

POLICY 4.1 – INFECTION CONTROL

Management of Body Fluid Spills & Biomedical Waste

See also POLICY 4.2 – COVID PANDEMIC PLAN & PROCESSES

Purpose

This policy outlines infection control measures for managing body fluid spills, biomedical waste, and sharps in all Wonderland Community Services (WCS) operations, ensuring the safety and wellbeing of participants, staff, visitors, and the community.

Legislative and Standards Compliance

This policy complies with:

- **NDIS Practice Standards (2021)** – particularly the *Provision of Supports Environment* and *Risk Management* modules to ensure safe and hygienic support delivery.
- **NDIS (Code of Conduct) Rules 2018** – mandating safe and respectful participant support.
- **NDIS (Incident Management and Reportable Incidents) Rules 2018** – requiring appropriate incident reporting of infection control breaches.
- **Queensland Child Safe Standards**, especially Standard 8 (*Safe and Accessible Environments*), applying to all child safety placements managed by WCS.
- **Queensland Legislation:**
 - *Work Health and Safety Act 2011 (Qld)* – ensuring safe workplaces and infection prevention.
 - *Public Health Act 2005 (Qld)* – requiring public health risk mitigation, including infection control.
 - *Waste Reduction and Recycling Regulation 2011 (Qld)* – governing biomedical waste disposal.
 - *Food Act 2006 (Qld)* – ensuring food safety in kitchen and food prep areas.
- **Tasmanian Legislation:**
 - *Work Health and Safety Act 2012 (Tas)*
 - *Public Health Act 1997 (Tas)*
 - *Waste Management Regulations 2020 (Tas)*
- **Australian Guidelines for the Prevention and Control of Infection in Healthcare (NHMRC, 2019)** – establishing best practice infection control procedures.

Definition of Biomedical Waste

“Medical waste that contains potentially infectious material.”

General Statement

- WCS does not provide clinical nursing care. Some participants are accepted if they can self-manage specialized medical procedures (e.g., insulin injections) or staff have completed specialist training.
- Illnesses or accidents causing body fluid spills trigger infection control procedures.
- All human body fluids are treated as potentially infectious and handled according to the procedures below, aligning with NDIS requirements for safe participant support and workplace health and safety laws.

General Infection Control in WCS Properties

(Facilities, Amenities, Equipment, PPE, and other items)

- Toilet facilities are maintained in good working order with adequate supplies, handwashing facilities, waste management, and regular cleaning regimes in accordance with *Public Health Act 2005 (Qld)* and NDIS Practice Standards.
- Handwashing facilities include hand basins, running water, mild liquid soap (preferred), paper towels, and bins, cleaned regularly.
- Hand sanitisers are provided for onsite and excursion use, with safety and accessibility considered per Child Safe Standards.
- PPE (disposable gloves, appropriate face masks) is supplied and used as per Australian infection control guidelines and NDIS standards.
- First aid kits are regularly restocked by Facilities Officer, Safety & Risk Officer, and Housekeeping Officer.
- Food preparation areas meet *Food Act 2006 (Qld)* standards for infection control.
- Waste disposal systems manage all waste types to prevent infection risks, complying with *Waste Reduction and Recycling Regulation 2011 (Qld)* and Tasmanian equivalents.
- Sanitary product and nappy waste disposal uses preferred suppliers and designated bins, respecting privacy and safety per Child Safe Standards. Feminine hygiene products are never flushed; signage enforces this.
- Teeth cleaning equipment is participant-provided or supplied by WCS and disposed of after use to avoid cross-infection.

Responsibility

- **STA properties and office:** Facilities Officer and Facilities Supervisor are responsible for maintaining infection control infrastructure and training.
- **Child Safety properties and client home environments:** Key Worker ensures hygiene and equipment regimes, aligning with Child Safe Standards.
- All staff must comply with infection control procedures under NDIS and workplace health and safety legislation.

