Infection control guidance

HTM 01-05 guidance requires that every practice should be capable of meeting the essential quality requirements. *Dental Tribune* rounds up some important points.

**Health Technical Memorandum 01-05** is intended to progressively raise the quality of decontamination work in primary care dental services by covering the decontamination of reusable instruments within dental facilities.

Patients deserve to be treated in a safe and clean environment with consistent standards of care every time they receive treatment. It is essential that the risk of person-to-person transmission of infections be minimised as much as possible.

Here are some ways this can be done.

**Essential quality requirements**

- Regardless of the technology used, the cleaned instruments, prior to sterilisation, should be free of visible contaminants when inspected. Instruments should be reprocessed using a validated decontamination cycle including: cleaning/washing; a validated steam steriliser, and at the end of the reprocessing cycle they should be in a sterilised state.
- Reprocessed dental instruments should be stored in such a way as to ensure restraint of microbiological recolonisation. These measures should be backed by careful controls on the storage times to which instruments that are less frequently used are subject.
- Practices should audit their decontamination processes quarterly using an audit tool (the use of the Infection Prevention Society/ DH audit tool that accompanies this document is strongly recommended).
- Practices should have in place a detailed plan on how the provision of decontamination services will move towards best practice.

**Best practice**

To demonstrate best practice, further improvements are required in three main areas:

- A cleaning process that should be carried out using a validated automated washer-disinfector.
- The environment in which decontamination is carried out should be such as to minimise the risk of recontamination of instruments and the possibility of generating aerosols, which may reach patients or unprotected staff. For best practice, the decontamination facilities should be clearly separate from the clinical treatment area. This implies the use of a separate room or rooms for the accommodation of clean (output) and dirty (input) work. In these facilities, the rooms should be used for this purpose only and access should be restricted to those staff performing decontamination duties. However, plant and equipment not necessarily used for decontamination may be located in these rooms (but preferably in the dirty room) provided it can reasonably be shown that the devices do not conflict with the requirement for a clean environment.

- The storage of reprocessed dental instruments in a simple but carefully designed facility clearly separate from the clinical treatment area is an important best practice improvement. The facility should take account of the need to reduce recolonisation of sterilised instruments and also make the identification/selection of instruments easy. This storage facility will ordinarily be part of the clean area within the decontamination room(s).

For a full report on the guidance, visit the Department of Health website at [www.dh.gov.uk](http://www.dh.gov.uk).

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The MSc in Endodontics has been designed to develop your knowledge and confidence in this complex discipline, enabling you to deliver a high quality service. As a part-time course spread over 3-5 years, it offers you the flexibility to continue working in clinical practice while studying. You will study a wide range of topics from sterilisation and disinfection procedures to tissue regeneration and preventing cross infections.

The closing date for applications is **15th October 2009**. Applicants should be registered with the General Dental Council and have full professional indemnity insurance.

Contact Anne Duhig-Reader for further information, quoting reference code: C0908F3

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SPRAYNET 500 is perfect for cleaning and disinfecting all surfaces and hoses. The surfaces and grip of the handpieces are easily cleaned; screws are concealed to avoid possible areas where debris and germs can accumulate; cleanliness has always been a feature of Switzerland and this has become integral with the design of instruments all of which are manufactured to European Standards. Bien-Air is confident they provide the highest standards of safety.

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The issue 2 catalogue is now available to order, featuring over 1,000 commonly used items, it is packed full of money saving products and special bulk purchase offers. All products featured come with a full 100% money back guarantee.

Topdental also manufacture a range of infection control chemicals, which cover all requirements in a typical dental surgery environment. Items such as surface wipes through to water line treatments are available at competitive prices.

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Tough Infection Control with The Dental Directory

With the release of the updated HTM 01-05 government guidelines and the outbreak of the Swine-Flu H1N1 Virus, keeping abreast of the risk of cross infection been so at the forefront of your mind and so paramount for your dental practice.

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As of 6th July 2009, www.direct.gov.uk/swineflu

For our latest prices, full cross infection range and advice please call 0800 585 586 or visit www.dental-directory.co.uk

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For further information please contact Bien-Air on 01506 711 505 or visit www.bienair.com

For our latest prices, full cross infection range and advice please call 0800 585 586 or visit www.dental-directory.co.uk

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