

Infection Prevention & Control Advice for Nursing/Residential Home facilities without a water supply or those with an interrupted water supply

Hand Hygiene

Alcohol hand preparations will suffice for routine hand hygiene. However, after 4 or 5 applications of the alcohol hand preparation, hand hygiene should be performed with soap and water – in the event that there is no water supply an antiseptic soap solution and bottled water should be used.

When staff are dealing with vomiting and/or diarrhoea, soap and water must always be used, alcohol hand preparations should not be used on this occasion.

Bedpan washers/disinfectors

In the absence of a water supply, bedpan washers/disinfectors will not function. If this is the case bedpans should be emptied in the sluice/dirty utility and flushed away with a bucket of water. The bedpan should then be washed and decontaminated with a hypochlorite (bleach) solution at a strength of 1,000ppm (parts per million).

It is advisable that this procedure is undertaken in a ventilated room with the door closed and staff should wear PPE (personal protective equipment) i.e. Gloves and aprons and a mask where appropriate.

Hand hygiene should then be performed using soap and water.

Laundry

In the event that there is no water supply soiled/infected linen should be stored appropriately as per local guidelines (e.g. alginate bag and an outer bag) until the water supply issue has been resolved. If facilities are without water for a prolonged period of time alternative and appropriate local arrangements should be made for laundering clothes and linens, for example an arrangement could be with another care facility which has water supply to see if laundry could be transferred to be laundered in that facility.

Routine Cleaning

Routine cleaning should continue as normal using bottled water in the absence of a water supply. Disinfectant hard surface wipes can be used for equipment cleaning. For environmental cleaning in the event of an outbreak for example, a hypochlorite solution should be used at a strength of 1,000ppm for routine cleaning. For blood contamination or spillages, a concentration of 10,000ppm should be used. These solutions should be made up using bottled water.