White Paper
Infection Control

Background
Infection control has always been an important quality of care issue in long term care. With the emergence of multiple drug resistant organisms this rises to a more serious level that demands the collaborative focus of all care providers in the continuum of care.

Legal Considerations
Potential lawsuits related to the development of avoidable healthcare acquired infections.

Regulatory Considerations
At §483.65 Infection Control (F441) the federal regulatory language states:
The facility must establish and maintain an Infection Control Program designed to provide a safe, sanitary and comfortable environment and to help prevent the development and transmission of disease and infection.

The facility must establish an Infection Control Program under which it –

1) Investigates, controls, and prevents infections in the facility;

2) Decides what procedures, such as isolation, should be applied to an individual resident; and

3) Maintains a record of incidents and corrective actions related to infections.

And

1) When the infection control program determines that a resident needs isolation to prevent the spread of infection, the facility must isolate the resident.

2) The facility must prohibit employees with a communicable disease or infected skin lesions from direct contact with residents or their food, if direct contact will transmit the disease.

3) The facility must require staff to wash their hands after each direct resident contact for which hand washing is indicated by accepted professional practice.

§483.65(c) Linens
Personnel must handle, store, process and transport linens so as to prevent the spread of infection.

Intent
The intent of this regulation is to assure that the facility, develops, implements and maintains an Infection Prevention and Control Program in order to prevent, recognize, and control, to the extent possible, the onset and spread of infection within the facility.

Criteria for Compliance
The facility is in compliance with 42 CFR 483.65 Infection Control if:

• The infection prevention and control program demonstrates ongoing surveillance, recognition, investigation and control of infections to prevent the onset and the spread of infection, to the extent possible;

• The facility demonstrates practices to reduce the spread of infection and control outbreaks through transmission-based precautions (e.g., isolation precautions);
• The facility demonstrates practices and processes (e.g., intravenous catheter care, hand hygiene) consistent with infection prevention and prevention of cross-contamination;

• The facility demonstrates that it uses records of incidents to improve its infection control processes and outcomes by taking corrective action;

• The facility has processes and procedures to identify and prohibit employees with a communicable disease or infected skin lesions from direct contact with residents or their food, if direct contact will transmit the disease;

• The facility consistently demonstrates appropriate hand hygiene (e.g., hand washing) practices, after each direct resident contact as indicated by professional practice; and

• The facility demonstrates handling, storage, processing and transporting of linens so as to prevent the spread of infection.

Noncompliance for Tag F441 may include, but is not limited to, failure to do one or more of the following:
• Develop an infection prevention and control program;
• Utilize infection precautions to minimize the transmission of infection;
• Identify and prohibit employees with a communicable disease from direct contact with a resident;
• Demonstrate proper hand hygiene;
• Properly dispose of soiled linens;
• Demonstrate the use of surveillance; or
• Adjust facility processes as needed to address a known infection risk.

Policy Considerations
• Comprehensive and detailed
• Based on F441 and CDC Guidelines

Educational Considerations
• Upon hire, annually and as the need arises

Additional Information/ Resources
• http://www.cdc.gov/hicpac/pubs.html
• 2007 Guideline for Isolation Precautions:
• Guideline for Disinfection and Sterilization in Healthcare Facilities, 2008
• Guidelines for Hand Hygiene in Healthcare Settings Published 2002
• Guidelines for Hand Hygiene in Healthcare Settings Published 2002
• Management of Multidrug-Resistant Organisms In Healthcare Settings, 2006: http://www.cdc.gov/hicpac/mdro/mdro_0.html


July 30, 2012