



New South Wales

Nurses (General) Amendment (Infection Control Standards) Regulation 1998

under the
Nurses Act 1991

His Excellency the Governor, with the advice of the Executive Council, has made the following Regulation under the *Nurses Act 1991*.

ANDREW REFSHAUGE. M.P.,
Minister for Health

Explanatory note

The object of this Regulation is to amend Schedule 1 (Infection control standards) to the *Nurses (General) Regulation 1997* to ensure that the standards of infection control for nurses detailed in that Schedule parallel the equivalent standards for doctors in the draft *Medical Practice Regulation 1998* placed on public exhibition in accordance with the provisions of the *Subordinate Legislation Act 1989*.

This Regulation is made under the *Nurses Act 1991*, including section 78 (the general regulation-making power) and in particular section 78 (2)(1).

Nurses (General) Amendment (Infection Control Standards) Regulation 1998

1 Name of Regulation

This Regulation is the *Nurses (General) Amendment (Infection Control Standards) Regulation 1998*.

2 Amendment of Nurses (General) Regulation 1997

The *Nurses (General) Regulation 1997* is amended as set out in Schedule 1.

3 Notes

The explanatory note does not form part of this Regulation.

Schedule 1 Amendments

(Clause 2)

[1] Schedule 1, clause 3

Omit the clause. Insert instead:

3 Hand and skin cleaning

- (1) Hands must be cleaned immediately before and after any direct patient care. This requirement does not apply in circumstances where medical treatment is required to be performed urgently and cleaning facilities are not readily available.
- (2) Hands may be cleaned by:
 - (a) using washing facilities involving water and a soap or antiseptic, or
 - (b) if any of the items specified in paragraph (a) are unavailable, using non-water cleansers or antiseptics.
- (3) Hands or other skin surfaces that are contaminated with a patient's blood or other body substance must be cleaned as soon as it is practicable to clean them.
- (4) The requirement to clean hands applies regardless of whether gloves are also required to be worn.

[2] Schedule 1, clause 5 (2) (a)

Omit "while performing". Insert instead "during".

[3] Schedule 1, clause 5 (2) (d)

Omit "stick, and". Insert instead "stick".

[4] Schedule 1, clause 5 (2) (e)

Omit the paragraph.

[5] Schedule 1, clause 6 (4) and (5)

Insert after clause 6 (3):

- (4) In cases where protective eye wear is required to be worn, it must be worn and fitted in accordance with the manufacturer's instructions.
- (5) Protective eye wear must be discarded once it has been worn and not used again unless it is reusable in which case it is to be cleaned in accordance with the manufacturer's instructions.

[6] Schedule 1, clause 8 (1)

Omit the subclause. Insert instead:

- (1) Clinical waste must be properly packaged to protect against potential exposure to infectious agents and to facilitate the proper handling, storage and treatment or disposal of the waste.

[7] Schedule 1, clause 12 (3)-(5)

Omit clause 12 (3). Insert instead:

- (3) The process of cleaning must involve water and mechanical or physical action (such as washing machines) and a cleaning agent.
- (4) All cleaning agents must be removed from instruments and equipment by rinsing prior to further processing.
- (5) In this clause, *cleaning agent* means a detergent and includes proteolytic enzyme substances.

[8] Schedule 1, clause 13 (1)

Omit the subclause. Insert instead:

- (1) Any instrument or equipment that comes into contact with non-sterile tissue (other than intact skin) must be disinfected before it is used with a disinfectant specified in the *Australian Register of Therapeutic Goods*, and the relevant manufacturer's instructions must be followed.

[9] Schedule 1, clause 14 (3), (4) and (5)

Omit clause 14 (3), (4) and (5).

Insert instead:

- (3) A benchtop/portable steriliser may be used only if it is one that is specified in the *Australian Register of Therapeutic Goods*.
- (4) If a steriliser is used (whether it is a benchtop/portable steriliser or a permanently plumbed or wired steriliser), the following criteria must be met:
 - (a) the relevant manufacturer's instructions must be followed,
 - (b) an ongoing monitoring program must be followed which reflects the requirements of Table 7.1 "STERILIZER TESTS AND TEST FREQUENCIES" of *Australian Standard AS 4187-1998*.