

## WHAT YOU SHOULD KNOW ABOUT INFECTION CONTROL

### **Why is Infection Control Important?**

- Health Care settings maintain an Infection Control Program to protect patients, visitors, and employees/students from exposure to disease that could result in infection.

### **Why do Infections Occur in the Health Care Setting?**

- Many sick people are treated in the Health Care Facility setting.
- Treatment and procedures may increase the risk of infection (i.e. IV's, surgery).
- Germs are easily transported on hands and equipment.

### **What are the Essentials of a Health Care Facility Infection Control Program?**

- The Infection Control Committee is a multi-disciplinary group, which directs the Health Care Facility Infection Control Plan.
- Infection Control Coordinators/Nurses implement the plan by monitoring infections in the Health Care Facility, developing policies, procedures, and education programs.
- Control measures maximize safe practices to prevent infection, such as isolation guidelines.

### **Employee/student Responsibility to Help Control the Spread of Infection:**

- Practice Hand Hygiene—Use alcohol hand gel or soap and water per policy and procedure
- Practice good personal hygiene.
- Always use Standard Precautions by treating all blood/body fluids as infectious.
- Follow isolation precaution procedures (refer to site specific Infection Control Manuals online).
- Clean and disinfect reusable equipment between patients.
- Contact employee health with questions about work-related illness or exposures.
- Report unsafe work practices.
- Follow Respiratory Hygiene / Cough Etiquette guidelines for all patients, visitors and healthcare workers

**REMEMBER, HAND HYGIENE IS THE SINGLE MOST EFFECTIVE WAY TO PREVENT INFECTIONS. USE ALCOHOL HAND GEL or SOAP, WATER AND FRICTION! SHUT OFF FAUCET HANDLES WITH PAPER TOWELS AFTER HANDWASHING.**

### **Infection Control is Everyone's Responsibility**

- Learn your department's Infection Control Policies and Procedures. (Your specific department will instruct you in the department's Infection Control policies and procedures.)
- Review initial/annual online Safety Fair.
- Read updates to Infection Control Manuals online.

### **Employee/Student Resources:**

1. Employee Health website (see Aurora Intranet)
2. Infection Control Manual (refer to site specific manuals online)
3. Department Specific Infection Control policies and procedures (Infection Control Manuals online)
4. Tuberculosis Exposure Control Plan
5. Blood borne Pathogen Exposure Control Plan
6. Reduction of Sharps Injury/Safety Products Policy

### **OSHA Blood borne Pathogen Standards**

This federal law took effect March 6, 1992. It applies to any employee/student in the U.S. who has a potential for exposure to blood/body fluids while performing his/her job duties. This law was updated January 18, 2001 to include reduction of injuries due to sharps (i.e. Needle sticks).

The law includes, but is not limited to specific rules for the following:

#### **Use of Personal Protective Equipment:**

- Gloves – must be worn when touching blood/body fluids, as well as when handling items or surfaces soiled with the same.
- Gown – Must be worn if there is a potential for splashing, spraying, and spattering of blood/body fluids to clothing.
- Masks and Protective Eyewear – must be worn if there is a potential for splashing, spraying, or spattering of blood/body fluids to face.

#### **Engineering and Work Practice Controls:**

- Hand hygiene.
- Sharps safety devices
- Proper disposal of needles/sharps in puncture resistant container
- Eating, drinking, smoking, applying cosmetics or lip balm, and handling contact lenses are prohibited in work areas where there is a reasonable likelihood of occupational exposure. No eating or drinking will be allowed at nurses' stations. All food and drink must be kept in a designated area on the unit.
- Eyewash stations

#### **Housekeeping Rules for Laundry and Waste Disposal:**

- Red bags are used for infectious waste.
- All used linen is considered potentially infectious.

#### **Hepatitis B Vaccine – Contact Employee Health.**

#### **Post exposure treatment - Contact Employee Health.**

#### **Reduction of Sharps Injuries**

- Safety Devices to be reviewed on your unit.
- For more information, contact Employee Health or Infection Control

### **OSHA Tuberculosis Prevention and Control Plan**

Standard includes, but is not limited to:

#### **Use of Personal Protective Equipment:**

- N-95 Mask for suspected or confirmed TB patient -- Fit Testing required ; testing performed by Employee Health
- Powered Air Purifying Respirator (PAPR)

#### **TB Testing:**

- Initial testing on new hires will be a blood test (QuantiFERON)
- According to revised CDC guidelines, all Aurora sites are currently low risk based on the CDC definitions and therefore a PPD Skin Test is not required for existing staff in 2007
- Employee Follow-up after exposure to TB (PPD skin testing) will continue as before.

#### **Engineering and Work Practice Controls:**

- Negative Pressure Rooms for suspected or confirmed patients with Tuberculosis.
- Airborne Isolation Precautions\* – See site specific Infection Control manual on-line

### **If you have questions, please contact the Infection Control office:**

Aurora Lakeland Medical Center- (262) 741-2197

Aurora Medical Center Kenosha- (262) 948-5811

Aurora Memorial Hospital of Burlington- (262) 767-6318