



# Infection Prevention and Control Resource for Adult Social Care:

## 12. Glossary

### **Administrative controls**

Procedures or policies that change how work is carried out to reduce infection risk (e.g., limiting staff movement during outbreaks, using specific care plans).

### **Adult Social Care (ASC)**

All forms of personal care and other practical assistance provided for people who, because of age, illness, disability, pregnancy, childbirth, dependence on alcohol or drugs or any other similar circumstances, need such care or other assistance. Social care supports daily living so that people can remain as independent and well as possible

### **Adult social care settings**

Settings which help and support people over the age of 18, living with disability, physical or mental illness (including dementia and cognitive conditions), or learning disabilities. ASC settings include care homes for older adults, homes for younger adults with learning disabilities, day centres, extra care services, supported living and care provided at home (domiciliary care).

### **Aerosol-Generating Procedures (AGPs)**

Clinical procedures that produce respiratory particles capable of carrying infectious pathogens (e.g., suctioning, procedures triggering coughing).



22 **Alcohol-based hand rub**

23 A preparation applied to the hands to reduce germs, usually containing at least 60%  
24 alcohol and meeting British safety and effectiveness standards.

25 **Antimicrobial Resistance (AMR)**

26 When bacteria, viruses, fungi or parasites no longer respond to medicines such as  
27 antibiotics, antivirals or antifungals. AMR makes infections harder to treat and increases  
28 risk of spread.

29 **Antimicrobial Stewardship (AMS)**

30 A set of practices that promote the responsible use of antibiotics and other  
31 antimicrobials to ensure they remain effective. It includes using antimicrobials only when  
32 necessary and in the correct way.

33 **Antimicrobials**

34 Medicines used to treat infections, including antibiotics, antivirals, antifungals, and  
35 antiparasitic treatments.

36 **Aseptic Technique**

37 A method used during clinical procedures to prevent contamination of wounds, devices,  
38 or sterile areas using sterile gloves, equipment, and careful handling.

39 **Auditing**

40 Process of reviewing and checking activities, processes, or records to ensure they meet  
41 required standards, regulations, or best practices.

42 **Blood or body fluid spillages**

43 Any accidental escape of blood or body fluids like urine, faeces, vomit or sputum (spit or  
44 saliva) (for example: on the floor or surfaces).

45 **Care and Support Workers**



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46 Care and support workers are paid staff who help others with everyday activities and  
47 wellbeing so they can live as independently as possible. This term is used throughout to  
48 refer to all ASC workers/staff.

### 49 **Care environment**

50 A care environment is the place where people receive care, treatment, or support.

### 51 **Care equipment**

52 Care equipment is items that help people receive care safely and comfortably.

### 53 **Care Home**

54 A residential setting where adults (often older adults) receive accommodation and  
55 personal care. Some homes provide nursing care.

### 56 **Care Quality Commission (CQC)**

57 The CQC is the regulator for health and social care in England, and the purpose is to  
58 make sure health and social care services provide individuals with safe, effective,  
59 compassionate, high-quality care.

### 60 **CAUTI (Catheter-Associated Urinary Tract Infection)**

61 UTI caused by the introduction of bacteria via a urinary catheter.

### 62 **Chain of Infection**

63 Shows how infections spread. The chain has 6 interconnecting links (pathogen →  
64 source of infection → way out → spread → way in → person at risk). Breaking any one  
65 link can stop the spread of infection.

### 66 **Cleaning**

67 A process that physically removes contamination but does not necessarily destroy  
68 microorganisms.



69 **Clinical interventions and procedures**

70 Medical or care actions performed to help keep someone healthy or treat an illness or  
71 injury.

72 **Commissioning organisations**

73 An organisation that decides what services are needed, buys them, and makes sure  
74 they are delivered properly.

75 **Control of Substances Hazardous to Health (COSHH)**

76 UK regulations requiring employers to manage risks from hazardous substances,  
77 including biological agents that can cause infection.

78 **Decontamination**

79 A process which removes or destroys contamination and thereby prevents  
80 microorganisms or other contaminants reaching a susceptible site in sufficient quantities  
81 to initiate infection or any other harmful response. Three processes of decontamination  
82 are commonly used: cleaning, disinfection and sterilisation.

