michael would need to capture in an incident report form. Ensure the information is specific to the case study.