

**MENTAL HEALTH SERVICE BUSINESS RULE SESLHDBR/048**

<b>Name</b>	Infection Control: Cleaning of Sensory Equipment		
<b>What it is</b>	This business rule is designed to ensure that the correct processes are followed in the cleaning and maintenance of equipment used for sensory modulation within all SESLHD mental health settings.		
<b>Risk Rating</b>	Medium	<b>Review Date</b>	June 2027
<b>What it is not</b>	This business rule is not intended as a guide for the safe operation of sensory equipment.		
<b>Who it applies to</b>	This business rule applies to all SESLHD Mental Health Service (MHS) staff who are involved in the use of sensory equipment.		
<b>What to do</b>	<p>This business rule identifies a range of strategies to be used in maintaining the cleanliness of the various items of equipment, ranging from superficial surface cleaning (eg chairs, bean bags, hard plastic items) through to machine washing (eg weighted blankets and vests). These strategies also include the assessment of consumer for conditions that may preclude their use of the equipment (ie open wounds, current active infections or infestations etc).</p> <p>As with the initial introduction of sensory equipment, this assessment process should be part of the admission procedure and should focus on determining whether the consumer meets any of the criteria for exclusion from using sensory equipment.</p> <p><b>Exclusion Criteria</b> The following is a list of issues and/or conditions that would exclude a consumer from the use of shared/communal sensory equipment:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Skin abscesses, boils or open wounds.</li> <li>• Scabies/lice infestations.</li> <li>• Current viral, bacterial or fungal infection (eg rhinovirus/ coronavirus/conjunctivitis/skin condition).</li> <li>• Unexplained, acute onset of fever/fever with cough.</li> <li>• Vomiting and/or diarrhoea (eg norovirus).</li> <li>• Unmanaged incontinence</li> </ul> <p>Exclusion from the use of sensory equipment should only be for the period during which the consumer is actively infectious. Once the infection or infestation has been effectively treated, or wounds have healed, the consumer should then be reassessed for suitability to use the equipment.</p>		

## Recommended Cleaning Equipment/Materials

### For equipment:

- Neutral detergent. A neutral detergent refers to detergent solution which acid has been fully neutralised by alkali to pH 7.0 as referred in [SESLHDGL/029 - Infection Control: Cleaning \(Shared\) Patient Care Equipment Guideline](#) apply

### For soiled equipment:

- Any item that is to be disinfected must be first thoroughly cleaned with a neutral detergent. Appropriate surface disinfectant include Alcohol wipes with 70% isopropyl alcohol For more information refer to [SESLHDGL/029 - Infection Control: Cleaning \(Shared\) Patient Care Equipment Guideline](#)

For consumer and staff: Alcohol based hand rub/gel.

## Recommended Cleaning Methods

All staff are to don appropriate PPE prior to commencing cleaning of sensory equipment.

All items of equipment require cleaning after use, as follows:

- Weighted blankets, vests and lap bags. When materials are smooth impervious surfaces such as metal, plastic, vinyl and laminate, a neutral detergent can be used.
- All porous covers, pouches and weighted bags require machine washing following each use (unless use is continuous over a short time period ie the consumer uses the item frequently throughout the day or night). MHS staff should liaise with local Infection Prevention and Control for the location of a washing machine that meets the Australian Laundry Standard SA4146.2000.

Refer to [APPENDIX A](#) for cleaning requirements for key equipment and devices.

### NOTE

- Not all equipment is included within this document. General principles for cleaning of shared consumer care equipment apply as per [SESLHDGL/029 - Infection Control: Cleaning \(Shared\) Patient Care Equipment Guideline](#) for apparatus/devices not listed.
- Ask consumer to perform hand hygiene prior to using common rehabilitation and gym equipment.
- The staff member who
  - Initiates the sensory equipment use with the consumer will be responsible for pre-use cleaning check.
  - Receives the sensory equipment after use will be responsible for ensuring the equipment is returned to the relevant staff member for cleaning (see “Who is responsible” below).

### When to use it

The recommendations contained within this business rule are applicable in every occurrence of use of the sensory equipment by a consumer.