83 **Department of Health and Social Care (DHSC)**

84 The Department of Health and Social Care is the part of government that decides  
85 national policies and priorities for health and care services.

86 **Diarrhoea**

87 3 or more loose stools in 24 hours.

88 **Disinfection**

89 A process used to reduce the number of viable microorganisms, but which may not  
90 necessarily inactivate some bacterial agents, such as certain viruses and bacterial  
91 spores.

92 **Domiciliary care**

93 Domiciliary care (also called home care) is care and support provided to people in their  
94 own homes rather than in a care home or hospital.



95 **Enteral feeding**

96 A method of delivering nutrition directly to the stomach or intestine when an individual  
97 cannot eat by mouth. This is via Naso-gastric (NG) – through the nose into the stomach,  
98 gastrostomy/PEG – directly into the stomach, and jejunostomy – directly into the small  
99 intestine.

100 **Filtering Face Piece class 3 (FFP3)**

101 A respirator that provides the highest level of protection against pathogens that might be  
102 in the air.

103 **Fluid Resistant Surgical Masks (FRSM)**

104 A medical mask that blocks fluids and helps prevent infection from spreading.

105 **Fundamentals of care**

106 Core practices to ensure individuals get safe, compassionate, dignified, and person-  
107 centred care.

108 **Hand hygiene**

109 Washing or sanitising hands to keep them clean and reduce the risk of spreading  
110 germs.

111 **Health Protection Teams (HPTs)**

112 A specialist public health team that deals with public health threats like infectious  
113 diseases, environmental hazards, and emergencies to protect the wider population.

114 **Hierarchy of controls**

115 Safety measures to take to reduce the risks from a particular hazard such as infection.

116 **High-Consequence Infectious Diseases (HCIDs)**

117 A serious disease that can be highly contagious and life-threatening, needing strict  
118 infection control.

119 **Individual**



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120 People who draw on care and support from social care services or other forms of  
121 assistance to live their daily lives, and are active participants with choice and control  
122 over their support. This group includes anyone needing extra help due to age, disability,  
123 illness, or other circumstances.

### 124 **Infection**

125 When bacteria, viruses, fungi or parasites (also known as pathogens or germs) enter  
126 the body, multiply and cause harm, making the individual unwell

### 127 **Infection Prevention and Control (IPC)**

128 Using safe practices to stop germs from spreading and causing illness.

### 129 **Infection Prevention and Control Teams**

130 An Infection Prevention and Control (IPC) team is a specialist group in health and care  
131 services that works to prevent and manage infections, helping keep everyone safe.

### 132 **Infectious diarrhoea and/or vomiting**

133 When the cause is not yet known, but it is suspected to be infectious based on  
134 symptoms and risk factors.

### 135 **Impermeable bag**

136 Bags that a liquid does not leak or pass through at any time during their use or during  
137 the washing process.

### 138 **Integrated Care Boards (ICBs)**

139 An ICB is the main local NHS body that decides how healthcare is delivered and how  
140 the NHS budget is spent in its area. ICBs hold overall responsibility for infection  
141 prevention across health and social care in their local area.

### 142 **Laundry and linen**



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143 Fabric items in care services that must be washed and managed to keep people safe  
144 and prevent infection.

### 145 **Legionella**

146 A bacteria found in water systems that can make people very sick if inhaled.

### 147 **Legislation**

148 Official rules or laws created to regulate behaviour and protect people.

### 149 **Local Authority**

150 A local authority is the local council that makes decisions about services, spending, and  
151 policies affecting people in its area.

### 152 **Mental Capacity Act (MCA)**

153 The Mental Capacity Act is the law that helps people make decisions safely or ensures  
154 others make decisions in their best interest if they cannot.

### 155 **Multidrug-resistant organisms (MDROs)**

156 Pathogens that do not respond to common treatments such as antibiotics, antivirals,  
157 antifungals and antiparasitic, making them difficult to treat

### 158 **Mouth care**

159 Looking after the mouth, teeth, and gums to maintain oral hygiene and overall health.

### 160 **Notifications of Infectious Diseases (NOIDs)**

161 Mandatory reports that doctors submit to UKHSA when they suspect certain notifiable  
162 infectious diseases, allowing public health teams to respond quickly and prevent further  
163 spread.

