Division of Oral Health
Summary of Infection Prevention Practices in Dental Settings
BASIC EXPECTATIONS FOR SAFE CARE

Centers for Disease Control and Prevention
National Center for Chronic Disease Prevention and Health Promotion

PRESENTER'S SCRIPT

Module 1 Introduction

SLIDE 1

This slide series was created to complement the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention's (CDC's) publication titled, *Summary of Infection Prevention Practices in Dental Settings: Basic Expectations for Safe Care*. This publication was developed to help increase adherence with established infection prevention practices.

This slide series provides an overview of the basic principles of infection prevention and control that form the basis for CDC recommendations for dental health care settings. It can be used to educate and train infection prevention coordinators, educators, consultants, and other dental health care personnel (DHCP).

The *Summary of Infection Prevention Practices in Dental Settings: Basic Expectations for Safe Care* can be found at www.cdc.gov/oralhealth/infectioncontrol/pdf/safe-care2.pdf.

SLIDE 2

This slide series is divided into 10 modules. The first module provides an introduction to infection prevention for dental settings. It is followed by nine additional slide modules – one for each element of standard precautions, as well as for dental unit water quality and program evaluation.

SLIDE 3

During the provision of dental treatment, both patients and DCHP can be exposed to a variety of pathogens or disease-causing organisms through contact with blood, oral and respiratory secretions, and contaminated equipment. Following recommended infection prevention procedures can prevent transmission of infectious organisms among patients and DHCP.

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Bloodborne pathogens include viruses such as hepatitis B virus (HBV), hepatitis C virus (HCV), and human immunodeficiency virus (HIV). These viruses:

- Can be transmitted to patients and DHCP in health care settings.

- Can produce chronic infection.

- Are often carried by persons unaware of their infection.

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Transmission may occur from the patient to DHCP, from DHCP to patient, and from patient to patient.

As shown by the larger arrow, DHCP are frequently exposed to blood and blood-contaminated saliva during dental procedures, which puts them at greater risk of infection by a bloodborne pathogen than patients.

SLIDE 6

Standard precautions are considered to be the primary strategy, or first tier, to prevent transmission of infectious agents among patients and DHCP. They are intended to be applied to the care of all patients in all health care settings, regardless of the suspected or confirmed presence of an infectious agent. There are seven main elements of standard precautions. The elements include:

- Hand hygiene.

- Using personal protective equipment.

- Respiratory hygiene/cough etiquette.

- Sharps safety, including engineering and work practice controls.

- Safe injection practices.

- Sterilization and disinfection of instruments and devices.

- Cleaning and disinfecting environmental surfaces.

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When standard precautions alone cannot prevent transmission, they are supplemented with transmission-based precautions. This second tier of infection prevention is used when patients have diseases that can spread through contact, droplet, or airborne routes—such as skin contact, sneezing, or coughing—and are always used in addition to standard precautions. More than one transmission category may apply because some diseases are spread by multiple routes of transmission. Examples of precautions may include patient placement (e.g., isolation), respiratory protection (e.g., N-95 masks) for DHCP, or postponement of nonemergency dental procedures.

For additional information, readers can consult the CDC *2007 Guideline for Isolation Precautions: Preventing Transmission of Infectious Agents in Healthcare Settings*, available at www.cdc.gov/hicpac/pdf/isolation/ Isolation2007.pdf.

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Infection prevention must be made a priority in any dental setting. At least one person with training in infection prevention—the infection prevention coordinator—should be responsible for developing written infection prevention policies and procedures that are tailored to their setting and reassessed on a regular basis (e.g., annually) or according to state or federal requirements.

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Education and training should be provided for all new staff during orientation to the dental health care setting, when new tasks or procedures are introduced, and at least annually. Training should address the safety of both DHCP and patients.

SLIDE 10

Infection prevention programs should also address occupational health needs, including vaccination of DHCP, management of exposures in personnel that require postexposure prophylaxis or work restrictions, and adherence with the Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) bloodborne pathogens standard. Referral arrangements for medical services can be made with qualified health care personnel in an occupational health program of a hospital, with educational institutions, or with health care facilities that offer personnel health services. Health records must be kept in accordance with all applicable state and federal laws.

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In an effort to increase adherence with established infection prevention practices, CDC's Division of Oral Health (DOH), in conjunction with many colleagues across the agency, has developed a user-friendly summary of key recommendations relevant to dental settings. The summary draws heavily from the *uidelines for Infection Control in Dental Health-Care Settings – 2003*, which remains the standard of practice for clinical dentistry.

