

INFECTION CONTROL MEASURES FOR WOUND CARTS

- Re-emphasize the need for hand hygiene before and after each patient contact. Alcohol-based hand sanitizer should be kept in easy reach on each wound cart and used as a primary method for hand hygiene in most situations.
- Hands must be washed with soap and water whenever there is visible or tactile soiling. Gloves are never a substitute for hand hygiene.
- Gloves that have been used in patient care should never come into contact with the cart.
- Maintain one dedicated wound cart for each ward of the facility. Do not transport wound carts between wards. When not in use, the wound cart should be kept locked.
- Wound carts are never to go into patient rooms.
- Medications or ointments for multiple patient uses must never be taken into patient rooms. Instead, they must be dispensed into individual containers on the cart which are to be discarded after use with the intended patient.
- Medications prescribed for individual patients must never be shared and must be kept in separate designated compartments in the wound care cart.
- Only the quantity of supplies expected to be needed for each episode of care should be taken into the room. Disposable items taken into patient rooms should not be returned to the wound cart, but should be stored in the room and dedicated to the patient.
- Scissors, shears, and other non-disposable items should also be dedicated to the patient whenever possible. All non-disposable items that are returned to the wound cart for storage must be thoroughly cleaned, disinfected and allowed to air dry between each patient use.
- If any item that travels into the patient room and then returns to the cart comes into contact with the top of the wound care cart, the surface must be cleaned with disinfecting wipes before gathering the next patient's supplies. Alternatively, establishing a clean area with a paper towel onto which supplies are placed will help prevent contamination of the cart surface prep area.
- All outside surfaces of the wound cart should be wiped with an EPA approved disinfectant at the end of use each day. When cleaning, use good friction and assure appropriate contact time for the product used.
- All inside compartments of the wound cart should be emptied, cleaned, and wiped with an EPA approved disinfectant on a quarterly basis. Contents should be reviewed at the same time, and expired or compromised items discarded.
- When a wound care patient is discharged or wound care is no longer indicated, all medications and supplies dedicated to that patient should be removed from the cart, and the dedicated cart compartment should be thoroughly disinfected with an EPA approved disinfectant.