### 164 **Outbreak**



165 An outbreak is: When two or more people have the same infection and are linked by  
166 time and place. This includes individuals receiving care and support as well as care and  
167 support workers. It can also be: When the number of infections appears unusual or  
168 higher than what is normally seen in an ASC setting.

169 **Pathogen**

170 Refers to a germ that causes infection.

171 **Pathogens that transmit through the air**

172 These are germs that travel in the air and can infect people when they breathe them in.

173 **Personal Protective Equipment (PPE)**

174 Equipment that is intended to be worn or held by a person to protect them from risks to  
175 their health and safety while at work. Examples include gloves, aprons and eye and  
176 face protection.

177 **Pets**

178 Animals that live with people and provide company or comfort.

179 **Pests**

180 Pests are animals or insects that can pose a risk to human health, for example birds,  
181 rats, mice and cockroaches

182 **Provider organisations**

183 A provider organisation is any service or group that gives care, treatment, or support to  
184 individuals.

185 **Quality assurance teams**

186 Quality assurance teams are groups responsible for making sure that health and social  
187 care services meet required standards and provide safe, effective, and high-quality  
188 care.





189 **Respiratory hygiene**

190 Ways to cover the mouth and nose and manage germs to stop infections spreading.

191 **Respiratory Protective Equipment (RPE)**

192 Equipment worn over the nose and mouth to protect the wearer from breathing in  
193 harmful substances, such as dust, chemicals, or infectious particles.

194 **Single use**

195 This means the equipment can only be reused for the same individual receiving care  
196 and support. Labelling might state 'single patient use'.

197 **Sharps waste**

198 Waste involving sharps such as needles or scissors

199 **Staff wellbeing**

200 Staff wellbeing is how healthy, supported, and satisfied workers feel while doing their  
201 jobs.

202 **Standard Infection Control Precautions (SICPs)**

203 Basic infection prevention and control (IPC) measures that should be used by everyone  
204 providing care in adult social care (ASC) settings, for all individuals receiving care and  
205 support, at all times regardless of whether an infection is known or suspected

206 **Sterilisation**

207 A process used to make an object free from all viable microorganisms including viruses  
208 and bacterial spores.

209 **Training and education**

210 Activities that help people gain knowledge, skills, and understanding to do their jobs  
211 effectively and safely.



212 **Transmission-Based Precautions (TBPs)**

213 Transmission-based precautions (TBPs) are extra infection prevention and control (IPC)  
214 precautions when an individual is suspected or is known to have an infection that can  
215 spread to others, for example through touch, coughs and sneezes and through the air.  
216 TBPs are used in addition to standard infection control precautions, not instead of them.

217 **Tuberculosis (TB)**

218 A bacterial infection that mainly attacks the lungs and can spread to others through the  
219 air.

220 **Unpaid carer**

221 A person who provides care and support to a family member, friend, or neighbour who  
222 is ill, disabled, or elderly, without receiving payment.

223 **Urinary Tract Infection (UTI)**

224 When bacteria in any part of the urinary system cause infection.

225 **UK Health Security Agency (UKHSA)**

226 A government agency responsible for protecting public health in the United Kingdom by  
227 preventing and responding to infectious diseases and other health threats.

228 **Vaccination**

229 The process of giving a vaccine to a person to help their body build immunity against a  
230 specific infectious disease.

231 **Ventilation**

232 The process of supplying fresh air to a space and removing stale air to maintain a  
233 healthy and comfortable environment.

234 **Vomiting (regurgitating or being sick)**



235 The forceful removal of stomach contents.

236 **Waste**

237 Any material or item produced during health or social care activities that needs to be  
238 safely disposed of.

239 **Water safety**

240 Managing and maintaining water systems to prevent contamination and protect people  
241 from waterborne infections.

242 **Water-soluble bags** (sometimes referred to as 'alginate' bags)

243 Bags that dissolve or break apart when processed in a washing machine

244 **Work exclusions due to infection or public health reasons**

245 Rules that prevent staff from working when they have, or might spread, an infectious  
246 disease to protect others.