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Furniture and Other Non-Medical Items in Patient/Resident/Client Care Areas

Purpose

This document is to provide Infection Prevention and Control (IPAC) recommendations for all healthcare settings when planning and choosing **furniture and non-medical items**; surfaces and finishes in **patient care areas**.

Recommendations apply to new purchases of furnishings, surfaces, finishes, loaned, borrowed, or **donated equipment** (see additional recommendations).

It is essential that all materials and non-medical items purchased in healthcare settings meet IPAC requirements for cleaning and disinfecting. This applies to all furnishings and non-medical items, surfaces, and finishes.

Decision Making

- Review **Appendix A: Key Questions: Furniture and Non-Medical Item Selection Checklist**
- Consult with Interior Health (IH) stakeholders to determine whether purchases meet essential criteria prior to decisions on furniture and non-medical item purchases.
 - Stakeholders include: IPAC, Capital Procurement and Equipment, Environmental Services (EVS), and Workplace Health and Safety (WH&S).
- Choose the most appropriate furniture and non-medical items for the space and intended purpose. Weigh the risks and benefits associated with the surfaces, fabrics, finishes, cleaning and disinfection and/or rinsing instructions and potential non-compliance with manufacturer's instructions for use (MIFU).
- Confirm that all new or replacement furniture is **commercial grade** and meets IH requirements including fire codes and safety standards.
- Furniture should be inspected and confirmed to be safe for use before it is accepted into the facility
 - E.g., clean and intact; free of bed bugs or other pests; TV, electronics and appliances meet safety standards. Items that are soiled or in disrepair should be discarded.

IPAC Recommendations:

For areas with moderate to high risk of environmental microbial contamination. This includes all clinical areas such as patient care areas, waiting rooms, clinical offices, and public spaces in healthcare settings.

General Principles:

- Identify and discard **or** remove and repair damaged items that can no longer be cleaned and disinfected.
- Replace worn, stained or torn items as these items may support the growth of microorganisms.
- Do not move furnishings from clinical to non-clinical areas and vice versa. Do not accept donations of used furniture and other non-medical items for use in patient care areas.

Furniture/non-medical items
<p>Surfaces and finishes that are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Compatible with approved hospital grade cleaner and disinfectant products. Review MIFU. • Easy to clean and disinfect and can withstand repeated cleaning and disinfecting without causing damage or voiding warranty • Seamless and without crevices • Non-porous with smooth surfaces • Fluid resistant <p>DO NOT select surfaces that are difficult to clean and disinfect such as:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Carpet • Cork boards • Paper and natural fibre products • Woven fabrics and fabric-covered products • Wood and wood-based products with veneers or painted surfaces • Surfaces that may become damaged or wear with repeated cleaning and disinfection
Fabric
<p>Fabric used for patient care, or for use on patients should be single patient use or washable between multi-patient uses (e.g., Slings, Holter monitor covers, mobility belts, etc.)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Resistant to tears, punctures, stains, and damage • Resistant to microbial growth (consult with IPAC to determine antimicrobial claims) • Easy to maintain and repair

Furniture/non-medical items

Items that require IPAC consultation prior to purchase (not an exclusive list):

- Desks and ergonomic accessories
- Seating, including built-in benching
- Over bed tables and bedside
- Bedside tables
- Carts and trolleys
- Paper towel and other dispensers
- Flooring and finishes
- Televisions and accessories
- Storage cabinets
- Paper towel and toilet paper dispensers
- Window treatments

Definitions

Non-medical items are objects in the patient area or healthcare setting that are not medical devices, i.e., used to assess, diagnose, or treat a patient.

Patient means anyone who receives or has requested care or services from Interior Health including residents, and clients.

Patient/resident/client care area means anywhere in a healthcare setting (e.g., acute care, long term care, ambulatory, supportive living, respite care, urgent care, etc.) where a patient may be or where direct care is provided. This includes nursing stations, waiting rooms, patient lounges and common areas.

