



Crumlin | Temple Street | Tallaght | Connolly

CHI NURSING PRACTICE GUIDELINE ON INTIMATE CARE

Area of use:	All of organisation <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	CHI at Connolly <input type="checkbox"/>	CHI at Crumlin <input type="checkbox"/>
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1.0 Guideline statement

Intimate care is defined as 'care tasks associated with bodily functions, body products and personal hygiene, which demand direct or indirect contact with or exposure of the sexual parts of the body'. It is essential that the child's privacy and dignity are respected when carrying out intimate care. All individuals have the right to privacy, dignity and respect.

Care needs can be divided into personal care needs and intimate care needs.

2.0 Scope

All staff who care for children

Employees: All full-time, part-time and fixed term employees employed by Children's Health Ireland.

Agents: Agents may be employees of suppliers, volunteers, students on placement or any other individuals associated with Children's Health Ireland.

3.0 Procedures

Care needs can be divided into personal care needs and intimate care needs.

3.1 Personal care

Personal care involves carrying out, supporting and assisting children with their personal care. This can include:

1. Skin care and the application of any skin care medication
2. Support with eating/PEG feeding
3. Hair care
4. Washing of non-intimate body parts
5. Dressing and undressing
6. Shaving
7. Dental and oral care
8. Application of deodorant

Some children will require their personal care to be carried out in a specific manner, this should be reflected in the Nursing Assessment carried out at admission, specific information and care needs should be given by the parent/guardian.

3.2 Intimate Care

Definition: Intimate care is any care which involves washing or carrying out a procedure to intimate personal areas which most people usually carry out themselves but some children are unable to do because of their young age, physical difficulties or other special needs. Intimate care needs are associated with bodily functions, body products and personal hygiene that demand direct or indirect contact with, or exposure of the genitals.

The care associated with bodily functions and personal hygiene, which will require direct or indirect contact with intimate body parts. This can include activities such as:

- Dressing and undressing-underwear
- Assistance with toileting needs
- Changing incontinence wear
- Changing nappies
- Bathing and showering
- Washing intimate body parts
- Changing sanitary wear
- Inserting suppositories or pessaries
- Administering enemas
- Catheterisation
- Colostomy bag changes

3.3 Prior to the procedure

- Consider having a chaperone present to assist the child during the procedure. A child may wish to have a family member present.
- Explain the procedure to the child and parent/carer (NMBI, 2014). Some procedures will require the parents' consent and the child's assent (HSE, 2019). Consent from parents/guardian is required (HSE, 2019). This consent is sought when the procedure is explained to the child and parent in language they understand.
- It is worthwhile spending the time with the child and parent ensuring there is an understanding of the procedure. This will allay any fears and promote participation in the care activity (Wong, 2019). Some children will require assistance with all activities of living arising from learning difficulties, physical impairments and sensory impairment. Staff are required to attend to the safety and comfort of these children with the utmost respect ensuring privacy and dignity is adhered to.
- Consider the intimate care needs and whether it should be carried out by a person of the same gender. A chaperone is recommended if this is not possible.

3.4 During the procedure

- Ensure the child's privacy and dignity are respected using screens and curtains appropriately.
- Ask other staff not to come in and out of the room during the procedure.
- If the procedure is personal care, ensure the water is warm enough for washing.
- When carrying out care around bodily functions, ensure the nurse wears appropriate personal protection, i.e. gloves and aprons as required.

3.5 Following the procedure

- Ensure the child is left in a comfortable position following the procedure, care activity.
- Decontaminate hands and dispose of all items used appropriately (see local infection prevention and control guidelines).
- Document all the details of the activity in the child's healthcare record (see local infection prevention and control guidelines) (HSE, 2011)

4.0 Glossary of acronyms, terms and definitions

Intimate Care

Intimate care - is any care which involves washing or carrying out a procedure to intimate personal areas which most people usually carry out themselves but some children are unable to do because of their young age, physical difficulties or other special needs. Intimate care needs are associated with bodily functions, body products and personal hygiene that demand direct or indirect contact with, or exposure of the genitals.

Personal care- is the daily personal living tasks and private hygiene and toileting along with dressing and maintaining personal appearance.

5.0 Monitoring, audit and evaluation

This PPPG will be reviewed and updated at least every three years by the document author/owner, or earlier if required due to updated guidance, evidence or legislation. Compliance with key principles or procedures described within this PPPG will be audited using quality care metrics on a monthly basis.

6.0 Key stakeholders

The following key stakeholders were involved in developing and/or reviewing this document:

Name	Title	Department
Fionnuala O' Neill	NPDC	CHI Crumlin
Caroline O' Connor	NPDC	CHI Temple Street
Caitriona Dennehy	NPDC	CHI Tallaght
Susan Keane	NPDC	CHI Temple Street
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7.0 Communication and training

All approved PPPGs will be available on the Qpulse system and the hospital intranet. Heads of Department and Line Managers must ensure that their staff are aware of all PPGs relevant to their role and have access to same. Where required, training should be provided on the contents of this PPPG.

8.0 References and Bibliography

- Children's Health Ireland (CHI) (2021) *CHI One Site Nursing Practice Guideline on Chaperone Care*. CHI, Dublin, Ireland.
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- Health Service Executive (2011) *HSE Standards & Recommended Practices for Healthcare Records Management*. Dublin: Health Service Executive.
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- Nursing & Midwifery Board of Ireland (2014) *Code of Professional Conduct and Ethics for Registered Nurses and Registered Midwives*. Dublin: Nursing & Midwifery Board of Ireland.
- Nursing & Midwifery Board of Ireland (2015) *Scope of Nursing and Midwifery Practice Framework*. Dublin: Nursing & Midwifery Board of Ireland.
- Nursing and Midwifery Board of Ireland (2015) *Recording Clinical Practice Professional Guidance*, NMBI, Dublin, Ireland
- Royal College of Physicians in Ireland / Health Service Executive (2015) *Guidelines for hand hygiene in Irish Healthcare settings: Update of 2005 guidelines*. Dublin: HSE Health Protection Surveillance Centre