



1. POINT OF CARE RISK ASSESSMENT (PCRA)

The PCRA is an evaluation of the risk factors related to the interaction between the HCW, the client and the client's environment to assess and analyze their potential for exposure to infectious agents and identifies risks for transmission. Control measures are based on the evaluation of the risk factors identified.

Prior to every client interaction, all Healthcare Workers (HCWs) are responsible to assess the infectious risk posed to themselves and other clients, family members, visitors, and HCWs by a client, situation or procedure. Perform a Point of Care Risk Assessment (PCRA) before each client interaction to determine the appropriate Routine Practices required for safe client care.

HCWs should perform PCRs before every interaction with a client and apply control measures for their safety and the safety of clients and others in the environment.

A PCRA is performed when a HCW evaluates a client and situation, including, but not limited to:

- Determine the possibility of exposure to blood, body fluids, secretions and excretions, non-intact skin, and mucous membranes and select appropriate control measures (e.g., personal protective equipment [PPE]) to prevent exposure
- Determine the need for Additional Precautions when Routine Practices are not sufficient to prevent exposure (e.g., client is receiving cytotoxic drugs).
- Risk varies in different settings therefore control measures may need to be modified depending on the health care setting rather than imposing the same level of precautions in each setting.

a) How to Perform a PCRA

When performing a PCRA, each HCW considers questions to determine risk of exposure and potential for transmission of microorganisms during client interactions.

Examples of such questions are:

- What contact will the HCW have with the client?
- What task(s) or procedure(s) is the HCW going to perform? Is there a risk of splashes/sprays or contact with secretions?
- If the client has diarrhea, is he/she continent? If incontinent, can stool be contained in a diaper or incontinent product?
- Is the client able and willing to perform hand hygiene?

b) Applying Control Measures Following the PCRA

The PCRA of the circumstances of the patient, the environment, and task to be performed determine the control measures required.

Control measures may include:

- Hand hygiene (alcohol-based hand rub at point of care)
- Treatment of active infection
- Work assignment, considering the immune status of HCWs who will potentially be exposed to certain infections (e.g., measles, mumps, rubella, varicella)
- Personal protective equipment selection (gowns, gloves, facial protection), applying PPE appropriate to the PCRA
- Cleaning of non-critical client care equipment and the client environment
- Handling of linen and waste
- Restricting visitor access where appropriate
- Reassessment of need for continuing or discontinuing Additional Precautions