



---

## Professional Standards Regarding Infection Prevention and Control in the Physician's Office

This document is a physician **standard** approved by the Council of the College of Physicians and Surgeons of Nova Scotia.

A **standard** reflects the minimum professional and ethical behavior, conduct or practice expected by the College of Physicians and Surgeons of Nova Scotia. Physicians licensed with the College are required to be familiar with and comply with the College **standards**.

### Preamble

Ensuring safe and effective infection prevention and control measures is an important component of medical practice. Prevention and control measures mitigate the risks associated with infection transmission for employees and the public. The same standard of care for infection prevention and control is required in a clinical office setting as in a hospital facility.

### Professional Standards

Physicians must maintain safe and effective infection control practices in their workplaces. In order to protect the health and safety of patients, employees and visitors in their offices, physicians must ensure that written policies and procedures are in place for the prevention and control of infectious agents. Protective measures must be in place in both direct patient care activities as well as in managing the clinical office environment.

Physicians must:

1. apply routine cleaning and disinfection practices at all times and additional precautions as necessary to prevent the transmission of infectious diseases;
2. implement hand hygiene procedures for patient and provider safety;
3. provide personal protective equipment (PPE) to staff for whom they are responsible, and ensure an adequate office supply of all necessary PPE;

4. appropriately handle, clean and dispose of materials, equipment and sharps;
5. safely reprocess reusable medical equipment and other medical devices;
6. safely handle and store medications and vaccines;
7. appropriately dispose of biomedical waste;
8. orient and educate employees to infection prevention and control practices; and
9. implement health and safety programs for infection surveillance, treatment for contact, screening and immunization.

Best practices regarding these professional standards and information on infection prevention and control in physician's offices are provided for in the following recommended documents:

1. [Infection Prevention and Control Requirements for Medical Clinics: Self-Assessment Tool](#)  
(College of Physicians and Surgeons of Alberta, 2022)

This is a concise, practical tool for assessing compliance with infection prevention and control best practices.

2. [Infection Prevention and Control for Clinical Office Practice](#)  
(Public Health Ontario, 2015)

This substantive document identifies physician responsibilities in relation to infection prevention and transmission. The index provides quick access to specific topics.

## Resources

College of Physicians and Surgeons of British Columbia

- [Infection Prevention and Control \(IPAC\) in Physician's Offices](#)

Public Health Ontario

- [IPAC Checklist for Clinical Office Practice](#)

Nova Scotia Health

- [Infection Prevention and Control](#)

Public Health Agency of Canada

- [Routine Practices and Additional Precautions for Preventing the Transmission of Infection in Health Care Settings](#)

Infection Prevention Control Canada

- [Infection Prevention and Control Resources](#)

## **Acknowledgements**

The College of Physicians and Surgeons of Nova Scotia acknowledges the College of Physicians and Surgeons of Alberta's and Public Health Ontario's related documents in the preparation of this standard.

## **Document History**

Approved by the Council of the College of Physicians and Surgeons of Nova Scotia: **December 9, 2016**

First approved by the Council of the College of Physicians and Surgeons of Nova Scotia: **May 27, 2011**

Approximate date of next review: **2019**

*Unless otherwise noted, this material is © College of Physicians and Surgeons of Nova Scotia. This material may be reproduced for non-commercial purposes, in whole or in part, provided that credit is given to the College of Physicians and Surgeons of Nova Scotia or other original source identified in this document. Any other use requires permission from the College of Physicians and Surgeons of Nova Scotia.*