<b>How to use it</b>	This business rule is to be used in conjunction with the <a href="#">SESLHDGL/029 - Infection Control: Cleaning (Shared) Patient Care Equipment Guideline</a> .
<b>Why the rule is necessary</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The purpose of the business rule is to establish clear processes for cleaning and maintaining the sensory modulation equipment to prevent potential contamination by, and the spread of, infectious organisms.</li> <li>Ensure standard precautions are adhered to for all consumer regardless of suspected or confirmed infection status of the consumer.</li> </ul>
<b>Who is responsible</b>	<p>Responsible staff include all SESLHD MHS staff involved in the use of sensory equipment, as well as Nursing Unit Managers, Inpatient Services Managers, Community Service Managers, Clinical Operations Managers and Service Directors.</p> <p>Staff directly responsible for cleaning and maintenance of sensory equipment need to be identified and designated within each unit where the equipment is in use. These responsible staff depend on local arrangements and negotiations.</p>
<b>NSW Ministry of Health/SESLHD References</b>	<p>NSW Ministry of Health</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><a href="#">PD2023_025 - Infection Prevention and Control in Healthcare Settings</a></li> <li><a href="#">PD2023_018 - Cleaning of the Healthcare Environment</a></li> </ul> <p>SESLHD</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><a href="#">SESLHDGL/029 - Infection Control: Cleaning (Shared) Patient Care Equipment Guideline</a></li> </ul> <p>Other</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><a href="#">Clinical Excellence Commission Infection Prevention and Control Practice Handbook v3 January 2020</a></li> <li><a href="#">Clinical Excellence Commission: Healthcare Associated Infections webpage</a></li> </ul>
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### Version and Approval History

Date	Version Number	Author and approval notes
August 2014	2	Revised by Ian Wilson, SESLHD MHS Quality Manager.
October 2014	2	Endorsed by SESLHD MHS Clinical Council
September 2017	2	Reviewed by Infection Control CNCs, site service NUMs and OTs.
November 2017	3	Comments received from Professional Head of Social Work: inclusion of detergent definition, Appendix A and reference to District Infection Control guideline. Initial amendment completed by District Policy Officer. Disseminated to Infection Control CNC (Susan Jain), District Infection Control Working Group (Belinda Boston), and Sites for consultation.
December 2017	4	Consulted Staff Specialist Infectious Diseases Nurse Practitioner on behalf of Infection Control Working group. Incorporated feedback; remove detergent impregnated cloth, replace to include neutral

		detergent wipe for equipment listed in Appendix A. Amended by District Policy Officer.
January 2018	5	Endorsed by DDDCC with minor changes to exclusion criteria and language from patient to consumers.
February 2018	5	Endorsed by SESLHD MHS Clinical Council with no further amendments.
January 2020	6	All links reviewed. Reviewed for gender diversity. Minor amendments made to formatting.
July 2020	6.1	Incorporates feedback from DDCC – expanded to include CMH
July 2020	6.1	Circulated to DDCC for final feedback – incorporates minimal final feedback
August 2020	6.1	Endorsed by SESLHD MHS DDCC Endorsed by SELSHD MHS Clinical Council
January 2024	6.2	References updated. Minor changes only.
April 2024	6.3	Endorsed DDCC out-of-session
May 2024	6.3	Endorsed Clinical Council
24 June 2024	6.3	Document published.

## APPENDIX A: CLEANING REQUIREMENTS

Item	Frequency	With (Solution)	Comments
<b>Bean Bags</b>	N/A	<u>External surface:</u> Neutral detergent wipe	The bean bags are made of waterproof vinyl and can be cleaned by wiping them down with neutral detergent wipe.  The Styrofoam 'beans' are contained within an inner lining, which can be removed from the bean bag whole if more serious cleaning or repair is required.
<b>Exercise Bike</b>	After each use	Neutral detergent wipe	All surfaces with which the consumer comes into contact (ie handlebars and seat). Ask the consumer to perform hand hygiene before and after each use. For common rehabilitation and gym equipment refer to <a href="#">SESLHDGL/029 - Infection Control: Cleaning (Shared) Patient Care Equipment Guideline</a> .
<b>Lights/Projectors</b>	After each use	Neutral detergent wipe	Lights/projectors can be dusted with a dry cloth in the first instance. However, if they require cleaning, they can be cleaned by wiping with neutral detergent cloths.
<b>Massage toys</b>	After each use	Neutral detergent wipe	N/A
<b>MP3 Player</b>	After each use	Neutral detergent wipe	Every consumer who wishes to use an MP3 player is to receive a set of headphones for his/her own use. These are to be labelled with the consumer's name and stored in a secure area to prevent cross-usage, which presents a potential risk in terms of cross-infection as well as self-harm or suicide.
<b>Wii</b>	After each use	Neutral detergent wipe	The remote controls require thorough cleaning with neutral detergent wipe after each use, ensuring that all surfaces are cleaned (including the protective silicone cover). The balance board requires cleaning after each use (it may also require cleaning before use if the consumer intends to use it in bare feet).