



INFECTION PREVENTION & CONTROL REUSE OF RAZORS COMMUNICATION FORM

PART 1: ISSUE & RECOMMENDATIONS

Issue:

There are instances when razors are being shared between patients/residents/clients (p/r/c) across the continuum of care. Safe practices are required to ensure shaving equipment is managed appropriately to prevent transmission of hospital-acquired infections among p/r/c.

Recommendations:

The WRHA Infection Prevention and Control Program provides the following recommendations:

1. Do not share straight-blade razors (disposable or re-useable) between p/r/c.
2. When a p/r/c is unable to provide his/her own razor, provide a disposable single-person use razor, OR allow use of an electrical razor with disposable or replacement heads.
3. Label each p/r/c razor (whether personal or provided from the facility; whether straight blade or electrical) with his/her name as appropriate and store at bedside or other designated area specific to the individual p/r/c.
4. If electric razors with disposable or replacement heads are used, prior to use on a new p/r/c:
 - a. Remove the previously used head.
 - b. Clean/ disinfect the body of the electrical razor per the manufacturer's instructions.
 - c. Attach a new disposable or replacement head.

PART 2: BACKGROUND: DISCUSSION OF ISSUE, OPTIONS AND ANALYSIS AND REFERENCES

Discussion of Issue:

Shaving is well known to cause abrasions and small cuts. Blades can become contaminated with blood.

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention caution against sharing razors because razors cause microscopic cuts in the skin as they remove hair. These nicks are large enough to allow viruses and bacteria into the skin. Blood borne diseases, such as HIV and hepatitis are the largest concerns.

The buildup of epithelial cells in razors blades (electrical or straight blades) could contaminate a cut and transmit infection.

Electric razors are considered single p/r/c, multi-use devices. Routine Practices indicate single p/r/c multi-use devices are to be assigned to only one p/r/c, and must be properly cleaned/ disinfected between uses.

Options and Analysis:

1. Provide disposable, single p/r/c-use razors to those who do not have their own.
2. Provide each p/r/c with his/her own electrical razor which is not shared with others.
3. Use electric razors with disposable or replacement heads. This requires appropriate cleaning/disinfection of the razors between each use.

References:

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