Donated furniture or equipment means a gift of an item, often used, and no longer required by a family's loved one (e.g., wheelchairs, scooters, recliners, speciality beds and/or mattresses, etc.).

Furniture and other non-medical items means objects in the patient area or healthcare environment that are located in patient areas or patient environment and/or accessible to patients and are *not* medical devices that are used to diagnose or treat a patient.

Commercial grade means furniture and non-medical items that are graded using industry standards to meet fire safety standards and other applicable manufacturing, installation, and operational standards.

Capital Procurement and Equipment means the department responsible for facilities-related resources and includes the Furnishings and Equipment Planning and Space Management teams. These teams provide expertise for selecting furnishings within commercial and healthcare facilities conforming to the require

For more information regarding the purchase of new medical equipment and cleaning and disinfecting practices refer to following resources:

[British-Columbia-Best-Practices-for-Environmental-Cleaning-for-Prevention-and-Control-of-Infections-in-All-Healthcare-Settings-and-Programs.pdf \(picnet.ca\)](https://www.picnet.ca/docs/default-source/Infection-control/Infection-control-reports/2017-2018/2017-2018-ICR-Appendix-1-BC-Best-Practices-for-Environmental-Cleaning-for-Prevention-and-Control-of-Infections-in-All-Healthcare-Settings-and-Programs.pdf)

References

1. Adapted from Alberta Health Services. (2022). [*Selection of Furniture and other Non-Medical Items for Patient Areas*](#)
2. Public Health Ontario [PIDAC]. (2018). *Best Practices for Environmental Cleaning for Prevention and Control of Infections in All Health Care Settings*.
https://www.publichealthontario.ca/-/media/Documents/B/2018/bp-environmental-cleaning.pdf?rev=4b78a8dee04a439384bf4e95697f5ab2&sc_lang=en
3. CSA (Canadian Standards Association) Standards CSA Z8000-18 National Standard of Canada, Canadian healthcare facilities, (2018). <https://online-viewer.techstreet.com/virtualviewer/>

Appendix A: - Key Questions: Furniture and Non-Medical Item Selection

Checklist:

May be used by end users to guide purchases.

REQUEST AND PRODUCT INFORMATION	
Type of Request: _____ Purchase: _____	Request Priority: Routine <input type="checkbox"/> Urgent <input type="checkbox"/>
Date Started: _____	Date Completed: _____
Requesting Manager and Department: _____	Phone: _____
IPAC Review: Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>	Phone: _____
Capital Procurement and Equipment Contact: _____	Phone: _____
Name of Furniture Requested: _____	
Manufacturer: _____	Vendor/Distributor: _____
Environmental Services has been contacted regarding cleaning and disinfection of purchase: <input type="checkbox"/>	
Manufacturer instructions have been reviewed: <input type="checkbox"/>	

KEY QUESTIONS TO ASK BEFORE PURCHASE IF "NO" TO ANY OF THE QUESTIONS, CONTACT IPAC.				
YES	NO	N/A	CRITERIA	COMMENTS
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>		Is the furniture commercial grade?	
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>		Are the manufacturer's instructions included and is the product and is compatible with IH cleaning protocols and disinfectants?	
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>		Who will be responsible for cleaning and disinfecting and what is the schedule for cleaning and disinfection?	
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>		Does the furniture have movable parts, complex design or detailing making it difficult to clean?	
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>		If fabric is required to be purchased for patient care or use on patients, it must be one time use or is it washable between patients?	
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>		Is the surface/furniture durable enough to withstand repeated cleaning and disinfection and wear e.g., resistant to breakage, punctures, and tears?	
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>		Do we have the right supplies, equipment, and methods to clean and disinfect the purchase?	
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>		Does the product have antibacterial claims? If so, what?	
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>		Has a review of product information been completed?	
ADDITIONAL RECOMMENDATIONS				

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