This SOP applies to all staff employed by NHS Greater Glasgow & Clyde and locum staff on fixed term contracts and volunteer staff.

**KEY CHANGES FROM THE PREVIOUS VERSION OF THIS SOP**

- None – no previous version

**Document Control Summary**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Approved by and date</th>
<th>Board Infection Control Committee 19 May 2014</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Date of Publication</td>
<td>27 May 2014</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Developed by</td>
<td>Infection Prevention and Control Policy Sub-Group 0141 211 2526</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Related Documents</td>
<td>Standard Infection Control Precautions (SICPs) (HPS National IPC Policy)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>NHSGGC Hand Hygiene Policy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>NHSGGC Personal Protective Equipment Policy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>NHSGGC Decontamination Policy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>NHSGGC Transmission Based Precautions Policy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Implications of Race Equality and other diversity duties for this document</td>
<td>This policy must be implemented fairly and without prejudice whether on the grounds of ethnicity, gender, sexual orientation, religion, belief, disability or age.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lead Manager</td>
<td>Board Infection Control Manager</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Responsible Director</td>
<td>Board Medical Director</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
**Aim**
To ensure that all Transoesophageal echocardiograph (TOE), Transvaginal and Transrectal Ultrasound Probes are disinfected successfully to safeguard patients from cross-infection.

**Statement**
Transoesophageal echocardiograph (TOE), Transvaginal and Transrectal Ultrasound Probes are used in procedures where they come into contact with mucous membranes and are classed as semi-critical devices requiring high-level disinfection under the Spaulding Classification. Many different models of ultrasound probes are used in a wide variety of procedures with the potential for contact between probes and non-intact mucous membranes.

All probes will be decontaminated in a way that will render them safe for use for every patient.

**Requirements**
- Standard Infection Control Precautions should be followed.
- A dedicated facility / area is available for the decontamination of the probes with clear linear flow from dirty to clean, allowing segregation of each stage of the decontamination process when possible in a controlled environment to prevent cross-contamination. The work surfaces should be cleaned between each stage of the decontamination process.
- Manufacturer’s instructions should be followed.
- Decontamination of the probes should be carried out after each use and between each patient.
- Decontamination of the probes should be carried out by staff who have been trained in the procedure and this has been documented.
- A suitable quality disposable probe cover should be used throughout clinical procedures.

**Location**
Where Transoesophageal echocardiograph (TOE), Transvaginal and Transrectal Ultrasound Probes are used preferably a dedicated facility but if not available, in an area where the person carrying out the procedure will not be interrupted and it is possible to move from a dirty area to a clean area once the procedure is complete.

**Timing**
After each patient use by the person designated to clean the scope.

---

The most up-to-date version of this policy can be viewed at the following website: [www.nhsggc.org.uk/infectionpreventionandcontrol](http://www.nhsggc.org.uk/infectionpreventionandcontrol)
**Procedure**

Prior to procedure ensure all necessary equipment is available.

- The probe cover should be checked after each use as per manufacturer’s instructions. If the cover is found to be damaged the probes must be reprocessed using an automated EWD or cold temperature sterilisation process (e.g. ethylene oxide sterilisation) as recommended by the manufacturer.
- The probe cover should be disposed of as clinical waste after each use.
- The probes should be transferred to a dedicated area which allows segregation between each stage of the decontamination process.
- The probe should be cleaned with a suitable detergent using the method recommended by the manufacturer.
- Cleaning can be undertaken by immersing in detergent solution or wiping with impregnated detergent wipe or non-linting cloth immersed in detergent solution.
- Ensure the correct amount / concentration is used, the minimum contact time is achieved and the temperature is maintained throughout the cleaning process particularly if using enzymatic detergent. The wipe, solution and cloth should be disposed of after each use.
- The probes should be rinsed (unless stated otherwise by the manufacturer) to remove residual detergent that may interact adversely with the disinfectant.
- The probes should be disinfected with high-level disinfectant. The manual disinfection can be undertaken using an impregnated disinfectant wipe. Manual immersion in the disinfectant can only be carried out if it is considered to be safe for staff to do so. Strictly follow the manufacturer’s instructions for the method including the contact time and concentration / amount of disinfectant used.
- The residual disinfectant should be rinsed off using water or rinsing wipes.
- A practical method is the use of a 3-wipe system comprising of cleaning, disinfection and rinsing wipes.
- The probes should be dried using single-use non-linting cloths.
- The probes should be inspected for cleanliness and signs of damage and this should be recorded.

**After Care**

- The decontaminated probes should be stored appropriately to minimise the risk of recontamination as per manufacturer’s instructions.

The most up-to-date version of this policy can be viewed at the following website: [www.nhsggc.org.uk/infectionpreventionandcontrol](http://www.nhsggc.org.uk/infectionpreventionandcontrol)