

HICPAC Isolation Precautions Guideline Workgroup Call

May 24, 2022, 3:00 pm ET

Participants

Workgroup: Sharon Wright, Mike Lin, Hilary Babcock, Elaine Dekker, Judith Guzman-Cottrill, Anu Malani, JoAnne Reifsnnyder, Mark Russi, Connie Steed, Julie Trivedi, Deborah Yokoe

CDC: Mike Bell, Darian Bishop, Sydney Byrd, Abigail Carlson, Mylaica Conner, Marie de Perio, Ryan Fagan, Jamesa Hogges, Alex Kallen, Devon Schmucker, Christine So, Matt Stuckey, David Weissman, Laura Wells

Agenda

- Roll call
- Recap of prior meeting
- Discussion of a draft outline
 - Overall approach
 - Workgroup feedback
 - Refining questions
- Next Steps

Discussion Summary

Discussion of a draft outline

After summarizing the last meeting, Dr. Lin led a discussion about a draft outline.

- The goal is to have a majority of Part I (approx. 85%) ready to present at the November HICPAC meeting to receive feedback from the committee.
- It was reiterated that the new document would not include every topic from the old document.
 - Some topics will be addressed in other guidelines/areas, such as environmental standards and core practices.
- The group reviewed the proposed draft outline sent to the group before the meeting.

Discussion of Table 1: Respiratory Pathogen Considerations for Respiratory Protection and Room Air Handling

Dr. Lin reviewed the table sent to the group before the meeting.

- Some members expressed concern about requiring respirators for SARS-CoV-2.
 - Due to the shortage of respirators during the pandemic, isolation masks were often used. There was no notable difference in the rate of infection of healthcare workers in their facilities.
 - Should the upper right box (respirator required) say emerging respiratory viruses instead of SARS-CoV-2?
 - A member commented there could be pathogens in the lower-left box; for example, a varicella immune staff could go into the rooms of varicella patients without wearing a respirator.
- A member asked if the evidence review could look at aerosol-generating procedures (AGPs) in relation to increased transmissibility.
 - Staff may not know in advance if they will be performing an AGP, so it is hard to determine if an isolation room is necessary.
- Eye protection is not included in this table, but it will be important to incorporate.
- A member suggested four general buckets:
 - Enhanced standard precautions
 - Near-range respiratory

- Mid-range respiratory
- Airborne
- The OSHA Respiratory Protection Standard has to be followed
 - Fit testing is a challenge.
 - Is there a place for “voluntary use”?
 - This would require a discussion with OSHA.
- A group member proposed some topics/questions to consider.
 - Pulling apart how transmission occurs and how we prevent transmission is important.
 - Are N95 masks doing what they are supposed to do?
 - Should pathogens like meningococcal and pertussis be treated like flu and seasonal coronaviruses?
- A member recommended changing “B.iii” in the outline to “Environmental Controls,” with subsection “i” being “Patient Placement” and “ii” being “Ventilation.”
- The group discussed that emerging pathogens could be placed in the upper right box of the table, then move to the lower box once determined to be less severe due to the build-up of immunity, etc.
- How a pathogen gets moved from the upper right to the lower right will need to be clearly defined.
- Source control and indoor air handling need to be incorporated along with isolation rooms and respirators.
- It was reiterated that before the group places organisms into the table, there needs to be more discussion around how transmission occurs.
- Should we identify criteria that could be used to help decide which pathogens go into which category?
 - Emerging, severity, transmission risk, etc.
- Could there be a special circumstances column?

Next Steps

Dr. Lin asked the group to continue to look over the outline and table so that the discussion can be resumed at the next meeting.

The call adjourned at 4:02 pm with no additional comments or questions.
The next Workgroup call is scheduled for June 9, 2022, at 2:00 pm EST.