Quick Reference for Reprocessing in the Clinical Office Setting

Region of Waterloo
PUBLIC HEALTH

1. Policies and Procedures:

- Ensure there are written policies and procedures for all aspects of reprocessing
- Single-use medical instruments are preferred and must not be reprocessed
- Equipment used to clean, disinfect or sterilize must meet Health Canada/PHAC and CSA standards

2. Education and Training for Reprocessing Staff

- It is strongly recommended that any staff responsible for reprocessing complete the Provincial Infectious Disease Advisory Committee's 'Reprocessing in the Community Online Learning Course' (see reverse for link to this resource)
- Written, device specific reprocessing instructions are available to reprocessing staff

3. Physical Reprocessing Space:

- There is a designated area that is physically separate from direct care areas and from where clean items are handled and stored
- There is a dedicated hand washing sink and/or ABHR for hand hygiene, eye washing station, point-of-use sharps container, and an appropriate supply of personal protective equipment is available for staff

4. Reprocessing Level:

Class	Use	Minimum Level of Reprocessing	Examples
Critical	Enters sterile body site, including the vascular system	Cleaning followed by sterilization	• Surgical instruments • Uterine sounds • Tenaculum • Forceps • Biopsy instruments • Foot care/podiatry equipment
Semi-Critical	Comes in contact with non-intact skin or mucous membranes but does not penetrate them	Cleaning followed by high-level disinfection. Sterilization is preferred	• Vaginal specula • Endoscopes • Biopsy instruments • Anaesthesia equipment • Tonometer
Non-Critical	Touches only intact skin and non mucous membranes, or does not directly touch patient	Cleaning followed by low-level disinfection (in some cases, cleaning alone is acceptable)	• ECG machines • Oximeters • Stethoscopes • Blood pressure cuffs

** Spaulding's classification of medical equipment and required level of reprocessing (Adapted from Best Practices for Cleaning, Disinfection and Sterilization of Medical Equipment/Devices, Public Health Ontario)*

5. Instrument Cleaning:

- Immediately after use, instruments are immersed in an appropriate diluted cleaning solution (e.g. enzymatic cleaner) or are treated with an agent that prevents drying of secretions/body fluids
- Dirty and clean instruments remain separate in covered containers
- Instruments are cleaned manually with a detergent or enzymatic solution, or in an ultrasonic washer, or in an automated washer-disinfector
- Cleaning equipment (e.g. brushes, sponges) is disposable or is cleaned and disinfected with a high-level disinfectant between uses
- Instruments are rinsed after cleaning, and dried prior to high-level disinfectant or sterilization
- Detergent or enzymatic cleaning solution is discarded after each use

6. High-Level Disinfection:

- Disinfection logs are required, including test strip monitoring, concentration and exposure time, and disinfectant temperature for automated endoscope reprocessors
- Disinfectant has not passed the manufacturer's expiry date
- Chemical test strips are used to determine whether an effective concentration is present
- Instrument are thoroughly rinsed with sterile, filtered or tap water, depending on intended use
- Instrument are dried after disinfection before storing in a dry, covered container (e.g. dried with a lint free cloth)

next page ▶

7. Quality Control of Sterilization Process:

- Equipment/devices are wrapped prior to sterilization using approved sterilization packaging (wrap or pouch)
- Chemical indicators (CIs) are placed appropriately in and/or on each package (if not already included as part of the pouch/pack wrap)
- Date of sterilization is recorded on the wrapper prior to sterilization

8. Sterilization:

Instruments are placed in the sterilizer according to manufacturer's instructions. Do not overload!

- Sterilization logs are required for all sterilizers/autoclaves
- Sterilizer is tested with biological indicators (BIs) to verify that bacterial spores are killed after cycle (e.g. spore testing)
- After each cycle, mechanical printout (if available) is reviewed in order to verify cycle time, temperature and pressure
- Medical instruments are not used if the chemical and/or biological indicators fail

