

SOP: Isolation Precautions and Patient Cohorting

This SOP details **isolation precautions and patient cohorting** protocols to prevent the transmission of infectious agents within healthcare settings. It covers patient assessment, appropriate use of isolation methods, cohorting strategies based on infection status, staff assignment, personal protective equipment (PPE) requirements, environmental cleaning, and monitoring adherence. The goal is to minimize cross-contamination, protect patients and healthcare workers, and optimize infection control practices effectively.

1. Purpose

To provide standardized procedures for implementing isolation precautions and cohorting of patients, reducing infection transmission in healthcare environments.

2. Scope

This SOP applies to all clinical staff, healthcare workers, and support personnel involved in direct or indirect patient care within the facility.

3. Definitions

- **Isolation Precautions:** Infection prevention measures applied to patients with suspected or confirmed infectious diseases.
- **Cohorting:** Grouping patients with the same infection to limit spread.
- **PPE:** Personal Protective Equipment such as gloves, gowns, masks, and eye protection.

4. Procedure

1. **Patient Assessment**
 - Screen all patients for symptoms/signs of infection upon admission and as indicated.
 - Document infection status (suspected/confirmed/ruled out).
2. **Type of Isolation Precautions**

Transmission Category	Example Pathogens	Precautions
Contact	MRSA, C. difficile	Gloves, Gown
Droplet	Influenza, Meningococcus	Mask, Gloves, Gown
Airborne	Tuberculosis, Measles	N95/Respirator, Negative Pressure Room

3. **Patient Cohorting**
 - Place single infection cases in single rooms when possible.
 - Cohort patients with the same pathogen in designated multi-bed rooms or wards.
 - Do not cohort immunocompromised patients with infectious cases.
4. **Staff Assignment**
 - Assign dedicated staff to cohorted/in isolation patients to limit cross-contamination.
 - Staff must avoid simultaneous care of infected and non-infected patients when possible.
5. **PPE Requirements**
 - Don appropriate PPE before entering isolation/cohort areas.
 - Remove and dispose of PPE correctly after patient care.
6. **Environmental Cleaning**
 - Follow enhanced cleaning protocols for isolation and cohort areas.
 - Disinfect reusable equipment between each patient.
7. **Monitoring and Compliance**
 - Audit isolation/cohorting and PPE compliance regularly.
 - Provide feedback and retraining as needed.

5. Documentation

- Record isolation status and type in patient medical records.
- Document staff assignments and cleaning logs daily.

- Maintain audit results for review.

6. References

- CDC. [Guideline for Isolation Precautions](#).
- WHO. [Core Components of Infection Prevention and Control](#).

7. Review & Responsibility

- This SOP should be reviewed annually or as guidelines change.
- Responsible: Infection Control Committee/Lead