

Evaluating Contact and Droplet Precautions Program

1. Why it is important...

- To measure the effectiveness of current policies
- To identify areas needing increased education
- To be able to give feedback to employees on their performance

2. How to observe Contact and Respiratory Precautions

- Direct observation is the most accurate method
- Observer must conduct the observation without interfering with ongoing work. Best if person being observed does not know they are being observed.
- Observer should be familiar with contact and respiratory precautions, supplies necessary for each type, and the data collection tool that is being utilized
- Observe in rooms labeled for contact or droplet precautions
- For rooms labeled contact precautions:
 - Perform hand hygiene
 - Put on gown and tie in the back
 - Put on gloves
 - Enter room
 - Remove gloves
 - Remove gown
 - Discard inside room
 - Perform hand hygiene
- For rooms labeled droplet precautions:
 - Perform hand hygiene
 - Put on mask
 - Enter room
 - Exit room
 - Remove mask
 - Hand hygiene

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- Observe a variety of health care workers and a variety of shifts if possible. (Example: nursing, environmental, dietary, etc.)
- Calculating percentage on a regular (monthly) basis will let you know if educational efforts are working. If the percentage increases, what you are doing is effective. If the percentage drops, you may need to change or increase your educational efforts.
- You can also look at completed forms to decide where to target your education. If you see dietary workers have several missed opportunities, you can plan to speak to them as a group. Or if you identify several healthcare workers are missing a particular moment (example: washing hands before donning gown) you can target your educational messages accordingly.
- Be aware that very high rates (100%) may not be accurate. Consider that staff may be aware of observation or observer may be recording inaccurate data.

3. Feedback to Staff - Why it is important:

- Helps them recognize gaps in good practices and knowledge
- Can help raise awareness and can convince them there is a problem
- Ongoing feedback will demonstrate improvement and sustain motivation

4. Tips for improving transmission based precautions compliance:

- Engage front line staff in deciding how to store PPE so it is convenient for them to use
- Placement of supplies right outside the patient/resident's door encourages compliance
- Similarly, placement of a large trash can and hand hygiene dispenser just inside the room door makes it easier to do the right thing
- Implement a "buddy" system to provide peer reminders
- Place signs near doors and supplies as a reminder
- Internal Newsletters
- Provide positive reinforcement- "Catch them doing it right"