



TRAFFIC PATTERNS FOR RESTRICTED AND SEMI-RESTRICTED AREAS

Clinical Policy

Approved: July 2013

Next Review: July 2016

Clinical Area: Operating Room, PACU, Cardiac Cath Lab, Interventional Radiology, Perinatal Services

Population Covered: All persons entering the restricted and semi-restricted areas

Related Procedures, Protocols, and Job Aids:

[Surgical Attire: Attire for Restricted and Semi-Restricted Procedure Areas](#)

Purpose

To describe traffic control practices utilized to protect patients, personnel, supplies and equipment from potential sources of cross-contamination.

Responsible Persons

All staff and visitors within the perioperative and invasive procedural areas defined above.

Policy

The surgical/procedure suites and adjacent areas are divided into three designated areas:

- Unrestricted areas
- Semi-restricted areas
- Restricted areas

These areas may be demarcated differently based on the physical layout of each department.

These areas are defined by the physical activities performed in each area.

Eating and drinking are prohibited in restricted and semi-restricted areas.

Following the Culture of Safety, each team member is responsible for monitoring the environment of care.

Restricted Area (operating and procedure rooms, the clean core and scrub sink areas) To enter these areas you must cross the red line demarcation into the semi-restricted area and then into the restricted area.

1. Movement of personnel in and out of operating rooms is kept to an absolute minimum while procedures are in progress. Doors to the operating rooms are closed except when personnel are entering or exiting.
2. Surgical attire, covering of all head and facial hair, and appropriate footwear are required for all personnel.

3. Wearing of masks is required where sterile supplies are open +/- scrubbed persons are located.
4. Personal protective equipment (PPE) is required.
5. Masks for parents may be optional until after the child is anesthetized.

Semi-Restricted Area (peripheral support areas of the surgical suite, storage areas for clean and sterile supplies, work areas for processing and storage of instrumentation, and corridors leading to restricted areas)

1. Traffic in this area is limited to authorized personnel only.
2. The semi-restricted areas are divided from the unrestricted areas by red demarcation lines on the floor.
3. Surgical attire and covering of all head and facial hair are required.
4. Personnel protective equipment is required.

Unrestricted Area (offices, lounges, patient transfer areas, PACU)

1. All transfer area (TA), post-anesthesia recovery unit, and office workers are expected to comply with the policy [*Attire for Restricted and Semi-Restricted Procedure Areas*](#).
2. There are no clothing restrictions; patients, family members/significant others, physicians or staff may enter these areas for temporary business in street clothes.

NOTE: Interventional Radiology services provided in a location not within a surgical suite:

- Restricted area is defined as the procedure room.
- Semi-restricted area is defined as control room and storage areas.
- Traffic should be limited in the corridors, recovery area, and patient prep area accessing the procedure rooms.

Mandatory behaviors for personnel entering the OR and invasive procedural areas:

1. Traffic into and out of the OR/procedure rooms is minimized; the number of door openings and closings has been linked to an increase in the number of surgical site infections. Doors to the operating room or procedure suite are kept closed.
2. The number of people in the room is limited to necessary personnel.
3. Talking is minimized during procedures.
4. All patients entering the semi-restricted and restricted areas are attired in clean gown/linens and hair covering. Clean personal undergarments or socks may be worn when they will not interfere with the surgical site.
5. Contaminated instruments, supplies and equipment are moved from the OR / procedure rooms to the disposal or cleaning area through the exit door to the hallway. They are NOT moved into the core area for removal.
6. Only sterile, clean, and decontaminated supplies and equipment are allowed in the core/storage areas.
7. All supplies are removed from the outside shipping package before being moved into the restricted and semi-restricted areas.
8. Patient emergencies and fire/safety hazards may necessitate temporary changes in traffic patterns.

Definitions

None.

Supplemental Information

The care of the patient during surgery or invasive procedures requires movement of patients, personnel and material within the surgical suite. Planning and controlling these movements assist in the containment of contamination.

Regulatory Requirement

CMS. 482.51 – Surgical Services.

DNV. SS.1 – Surgical Services.

DOH. WAC-246-320-236 – Surgical Services.

The Joint Commission. IC.01.05.01 – Infection Prevention and Control.

References

AORN Journal. (2011). Clinical Issues: Limiting traffic and personnel during invasive procedures.

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Andersson, A.E., Bergh, I., Karlsson, J., Eriksson, B.I., & Nilsson, K.(2012). Traffic flow in the operating room: An explorative and descriptive study on air quality during orthopedic trauma implant surgery. American Journal of Infection Control, 40, pp. 750-755.

Pryor, F., & Messmer, P.R. (1998). The effect of traffic patterns in the OR on surgical site infections. AORN Journal, 68, pp. 649-660.

STAKEHOLDERS

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Expert Consultants

None.

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