2.27 Rehabilitation Services

Purpose

To provide the employee of the Rehabilitation Services Department with guidelines for control of infection while in contact with patients utilizing their services.

Audience

All UTMB employees, contract workers, volunteers, and students in the Rehabilitation Services Department

Universal Precautions/ Handwashing

- Personnel shall adhere to the departmental dress code and the dress code of the hospital. Uniforms soiled by blood and/or body fluids must be spot cleaned or changed immediately.
- The Universal Precautions policy shall be followed for all patients and for any and all contact with blood and body fluids.
- Handwashing shall be performed before and after each patient contact and after the removal of gloves (see policy: Handwashing for All Hospital Employees).
- All cuts and lacerations shall be covered with a waterproof dressing.
- Isolation supplies shall be available at all times in cabinets marked with personal protective equipment (PPE) signs.
- Eating and drinking shall be confined to non-patient care areas.

Patient/HCW with Infections

- Personnel shall comply with the Employee Health Center guidelines for their area.
- Personnel with suspected or documented infections or exposure to infectious or communicable diseases shall be reported to the Employee Health Center or Healthcare Epidemiology immediately. A decision shall be made regarding patient contact in the event of documented infection, for example:
  - Patient contact allowed with protective measures such as the use of gown, gloves, or mask.
  - Transfer out of immediate area to care for patients at less risk of acquiring the infection.
  - No patient contact allowed.
- Visitors shall abide by the hospital rules for the area. Traffic shall be monitored and kept to a minimum. Visitors with colds or other obvious signs of infection shall be restricted upon entering until certain precautions specific to their infection can be implemented, (i.e., a visitor with a cold would don a mask before entering and would wash his/her hands thoroughly prior to touching the patient or

his/her surroundings).

- Family members or persons caring for infected patients shall be instructed in the proper care of the patient so that the infection is not transmitted.
- Patients with a suspected or known infection shall be immediately isolated in a private room. Precautions specific to the infection shall be instituted.
- Guidelines for isolation of a patient with an infectious or communicable disease shall be carried out (see policy: Isolation).
  - The Rehabilitation Services Department shall be notified about patients in isolation prior to their transport to departmental areas. The assigned transporter and/or therapist shall assure adherence to all isolation precautions.

Equipment/ Materials

- There shall be a routine schedule for cleaning mats, tabletops, exercise equipment, gait devices, wheelchairs and/or other equipment. All equipment shall be disinfected daily, or when soiled, with and EPA-registered tuberculocidal (hospital-grade) disinfectant.
- Clean linen shall be placed on transport equipment for each patient. Transport equipment shall be immediately cleaned with an EPA-registered tuberculocidal (hospital-grade) disinfectant when soiled by a patient's blood or other body fluids.
- Treatment tables shall be covered prior to patient use and shall be cleaned with an EPA-registered tuberculocidal (hospital-grade) disinfectant between each use, and when soiled with a patient's blood, or other body fluids.
- All personnel shall follow posted isolation precautions when treating a patient at the bedside. Items to be used during treatment shall be disinfected immediately after removal from patient's room at the end of therapy session.
- Equipment used for emergency care shall be covered to protect it from dust.
- Used patient-specific resuscitation bags that are reusable shall be terminally cleaned by sterilization or high-level disinfection weekly.
- All disposable single use items shall not be reused or reprocessed. All equipment contaminated with blood or other body fluids shall be decontaminated by appropriate means prior to being reprocessed or serviced (i.e., in the decontamination room).
  - Gloves shall be worn by the person who decontaminates the

equipment.

  - When equipment cannot be decontaminated prior to servicing or reprocessing a sticker displaying the biohazard symbol shall be attached.
  - The area(s) contaminated shall be written on the front of the sticker.

- Non-disposable bandage scissors shall be disinfected with 70-90% isopropyl alcohol.
- Bedpans, urinals, and emesis basins shall be emptied immediately, thoroughly cleaned between each use, and covered and stored in the patient's room.
- Stethoscopes shall be wiped with a 70-90% isopropyl alcohol between each patient contact.
- All clean and sterile supplies shall be stored on shelves or placed on pallets at least 8-10" off the floor. Clean and sterile supplies shall be dust-free. Clean and dirty supplies shall always be separated.

General Cleaning

- Gloves shall be worn when cleaning items contaminated with blood, or other body fluids.
- All soiled dressings shall be bagged and disposed of immediately at the location where they were removed. Dressings saturated or dripping with blood or bloody body fluids shall be discarded into a red plastic biohazard bag.
- Care shall be taken to prevent splashing or splattering of blood and other body fluids.
- Linen hampers or trash receptacles or cans shall not be overfilled so that their contents spill out onto the floor.
- Floors shall be cleaned at least daily and more often as necessary.
- Clean linen shall be handled appropriately (see policy: Guidelines for Handling Linen).
- Eating and drinking shall be confined to designated areas.

Medications and Supplies

- All patient supplies shall be labeled with patient's name, kept separate, and used only on that patient. Sterile technique shall be used when applying creams, medications or dressing applications. After 24 hours, opened bottles of saline and water shall be discarded. After each use, the outside of the jars of cream and ointments shall be wiped clean.

- Expiration dates on sterile supplies and medications shall be checked daily.
- All refrigerators containing patient care items shall contain thermometers. Opened food containers for patient use shall be marked and discarded within 48 hours. The temperature shall be checked and recorded daily (see policy: Care of Refrigerators and Freezers).

Whirlpools

- Strict aseptic technique shall be applied and maintained for all whirlpool procedures (see policy: Cleaning and Reprocessing of Patient Care Equipment and Medical Devices).
- Water in whirlpools shall be maintained at a temperature at 98-100°.
- Bleach shall be added if prescribed in the following amounts:

a) 1/2 strength (240:1)

TANK	DISINFECTANT
Hubbard Tank	1 1/8 gals. bleach to 270 gals. H_2O
Setma Tank	1 qt. bleach to 60 gals. H_2O
Small Tank	1 1/2 cups bleach to 24 gals. H_2O

b) ½ strength Ultra Bleach (1:240)

TANK	DISINFECTANT
Hubbard Tank	3 qts. to 270 gals. H_2O
Setma Tank	1 ½ pts. to 60 gals. H_2O
Small Tank	1 1/8 cups to 24 gals. H_2O

The water in the deep LE Whirlpool, Hubbard, and Setma tanks is agitated via mechanical means (e.g., turbine). The water in small whirlpools is agitated via compressed air through tubes in air liners. Turbines and mechanical agitators are disinfected after each treatment by running disinfectant through the turbine and then flushing the system with water. Scissors shall be disinfected before they are used to puncture holes in the air liners.