Title: Food and Beverage Safety	
Document #: 6468	**Issuing Authority:** Chief Human Resources Officer
Last Revised Date: 8/7/2024	**Version Number:** 2.0 (Current)

PURPOSE:

Brant Community Healthcare System (BCHS) is committed to providing a safe environment for patients, staff and visitors. The contamination of food and beverage from hazardous chemicals, hazardous drugs, and infectious materials place the health care worker at risk. In accordance with the Occupational Health and Safety Act (OHSA), BCHS prohibits the consumption, handling or storage of personal belongings, personal and communal food or beverages, tobacco or cosmetics in areas where infectious materials, hazardous chemicals or hazardous drugs are used, handled or stored.

POLICY STATEMENT:

Under the OHSA, it is the duty of all staff and/or affiliates to comply with this regulation and report non-compliance to the manager. It is the duty of the manager to comply with the regulation, ensure staff and affiliates are aware of the hazards and enforce this regulation.

Failure to comply with this policy may result in disciplinary action, up to and including termination of employment or affiliation. Charges for infractions of the OHSA can be given to an employer, supervisor, employee and/or affiliate. If employees and/or affiliates have been instructed by their employer, and the employee and/or affiliate continues to be non-compliant, the Ministry of Labour inspector may issue a personal order to the employee and/or affiliate and/or a fine may be levied.

DEFINITION (S):

Affiliates

Individuals who are not employed by BCHS but perform specific tasks at, or for, the organization, including but not limited to:

- Credentialed professional staff with a hospital appointment (e.g. physicians, midwives, dentists),
- Volunteers,
- Contractors or contracted workers who may be members of a third party contract or under direct contract with the organization, and
- Individuals working at the organization but funded through and external source.

Communal Food

Food that is intended to be shared by many people, including but not limited to food trays (e.g. fruit, meat, cheese), doughnuts, bags of chips, candy, and potlucks.

Communication Station

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The common shared space in a clinical area (also referred to as the Nursing Station or Communication Station) in which charts may be housed, team communication occurs and/or documentation is completed.

Hydration Station

A designated location in all clinical areas where only beverages in closed containers (i.e. beverages with proper sealing lids) may be stored and consumed. Food will not be permitted to be stored or consumed at hydration stations.

Designated Clean Space

A location that has been approved by clinical managers in consultation with Organizational Health for food and/or beverage storage and consumption. The space must meet the following conditions:

- Direct patient care (i.e. direct hands on care) is **not** administered in the area,
- Patients do not have access to the area,
- Surfaces are in good state of repair and can be easily cleaned,
- Medications are not stored or handled in the area,
- Chemicals are not stored or handled in the area (includes cleaning products),
- Specimens are not handled, labelled or stored in the area, includes areas where there is a pneumatic translogic station, and
- Soiled “dirty” patient equipment is not handled or stored.

Routine Practices

The system of infection prevention and control practices recommended by the Public Health Agency of Canada to use used with all clients, patients and residents during all care to prevent and control transmission of microorganisms in all health care (e.g. hand hygiene, environmental controls, and use of personal protective equipment).

PROCEDURE:

1. **Food and Beverage Storage and Consumption**

   Staff and/or affiliates must:

   a. Only store and consume food in an approved designated clean space located outside of the direct patient care/contact environment and away from infectious materials, specimens, contaminated equipment and hazardous chemicals or drugs. (See Appendix A). If unclear regarding whether or not an area is appropriate for food or beverage consumption, contact the clinical manager for further direction.
   b. Ensure food and beverages are stored with appropriate fitting lids.
   c. Observe Routine Practices and safe food handling practices at all times (See Appendix B).

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2. Communal Food

Communal food is discouraged in the workplace, but is permitted in designated clean spaces if the following conditions are met:

a. Any food to be served or shared must be in an area where there is no direct patient care/contact or possibility of contamination from infectious materials, hazardous chemical or drugs.
b. Any area where food is being consumed must have either a hand washing sink or the availability of alcohol based hand rub so individuals can perform proper hand hygiene.
c. Proper waste containers (not adjacent to food serving area) must be available for the disposal of all materials (food and serving Implements).

For potluck type events:

a. Guidance should be provided to those contributing food regarding safe handling and storage (See Appendix B).
b. Sufficient supplies of clean implements must be available to allow for each dish to have separate serving utensils to prevent cross contamination.
c. The food area must be supervised during service by an individual(s) who understands their role in maintaining cleanliness and food safety in order to prevent cross contamination.

RELATED PRACTICES AND / OR LEGISLATIONS:

Occupational Health and Safety Act, R.S.O. 1990, c.0.1.
Public Health Agency of Canada, Routine Practices.

REFERENCES:

London Health Sciences Centre. (2019). Food and Beverage Safety Policy #GEN066.

Occupational Health and Safety Act Ontario Regulation 67/93 Healthcare and Residential Facilities. (April 30, 2018). Retrieved April 26, 2019, from www.ontario.ca

Provincial Infectious Disease Advisory Committee (PIDAC), Best Practice Document, Routine Practices and Additional Precautions in All Health Care Settings, November 2012.

APPENDICES:

Appendix A – Food and Beverage Storage, Handling, Transportation and Consumption Location and Guidelines
Appendix B – Every Day Safe Food Handling Practices
Appendix C – BCHS Hydration Station Signage

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Appendix A – Food and Beverage Storage, Handling, Transportation and Consumption Location and Guidelines

Permitted	Not Permitted
✓ Private/staff/affiliate areas of the department • Lunch room • Classroom/meeting room • Private office areas ✓ Other approved designated clean spaces or hydration stations	✕ Communication stations ✕ Direct patient care areas including but not limited to: • Patient rooms • Patient examination bays • Procedure areas • Treatment rooms • Patient care corridors and hallways ✕ Wherever chemicals or medications are located including but not limited to: • Laboratories • Pharmacies • Sterile processing areas • Housekeeping areas • Maintenance areas ✕ On/in mobile equipment including but not limited to: • Medication carts • Isolation carts • Housekeeping carts • Supply carts • Code blue crash carts ✕ In patient supply storage areas (e.g. patient lockers, cabinets, bedside tables) ✕ In areas containing contaminated

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	equipment or materials ✕ Areas where specimens are stored or handled

Appendix B – Every Day Safe Food Handling Practices

	Practice
Clean	• Hand hygiene is one of the best ways to prevent the spread of food borne illness. • There must be hand hygiene stations or sinks nearby to support effective hand hygiene. • Always clean your hands with warm water and soap or alcohol based hand rub before and after handling food. • Thoroughly clean and sanitize food surfaces, cutting boards, utensils and dishes after each use using hot soapy water or a bleach sanitizer. • Consider using disposable towels to clean areas as cloth towels and sponges can harbour bacteria. • Avoid food which are not packaged for individual consumption (e.g. unwrapped candy, large bags of chips, fruit and sandwich trays or other similar products).
Chill	• Bacteria can grow in the danger zone between 4° C and 60° C – Do not keep food in the danger zone for more than 2 hours • Always refrigerate perishable food within 2 hours – within 1 hour when temperature is above 32.2° C. • Food and beverages sealed or otherwise cannot be refrigerated in any specimen or medication fridge.
Discard	• Discard any food left out at room temperature for more than 2 hours (1 hour when temperature is above 32.2° C). • Immediately discard any used disposable containers, plates or utensils.

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Appendix C – BCHS Hydration Station Signage



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