



Durham Region Health Department FAX about...

For Health Care Professionals



Infection Prevention and Control (IPAC) in Clinical Settings

Durham Region Health Department (DRHD) has seen an increasing number of IPAC lapses in clinical settings involving reprocessing (cleaning, disinfection and/or sterilization) of equipment. **An IPAC lapse is a failure to follow [IPAC practice standards](#)** resulting in a risk of transmission of infectious diseases to patients or staff through exposure to blood, body fluids, secretions, excretions, mucous membranes, non-intact skin, or contaminated equipment and soiled items.

IPAC Lapse Identification and Investigation

Health care providers are responsible for IPAC practices in their daily work, using best practice guidance available by the [Provincial Infectious Diseases Advisory Committee \(PIDAC\)](#), the Ministry of Health, and their regulatory colleges. If a complaint is made to DRHD by the public (staff, patients, etc.), DRHD launches an investigation which involves:

- Site visit with inspection and risk assessment
- Requiring implementation of best practices (includes performing immediate remediation and cease performing all procedures that put patients' health at risk)
- Providing education and resources to the clinic
- Notification of individual patients (where there is a risk of blood borne infection)
- Notification of appropriate regulatory college (CPSO, CNO, etc.), where appropriate
- Follow up inspection to ensure corrective action is implemented
- Public disclosure of confirmed IPAC lapses on the [Check&Go!](#) website for 24 months

Ensuring Best Practices in IPAC

Public Health Ontario (PHO) offers expertise and tools to help health care workers understand and implement infection prevention and control practices. Some key resources include: (NEW)

- [IPAC online learning resources](#), including: *IPAC for Health Care Workers, Reprocessing in Community Health Care Settings, IPAC for Non-clinical Staff*
- [IPAC Checklist for Clinical Office Practice – Core Elements](#)
- [IPAC Checklist for Clinical Office Practice – Reprocessing](#)
- [IPAC Organizational Risk Assessment for Clinical Office Practice](#)(NEW)
- [Organizational Risk Assessment Template for Clinical Office Practice](#) (NEW)

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905-668-2020 or 1-800-841-2729 | durham.ca/health

If you require this information in an accessible format, contact 1-800-841-2729.

