



# Infection Prevention and Control Policy

As at 1<sup>st</sup> January 2021

## Definition of 'infection'

According to the World Health Organization, infection prevention and control is a scientific approach with practical solutions designed to prevent harm caused by infection. The definition of infection (or to infect), is to taint; to affect with a disease-causing organism, or to contaminate.

## Purpose of this Policy

Capital Diagnostic Speech Pathology Pty Ltd and its employees have a duty of care to clients and staff to take all reasonable precautions to protect them from infection. Capital Diagnostic Speech Pathology Pty Ltd is committed to minimising the risk that clients or staff acquire an infection. This Infection Prevention and Control Policy is designed to support this objective.

## Breaches of this Policy

Failure to comply with this Infection Prevention and Control Policy exposes clients, staff and Capital Diagnostic Speech Pathology Pty Ltd to unacceptable health and legal risks. A breach of this policy may lead to the range of disciplinary and other outcomes including, without limitation, counselling or dismissal, and/or a report to the staff member's professional body or registration board.

## Exposures

From time to time, speech pathology staff, other staff members, and/or clients, may be exposed to another person's blood, body secretions and excretions, broken skin, and mucous membranes, including the membranes of their mouth and/or nose (collectively, the "Exposures" and each such event, an "Exposure"). For example (and, without limitation):

- a speech pathologist or speech pathology student (collectively, "speech pathology staff") may carry out an oral motor examination of a client (an "OMA");
- an administrative staff member may be asked to apply a band aid or bandage to an abrasion or cut;



- a staff member may provide first aid to a client, e.g. cardio-pulmonary resuscitation to a client who is not breathing; or
- a client may be treated by a speech pathologist with an open sore on his or her hand.

For each Exposure, the relevant staff member must adopt and undertake the Basic Precautions (as defined below).

## Meaning of Basic Precautions

For the purpose of this Infection Prevention and Control Policy, the Basic Precautions are:

- Good hand hygiene;
- Appropriate use of gloves;
- Appropriate disposal of all medical equipment used during an Exposure including any tissues, tongue depressors, gloves, masks and containers used to hold equipment after use;
- Appropriate clothes washing;
- using coughing etiquette;
- when appropriate (e.g. when there is a risk droplets or body substances from a client may otherwise get into a staff member's mouth, nose or eyes), use by staff of a facial mask and/or goggles, and
- encouraging clients and the families to scan the available Check In CBR QR code.

Good hand hygiene means cleaning one's hands thoroughly for at least 20 seconds with:

- alcohol-based hand solution, gel or foam;
- antiseptic handwash and running water; or
- liquid soap and running water

and

- drying one's hands thoroughly after such cleaning using dry, single use towels.

Good hand hygiene is required:

- before touching a client, or a client's surroundings;
- after an Exposure risk;
- after touching a client, or a client's surroundings;
- after going to the toilet; and
- between each client.

Appropriate use of gloves means the following:

- Wearing disposable medical examination gloves for any Exposure or potential Exposure, e.g. during any OMA or other procedure where a staff member is potentially exposed to blood and/or body substances, broken skin, and/or mucous membranes, and when handling equipment used during the Exposure, including when disposing of it;
- Wearing gloves when disposing of rubbish potentially tainted with blood and/or other body substances, and



- Wearing gloves when wiping down furniture, toys and equipment with disinfectant wipes.

Gloves must be removed and disposed of:

- if they are torn or otherwise damaged;
- after an Exposure and before using the phone or computer, or before touching furniture, other items or surfaces;
- between clients;
- before leaving the clinic room in which the Exposure occurred; and
- before writing client notes.

Used gloves must never be re-worn.

Appropriate disposal of all medical equipment means that equipment used with clients (e.g. tissues, tongue depressors and gloves) that is tainted with blood or other body substances must be discarded immediately after use in a rubbish bin.

Coughing etiquette means that people in the clinic (including staff, clients and others) who feel or display the symptoms of a respiratory illness must:

- cover their nose and mouth with a tissue when coughing or sneezing;
- use tissues to capture and hold respiratory secretions (including mucous);
- spit only into tissues (and then only if spitting is unavoidable);
- dispose of used tissues in a rubbish bin with a lid after use;
- when in the waiting room, wear a mask; and
- use good hand hygiene.

Appropriate clothes washing means that:

- clothing and linen tainted with blood or other body substances must be promptly removed, stored and washed in a manner that prevents the transfer of micro-organisms to any staff member or client, or the clinic environment, generally.
- tainted clothing and linen should be handled as little as possible and washed separately from other clothing and linen, and
- washing must involve the use of detergent and hot water.

Scanning the available Check In CBR QR code means using a smart phone or other device to register your attendance at a Capital Diagnostic Speech Pathology appointment. This code is available on posters displayed during the appointment, or by typing '967584' into the ACT Government Check In CBR app.



## No sharps

Capital Diagnostic Speech Pathology Pty Ltd is not licensed to, and does not perform, procedures that penetrate the skin. Needles, glass equipment and other sharp objects designed to perform procedures that penetrate the skin are therefore strictly prohibited on-site.

## Objects used during an Exposure or Potential Exposure

All disposable materials used in situations involving a potential Exposure or an Exposure must be disposed of in a rubbish bin and not be re-used. Non-disposable equipment, e.g. torches used in OMAs or containers holding OMA equipment, must be washed and disinfected after each use.

## Bottles and Teats

From time to time, clients may use baby bottles and reusable teats while on-site. Capital Diagnostic Speech Pathology Pty Ltd does not have an inventory of such equipment or have the facilities to disinfect them. Our policy is that, on-site, babies may only use teats and bottles owned and brought in by their carers and must never be used (even after chemical or thermal disinfectant) with another baby or other person.

## Toys

Toys are used in the clinic, both during assessment and therapy sessions and while clients are waiting. Toys handled or placed in children's mouths must be washable. Toys that are not washable must not be used. Toys must be washed in hot water with detergent and a disinfecting agent between each client use.

## Nails and Nail Polish

For infection prevention and control reasons, speech pathology staff providing direct client care must not:

- wear nail polish or nail art or technology or wear artificial nails; or
- allow their natural finger nails to exceed 0.6 centimetres in length.

## Disinfecting environmental surfaces regularly

Staff must wipe down furniture (including tables, chairs and equipment) used by clients with a disposable disinfectant wipe after each session, as well as before the first client and after the last client of the day in each clinic room. Disinfectant wipes must be disposed of in a rubbish bin and must not be reused.

