

# Infection Prevention and Control

## Practice Standard

### **Purpose**

The purpose of the infection prevention and control practice standard is to outline the minimum standards required to support safe work practices and help protect the health and safety of the public of Aotearoa New Zealand. It also provides podiatrists with access to standardised and regularly reviewed resources to enable them to implement effective infection prevention and control plans and practices.

### **Duty of patient care**

[The Health and Disability Commissioner \(Code of Health and Disability Services Consumers' Rights\) Regulations 1996](#) provides that every consumer has the right to have services provided with reasonable care and skill and that comply with legal, professional, ethical, and other relevant standards.

In accordance with the Principles and Standards for the Practice of Podiatry in Aotearoa New Zealand (PSPPANZ), practitioners must identify and manage health and safety risks within your practice environment.

In accordance with the Podiatrists Board Ethical Codes and Standards of Conduct, practitioners should at all times act in the best interests of their patients and practice in accordance with acceptable professional standards.

A key element of safe practice is preventing the transmission of disease-causing (infectious) agents, such as bacteria, viruses and fungi, among all individuals in the practice environment. The routine use of infection prevention and control measures, and an understanding of how infectious agents are transmitted, are critical in preventing this transmission and essential in ensuring people receive safe care.

Practitioners have a clear responsibility to treat people fairly and without discrimination. They must not discriminate against people by refusing or compromising care on the grounds of a known or suspected infectious condition.

Practitioners also have an ethical obligation to address known failures or risks to people in relation to infection prevention and control. Inform the patient, in a timely manner, about a serious breach in the infection prevention and control measures, even if that event caused no harm to that person. Ensure the person is aware of the Code of Health and Disability Consumers' Rights and inform them of relevant complaints procedures.

## Practice Standards

The Infection Prevention and Control Practice Standard sets the minimum standards for safe practice and are listed below.

1	You must be knowledgeable about infection prevention and control systems and regularly refresh your knowledge.
2	Before any patient interaction, all podiatrists should assess the infectious risks posed to themselves, their colleagues, other patients, and visitors.
3	You must apply proper techniques for handwashing and use of alcohol-based hand-rub at the correct times and routinely practice other hand hygiene protective measures.
4	Select PPE before any health care activity based on an assessment of the likely risk of exposure to body substances or contaminated surfaces.
5	You must ensure the safe handling and disposal of sharps.
6	You must ensure all contaminated reusable items are cleaned and dried appropriately.
7	You must ensure the safe handling and disposal of hazardous and controlled waste.
8	You must minimise the degree and extent of contamination within a contaminated zone and avoid spread of contamination to a clean zone.

9	<p>You must ensure you achieve and maintain a safe and clean clinical environment by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• effective cleaning of all surfaces, equipment and instruments.</li> <li>• discarding single-use items at point of use.</li> </ul>
10	<p>You must follow appropriate transmission-based precautions when the patient has an infectious condition that cannot be contained by standard precautions alone and treatment cannot be deferred. If you are unable to defer treatment or follow transmission-based precautions, you must refer appropriately.</p>
11	<p>You must manage contaminated items being sent off-site in a way that protects safety of people and avoids environmental contamination.</p>

## Useful Resources:

Allied Health Services Sector Standard NZS 8171:2005 - Section 5.5 of this Standard relates to Infection Control. <https://www.standards.govt.nz/shop/nzs-81712005>

Ngā Paerewa Health and Disability Services Standard NZS 8134:2021 - Section 5.2 of this Standard relates to Infection Control. <https://www.standards.govt.nz/shop/nzs-81342021>

Reprocessing of reusable medical devices and other devices in health and non-health related facilities AS 5369:2023. As of 15 December 2023, both AS/NZS 4187:2014 and AS/NZ 4815-2006 were replaced by AS 5369:2023. Aotearoa New Zealand representatives were involved in the development of AS 5369:2023 and it reflects current best practice. While this is an Australian standard, it is the most up-to-date version of the previous standards and should be utilised in the absence of an Aotearoa New Zealand-specific standard. See NZSSA Statement - <https://nzssa.org/2024/01/28/standard-as-5369/>

Reprocessing of reusable medical devices and other devices in health and non-health related facilities AS 5369:2023 can be accessed here. <https://store.standards.org.au/product/as-5369-2023>

New Zealand Sterile Sciences Association (NZSSA) - <https://nzssa.org/>

Blood and Body Fluid Exposure (BBFE) – Needlestick Injury Guidance – [Needlestick injury information – Awanui Labs - Wellington](#)

Te Whatu Ora | Health New Zealand Infection Prevention and Control - <https://www.tewhatuora.govt.nz/health-services-and-programmes/infection-prevention-and-control/>

Podiatry Board of Australia Infection Control self-audit tool -

<https://www.podiatryboard.gov.au/Policies-Codes-Guidelines.aspx#infection-control>

World Health Organisation (WHO) Infection Prevention and Control -

<https://www.who.int/teams/integrated-health-services/infection-prevention-control>

The New Zealand Pandemic Plan; A framework for action, Interim update July 2024 -

[https://www.health.govt.nz/system/files/2024-07/interim\\_nz\\_pandemic\\_plan\\_v2.pdf](https://www.health.govt.nz/system/files/2024-07/interim_nz_pandemic_plan_v2.pdf)

HRANZ Joint Guidelines for registered health care workers on transmissible major viral infections -

<https://www.podiatristsboard.org.nz/Portals/0/Uploads/TMVI%20-%20HRANZ%20guidelines.pdf>

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