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Supplies Management in IPC SOP

Standard Operating Procedures for Infection Prevention & Control

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Introduction

Supplies are the backbone of Infection Prevention and Control (IPC), forming the foundation upon which all strategies are built. Without sufficient and timely availability, IPC measures remain theoretical and impossible to apply effectively. Proper supply management reduces the risks of shortages and interruptions, ensuring the continuity of essential practices such as hand hygiene, environmental cleaning, and the use of personal protective equipment, thereby safeguarding patient safety and strengthening the resilience of the healthcare system.

Introduction

Supplies are not merely supportive tools but strategic resources that determine the success or failure of IPC programs. Effective supply chain management, guided by clear Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs), minimizes waste, enhances efficiency, and ensures compliance with national and international standards. By integrating supplies within the SOP framework, healthcare institutions can achieve sustainability in their practices, protecting patients, healthcare workers, and the wider community from preventable infections.

Introduction

The Safe Supply Chain for Infection Control (SSIC) Initiative aims to enhance supply chain efficiency, ensure sustainable availability of essential infection control supplies, and strengthen healthcare facilities' readiness by improving supply management, reducing waste, and ensuring compliance with the national & international standards.

SSIC

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Vision

To establish a national recognized model for safe, resilient, and efficient infection prevention & control supply chains that serve as a first line of defense in healthcare settings—protecting patients and healthcare workers at every stage of care.

Mission

To ensure the availability & sustainability of infection prevention & control supplies through implementing structured processes, fostering integration, and enabling effective collaboration across all relevant stakeholders.

Goal

To establish a proactive and sustainable system that guarantees uninterrupted access to high-quality Infection Prevention and Control (IPC) supplies across all healthcare facilities in Saudi Arabia — aiming to prevent healthcare-associated infections (HAIs), optimize resource utilization, and enhance emergency preparedness.

SOP and Supplies: The Connection

Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs) provide a clear framework that outlines what needs to be done, who is responsible, and how each action should be implemented. Yet, these procedures remain theoretical if the required supplies are not available.A reliable and well-managed supply chain ensures that every step of the SOP can be carried out effectively and without delay.

SOP as the Framework for Supplies

SOPs unify infection prevention practices across all levels of healthcare—hospital, cluster, regional, and central. They establish accountability by clearly defining responsibilities for stock control, ordering processes, and reporting requirements. Through this structure, SOPs link infection control strategies directly with supply chain systems, ensuring that resources are managed efficiently, consistently, and in alignment with national standards.

Integration Between SOP and Supplies

SOPs define the required actions, while supplies make those actions executable. Inventory systems, whether manual or electronic, are crucial to maintaining continuity in IPC implementation. The SOP establishes escalation pathways for shortages: hospitals report stock issues, clusters redistribute available resources, regional levels provide additional support, and the central authority intervenes when necessary. This structured integration ensures that IPC strategies are applied seamlessly and without disruption across the healthcare system.

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The Result of SOP-Supply Integration

When SOPs exist without supplies, they remain theoretical and impossible to implement effectively. On the other hand, supplies without SOPs lead to disorganization, inefficiency, and wasted resources. The integration of both creates sustainable IPC programs, reduces the risk of healthcare-associated infections, and strengthens overall patient safety. By embedding supply management within the SOP, supply chains become a strategic foundation that elevates infection prevention from reactive measures to a proactive, sustainable system.

Hospital Level

- Establish manual or electronic systems for inventory tracking.
- Implement PAR-level monitoring for ICUs to detect low stock early.
- Maintain detailed inventory lists with MOH/NUPCO codes.
- Reorder supplies promptly through approved platforms (Mawared, NUPCO, Etimad).
- Escalate unresolved issues to the cluster representative.

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Cluster Level

- Consolidate inventory data from all hospitals within the cluster.
- Create a centralized list to track availability of IPC supplies.
- Redistribute resources between hospitals to cover urgent needs.
- Monitor open requests in the ticketing system and support hospitals.
- Submit regular reports on supply usage and challenges to the regional level.

Regional Level

- Oversee supply chain processes across multiple clusters.
- Ensure equal access to IPC supplies for all hospitals in the region.
- Identify gaps or delays in procurement and distribution.
- Provide feedback, technical support, and coordinate with higher authorities.
- Compile and forward detailed reports to the Central Authority.

Central Authority

- Review and update the list of critical supply items.
- Ensure all supplies carry correct MOH/NUPCO codes.
- Coordinate with national supply departments for rapid distribution.
- Address systemic challenges in procurement or logistics.
- Escalate unresolved shortages for urgent national-level intervention.

Conclusion

Supplies are essential to sustain IPC programs, as they represent the foundation for maintaining effective infection prevention measures. Their impact depends on strong coordination across all levels of the healthcare system—hospital, cluster, regional, and central—ensuring that resources are managed consistently and without interruption. Effective supply chain management plays a critical role in reducing infection risks, while continuous monitoring strengthens both sustainability and resilience, guaranteeing that patient safety measures remain uninterrupted at all times.

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The End

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Let’s Practice

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Let’s Discuss