

Infection Control Assessment and Response (ICAR) Tool for General Infection Prevention and Control (IPC) Across Settings

Section 3: Observation Form - Water Exposure

Water Exposure: This form is intended to guide observations about water exposure risks. The form is intended for use in acute care facilities, long-term care facilities, and outpatient healthcare facilities. It is not intended for use in hemodialysis facilities; if conducting an assessment of a hemodialysis facility, refer to the resources at: [Audit Tools and Checklists | Dialysis Safety | CDC](#)

NOTE: This module does not apply to assessment of dental water lines.

Water Exposure ICAR Interview Questions (Section 2 Module 11) and Observation Forms for other IPC topics (Section 3) are available on the ICAR web page: <https://www.cdc.gov/hai/prevent/infection-control-assessment-tools.html>



**U.S. Department of
Health and Human Services**
Centers for Disease
Control and Prevention

Water Exposure Observations:

This portion of the tool is intended for the direct observation of water exposure practices. Ideally at least three patient care areas are observed.

Location/Unit 1: _____

Ice machine

Ice chest room

1. Is the ice dispenser area uncluttered, clean, and free of signs of rodents or insects?

Yes

No

Not observed but endorsed by frontline staff

Not observed and not endorsed by frontline staff

Medication Preparation area

2. Are patient care supplies protected from splashing (e.g., via splashguards or distance)?

Yes

No

Not observed but endorsed by frontline staff

Not observed and not endorsed by frontline staff

3. When taps are running, do countertops and care supplies remain free from splashing?

Yes

No

Not observed but endorsed by frontline staff

Not observed and not endorsed by frontline staff

4. Are faucets offset from drains?

Yes

No

Not observed but endorsed by frontline staff

Not observed and not endorsed by frontline staff

Soiled Utility Room

5. Do all hoppers have a cover that can be closed before flushing?

Yes

No

Not observed but endorsed by frontline staff

Not observed and not endorsed by frontline staff

6. Does the door to the soiled utility remain closed when hoppers are flushed?

Yes

No

Not observed but endorsed by frontline staff

Not observed and not endorsed by frontline staff

Communal Shower Room

Communal showers are not used, skip to "Patients or Resident Rooms"

7. Are shower chairs constructed of non-porous materials?

Yes

No

Not observed but endorsed by frontline staff

Not observed and not endorsed by frontline staff

8. Are shower trolleys and mats stored in a manner that allows for drying of all surfaces?

- Yes
- No
- Not observed but endorsed by frontline staff
- Not observed and not endorsed by frontline staff

Patient or Resident Rooms

9. Do sinks have drains offset from faucet stream?

- Yes
- No
- Not observed but endorsed by frontline staff
- Not observed and not endorsed by frontline staff

10. Are patient care supplies protected from splashing (e.g., via splashguards or distance)?

- Yes
- No
- Not observed but endorsed by frontline staff
- Not observed and not endorsed by frontline staff

11. Is toilet equipped with a lid?

- Yes
- No
- Not observed but endorsed by frontline staff
- Not observed and not endorsed by frontline staff

12. Is there any evidence of water intrusion in patient room, especially under patient sinks or around fold commodes?

- Yes
- No
- Not observed but endorsed by frontline staff
- Not observed and not endorsed by frontline staff

13. *If a ventilator is in use:* Are water traps on ventilator circuits below the level of the patient?

- Yes
- No
- Not observed but endorsed by frontline staff
- Not observed and not endorsed by frontline staff
- No ventilator in use

14. *If a ventilator is in use:* Are circuits kept closed during disconnection?

- Yes
- No
- Not observed but endorsed by frontline staff
- Not observed and not endorsed by frontline staff
- No ventilator in use

Notes

Location/Unit 2: _____

Ice machine

Ice chest room

1. Is the ice dispenser area uncluttered, clean, and free of signs of rodents or insects?
 - Yes
 - No
 - Not observed but endorsed by frontline staff
 - Not observed and not endorsed by frontline staff

Medication Preparation area

2. Are patient care supplies protected from splashing (e.g., via splashguards or distance)?
 - Yes
 - No
 - Not observed but endorsed by frontline staff
 - Not observed and not endorsed by frontline staff
3. When taps are running, do countertops and care supplies remain free from splashing?
 - Yes
 - No
 - Not observed but endorsed by frontline staff
 - Not observed and not endorsed by frontline staff
4. Are faucets offset from drains?
 - Yes
 - No
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 - Not observed and not endorsed by frontline staff

Soiled Utility Room

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Communal Shower Room

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Patient or Resident Rooms

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Notes

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