The summary document reinforces the importance of standard precautions as the key to preventing transmission of infectious agents in clinical dental settings. This document also provides links to full guidelines, other selected CDC recommendations published since 2003, and source documents that readers can reference for more detailed background information and recommendations.

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The objectives of the summary are to:

- Provide basic infection prevention principles and recommendations for dental health care settings.

- Reaffirm standard precautions as the foundation for preventing transmission of infectious agents during patient care in all dental health care settings.

- Provide links to full guidelines and source documents that readers can reference for more detailed background information and recommendations.

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The contents of the summary include the introduction and objectives, a section on each of the fundamental elements needed to prevent transmission of infectious agents in dental settings, a section on risk assessment, and a conclusion. The summary also includes a list of source documents where readers can go for more information and three appendices, which will be described next.

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Readers can explore the following three appendices for additional tools, resources, and information:

- Appendix A: Infection Prevention Checklist for Dental Settings: Basic Expectations for Safe Care

- Appendix B: Relevant Recommendations Published by CDC Since 2003

- Appendix C: Selected References and Additional Resources by Topic Area.

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In addition to the summary document, you can also find:

- Separate printable version of the Infection Prevention Checklist for Dental Settings.

- Fillable PDF format of the Infection Prevention Checklist for Dental Settings.

- Mobile App version of the Infection Prevention Checklist for Dental Settings.

- Compendium document: *Recommendations from the Guidelines for Infection Control in Dental Health-Care Settings – 2003*

All documents are available on the DOH website at www.cdc.gov/OralHealth/infectioncontrol/guidelines/index.htm.

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CDC recommends that dental settings establish routine evaluation of their infection prevention program, including evaluation of DHCP adherence to infection prevention practices. To help with evaluation activities, the summary includes a companion checklist (Appendix A) that can be used to periodically evaluate adherence with correct infection prevention practices. The checklist includes two sections – one to evaluate policies and practices and one to observe and evaluate DHCP during the performance of their duties.

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An electronic fillable version of the checklist is also available. Users can type their notes into the form and save as documentation of their evaluation activities.

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In addition to the fillable PDF format, CDC has developed a mobile app version of the *Infection Prevention Checklist for Dental Settings*. CDC DentalCheck, which is available for all mobile iOS and android compatible devices and can be downloaded for free through the iTunes App Store and Google Play Store, provides DHCP access to an interactive version of the Checklist in a portable, easy-to-use, and streamlined format.

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CDC DentalCheck allows users to move through the checklist by selecting Yes or No to acknowledge adherence with a list of administrative policies or observed practices. The app also provides access to basic infection prevention principles, background information, and key CDC recommendations for each topic area. The resources section includes links to full guidelines and source documents that users can reference for more detailed background and recommendations,
and users can export their results to document their evaluation activities.

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Another available resource is a reformatted, easy-to-print list of the recommendations from the *Guidelines for Infection Control in Dental Health-Care Settings—2003*. In this document, the recommendations began on page 39. CDC reformatted this information so that it is easy to print and can be used as a resource in the dental setting.

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Infection prevention should be a priority in all dental settings. Transmissions as a result of dental care are rare, and those that occurred were likely the result of lack of adherence with infection prevention recommendations. Strict adherence to standard precautions is the primary strategy for prevention. The *Summary of Infection Prevention Practices in Dental Health Care Settings: Basic Expectations for Safe Care* was created to help improve DHCP's understanding of and adherence with established infection prevention recommendations.

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For more information on CDC guidelines for dental settings and CDC's summary, see:

- CDC. *Guidelines for Infection Control in Dental Health-Care Settings—2003* at www.cdc.gov/mmwr/PDF/rr/rr5217.pdf.

- CDC. *Summary of Infection Prevention Practices in Dental Settings: Basic Expectations for Safe Care* at www.cdc.gov/oralhealth/infectioncontrol/pdf/safe-care2.pdf.

- Organization for Safety, Asepsis and Prevention. Interactive Online Article – Understanding CDC's Summary of Infection Prevention Practices in Dental Settings at www.osap.org/?page=SDVCDEA.

- Organization for Safety, Asepsis and Prevention. New CDC Tool for Dentistry webinar at zoom.us/recording/play/H78wsrry0pLxZyq-qt2uR9_s_UWTPAEYeQAYdMsvOw6NozvGEDwEzfnWzHf-Tftw.