Disease Prevention – Handling Blood and Other Body Substances

- Universal Standard Precautions are applied to all blood and body substances as potentially infectious, consistent with NDIS infection control guidelines and workplace health and safety laws.
- Staff use gloves, hand hygiene, and PPE appropriately to prevent transmission.
- Spill Kits are maintained and located as per the infection control plan. Staff must be familiar with their locations and use.

Procedures

Managing Exposure to Blood or Other Body Substances

1. Wash skin with soap and water after any contact with blood or body fluids.
2. Rinse eyes thoroughly with water if splashed.
3. If ingested, spit out and rinse mouth several times; seek medical advice immediately.
4. Report exposure incidents promptly to supervisor or occupational health officer, in line with NDIS Incident Management Rules.

Surface Cleaning of Blood and Body Substances

- Use gloves, eye protection, and plastic apron if splashing risk exists.
- Remove spills with paper towels; clean with detergent and warm water, then disinfect with household disinfectant or Spill Kit solution.
- Dispose of all contaminated materials safely in sealed bags per biomedical waste regulations.
- Wash hands thoroughly afterward.

Management of Medical Waste (Sharps)

- Parents/guardians and responsible participants must notify Site Managers of any sharps use.
- WCS provides approved sharps containers if participants/young persons do not supply their own.
- Staff handling sharps wear gloves and dispose of needles immediately into sharps containers.
- Sharps containers are returned to pharmacies or medical centers for safe disposal, complying with QLD and TAS waste management regulations.

Disposal of Biological Waste

Laundering:

- Blood/body fluid contaminated linens are handled with gloves, washed separately on maximum cycle with detergent, or double-bagged and returned home if laundering onsite is unavailable.
- Hand hygiene is maintained after handling.

Training in Handwashing

- Staff complete hand hygiene training at induction and monthly refreshers, aligned with NDIS quality standards.
- Hand hygiene facilities comply with public health requirements and Child Safe Standards (safe access).
- Steps for handwashing are displayed at handwashing stations.

Sanitising Hand Wash Solutions

- Alcohol-based hand rubs are used when handwashing is unavailable but must be handled safely to avoid ingestion and fire hazards, especially around children.

Training Staff in Spills Management & Sharps Disposal

- Staff training covers Spill Kit contents, Sharps Container use, and cleaning procedures.
- Spill Kits and Sharps Containers are located at all WCS sites, vehicles, and residences, with access restricted per Child Safe Standards.
- Spill cleaning methods for small and large spills, and sharps disposal are explained in detail, following NHMRC guidelines and state health legislation.

Emergency Action Plan

- In case of hazardous substance exposure, clean or rinse affected person immediately.
- Contact WCS person in charge (usually Site Coordinator) and ring 000 if necessary.
- Complete Incident/Accident Reports and submit as per WCS Incident Policy, linking to NDIS Reportable Incident protocols.
- Review and respond to incidents with continuous improvement processes.

Review of Infection Control and Hazardous Substance Incidents

- All hazardous incidents involving infectious agents or sharps injuries must be reported using WCS forms.
- Incident investigation and review align with WCS Incident Policy and NDIS Incident Management Rules.
- Child Safety incidents follow mandatory reporting under Queensland Child Protection legislation.

Special Conditions for COVID-19

- Refer to *Policy 4.2 – Covid Pandemic Plan & Processes* for pandemic-specific infection control measures.

Staff Training Responsibility

- All staff have access to policies and procedures via Monday.com.
- Induction includes a handbook covering infection control policy.
- Monthly staff training follows an annual training plan to refresh knowledge regularly.
- Key Workers and Shift Leaders provide onsite infection control training.
- Individualized training is provided when participants have bodily fluid accident risks.

| DATE | PERSON/S | DETAILS |
|------------|------------------|-------------------|
| 11.08.2025 | Becci Fazldeen | Review and update |
| 16.07.2025 | Toni Megihan | Review and update |
| 06.03.2024 | Bronwyn McMullen | Review and update |
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