

Excerpts from Appendix PP (F441) 42CFR 483.65 Infection Control

Transmission-based Precautions

Transmission-based precautions are used for residents who are known to be, or suspected of being infected or colonized with infectious agents, including pathogens that require additional control measures to prevent transmission. In nursing homes, it is appropriate to individualize decisions regarding resident placement (shared or private), balancing infection risks with the need for more than one occupant in a room, the presence of risk factors that increase the likelihood of transmission, and the potential for adverse psychological impact on the infected or colonized resident.⁹⁴

It is essential both to communicate transmission-based precautions to all health care personnel, and for personnel to comply with requirements. Pertinent signage (i.e., isolation precautions) and verbal reporting between staff can enhance compliance with transmission-based precautions to help minimize the transmission of infections within the facility.

It is important to use the standard approaches, as defined by the CDC for transmission-based precautions: airborne, contact, and droplet precautions.⁹⁵ The category of transmission-based precaution determines the type of PPE to be used. Communication (e.g., verbal reports, signage) regarding the particular type of precaution to be utilized is important. When transmission-based precautions are in place, PPE should be readily available. Proper hand washing remains a key preventive measure, regardless of the type of transmission-based precaution employed.

Transmission-based precautions are maintained for as long as necessary to prevent the transmission of infection. It is appropriate to use the least restrictive approach possible that adequately protects the resident and others. Maintaining isolation longer than necessary may adversely affect psychosocial well-being. The facility should document in the medical record the rationale for the selected transmission-based precautions.

Contact Precautions

Contact transmission risk requires the use of contact precautions to prevent infections that are spread by person-to-person contact. Contact precautions require the use of appropriate PPE, including a gown and gloves upon entering the contact precaution room. Prior to leaving the contact precaution room the PPE is removed and hand hygiene is performed.

Depending on the situation, options for residents on contact precautions may include the following: a private room, cohorting, or sharing a room with a roommate with limited risk factors (e.g., without indwelling devices, without pressure ulcers and not immunocompromised).

Implementation of Transmission-Based Precautions

It is important that facility staff clearly identify the type of precautions and the appropriate PPE to be used in the care of the resident. The PPE should be readily available near the entrance to the resident's room. Signage can be posted on the resident's door instructing visitors to see the nurse before entering.

It is not always possible to identify prospectively residents needing transmission-based precautions. The diagnosis of many infections is based on clinical signs and symptoms, but often requires laboratory confirmation. However, since laboratory tests (especially those that depend on culture techniques) may require two or more days to complete, transmission-based precautions may need to be implemented while test results are pending, based on the clinical presentation and the likely category of pathogens.⁹⁹ The use of appropriate transmission-based precautions when a resident develops symptoms or signs of a transmissible infection or arrives at a nursing home with symptoms of an infection (pending laboratory confirmation) reduces transmission opportunities. However, once it is confirmed that the resident is no longer a risk for transmitting the infection, removing transmission-based precautions avoids unnecessary social isolation.

The State Operations Manual is available online:

http://www.cms.gov/Regulations-and-Guidance/Guidance/Manuals/downloads/som107ap_pp_guidelines_ltc.pdf