9. Storage of Disinfected/Sterile Medical Equipment/Devices:

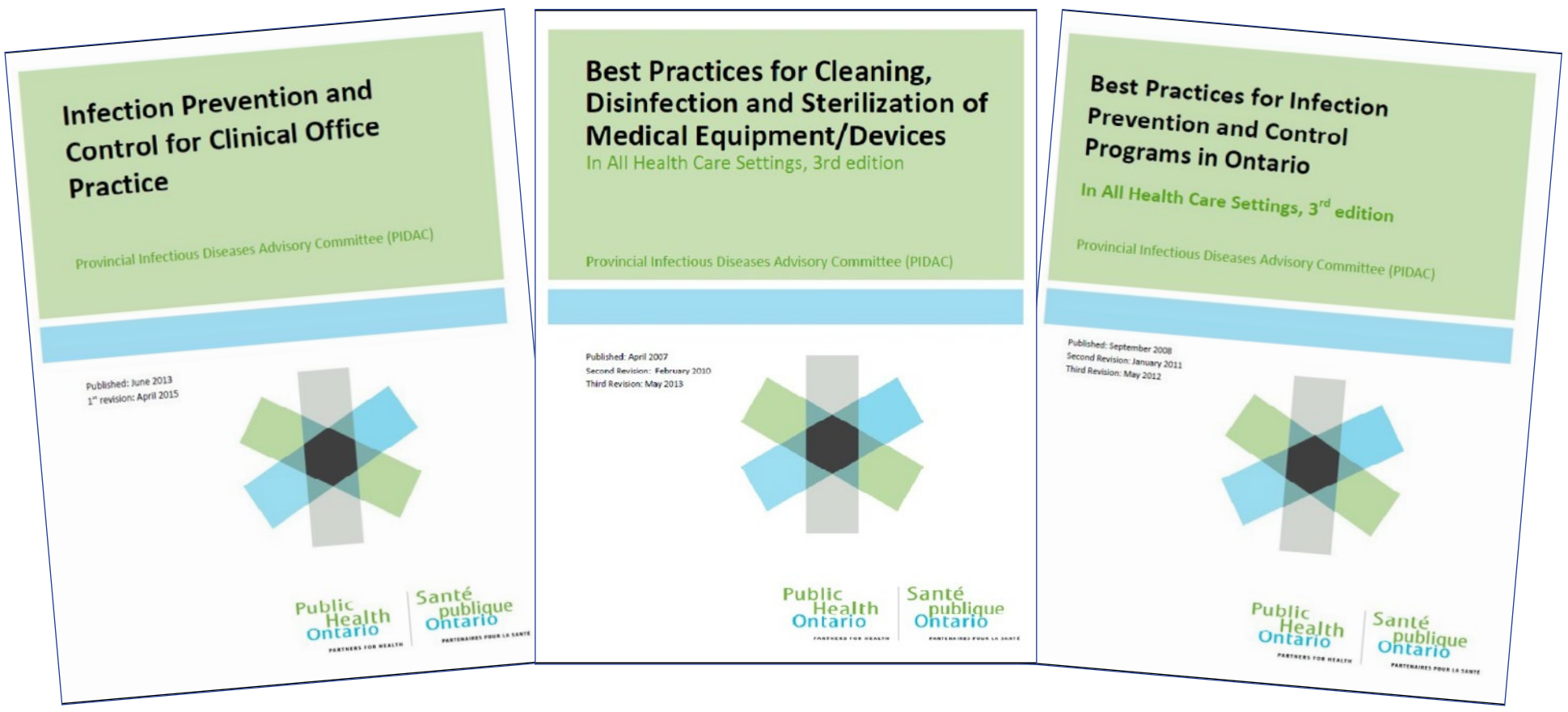
- Sterile items are stored in their sterile packaging until time of use
- Sterile items are stored in a clean, dry, dust-free area (e.g. closed shelves or containers), not at floor level, away from debris, drains, moisture, sinks and vermin in order to prevent contamination and maintain disinfection/sterility until time of use
- Prior to use, ensure sterility of the packaging has not been compromised

*All information based on the document "Infection Prevention and Control for Clinical Office Practice (PIDAC, 2013)

Please note: This is not an exhaustive list. **Please see resources for more detail.

Available Resources for Healthcare Professionals:

- Reprocessing in Community Health Care Settings (**Online Learning Course)
  https://secure.publichealthontario.ca/en/LearningAndDevelopment/OnlineLearning/InfectiousDiseases/Reprocessing/Pages/default.aspx
- Infection Prevention and Control for Clinical Office Practice (PIDAC)
  https://secure.publichealthontario.ca/en/eRepository/IPAC_Clinical_Office_Practice_2013.pdf
- Best Practices for Cleaning, Disinfection and Sterilization of Medical Equipment/Devices
  https://www.publichealthontario.ca/en/eRepository/PIDAC_Cleaning_Disinfection_and_Sterilization_2013.pdf
- Best Practices for Infection Prevention and Control Programs in Ontario
  https://www.publichealthontario.ca/en/eRepository/BP_IPAC_Ontario_HCSettings_2012.pdf
- Checklist for Reprocessing Endoscopy Equipment (Public Health Ontario)
  https://secure.publichealthontario.ca/en/eRepository/IPAC_Clinical_Office_Practice_Checklist_Endoscopy_Equipment_2013.pdf
- Checklist for Reprocessing (Public Health Ontario)
  https://secure.publichealthontario.ca/en/eRepository/IPAC_Clinical_Office_Practice_Checklist_Reprocessing_2013.pdf



2148734 06/16

Alternate formats of this document are available upon request.

Region of Waterloo Public Health
Infectious Disease, Dental and Sexual Health
519-575-4400