



DEDER GENERAL HOSPITAL

Standard Operating Procedure (SOP) for Prevention of Healthcare-Associated Diarrhea (HCAD)

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

1. Purpose.....	1
2. Scope.....	1
3. Responsibilities.....	1
4. Definitions.....	2
5. Procedures	2
5.1 Surveillance and Early Detection	2
5.2 Hand Hygiene.....	2
5.3 Personal Protective Equipment (PPE).....	2
5.4 Environmental Cleaning	3
5.5 Patient Placement	3
5.6 Food and Water Safety	3
5.7 Waste Management	3
5.8 Staff Education and Training	4
5.9 Visitor Precautions	4
6. Monitoring and Evaluation.....	4
7. References.....	4

1. Purpose

To outline the standard procedures for preventing healthcare-associated diarrhea (HCAD), including but not limited to *Clostridium difficile* infection, viral gastroenteritis, and other enteric pathogens acquired in healthcare settings.

2. Scope

This SOP applies to all healthcare workers in inpatient and outpatient care settings who are involved in patient care, environmental cleaning, food handling, or waste disposal.

3. Responsibilities

- ✍ **Healthcare Workers:** Adhere strictly to hand hygiene, personal protective equipment (PPE) usage, and environmental protocols.
- ✍ **Infection Prevention and Control (IPC) Team:** Monitor compliance, provide training, and investigate outbreaks.
- ✍ **Housekeeping Staff:** Ensure proper cleaning and disinfection of patient areas and equipment.
- ✍ **Dietary Services:** Maintain food hygiene and safe storage practices.

4. Definitions

- ✎ **Healthcare-Associated Diarrhea (HCAD):** Diarrhea that occurs ≥ 72 hours after hospital admission, not present at the time of admission.
- ✎ **Contact Precautions:** IPC measures to prevent transmission via direct or indirect contact with infectious materials.

5. Procedures

5.1 Surveillance and Early Detection

- ✎ Monitor patients for new onset of diarrhea (≥ 3 loose stools in 24 hours).
- ✎ Isolate symptomatic patients promptly.
- ✎ Notify IPC team for assessment and testing.

5.2 Hand Hygiene

- ✎ Perform hand hygiene with soap and water before and after patient contact.
- ✎ Alcohol-based hand rubs are not effective against *C. difficile* spores; soap and water is preferred.

5.3 Personal Protective Equipment (PPE)

- ✎ Use gloves and gowns for all patient contact or handling of contaminated materials.

- ✍ Dispose of PPE appropriately and perform hand hygiene after removal.

5.4 Environmental Cleaning

- ✍ Use sporicidal disinfectants for cleaning patient rooms, bathrooms, and frequently touched surfaces.
- ✍ Clean and disinfect shared medical equipment between patients.

5.5 Patient Placement

- ✍ Place patients with HCAD in single rooms where possible.
- ✍ If cohorting is necessary, group patients with the same pathogen.

5.6 Food and Water Safety

- ✍ Ensure safe food handling, preparation, and storage.
- ✍ Provide patients with safe drinking water.

5.7 Waste Management

- ✍ Dispose of fecal-contaminated waste in accordance with infectious waste guidelines.
- ✍ Avoid manual emptying of bedpans—use bedpan washers where available.

5.8 Staff Education and Training

- ✍ Train all staff on modes of transmission and preventive practices for HCAD.
- ✍ Conduct regular refresher courses and audits.

5.9 Visitor Precautions

- ✍ Instruct visitors on hand hygiene and PPE if visiting affected patients.
- ✍ Limit visitor access during outbreaks.

6. Monitoring and Evaluation

Conduct routine audits on hand hygiene, environmental cleaning, and compliance with contact precautions. Track incidence rates of healthcare-associated diarrhea and report trends.

7. References

1. IPC Vol1 Reference Manual
2. WHO Guidelines on Hand Hygiene in Health Care
3. CDC Guidelines for Isolation Precautions