Best practice recommendations

1. Issue

1.1 All staff and visitors entering healthcare facilities are screened for signs and symptoms of COVID-19. Some locations, i.e., Continuing Care (Hospice, Long Term Care, Designated Supportive Living and Congregate Living) include a temperature check as required by the Chief Medical Officer of Health.

1.2 Safe and efficient temperature screening processes are required to accommodate large numbers of people, e.g., shift change.

2. IPC key messages for selection of thermometers

2.1 Preferred choice: a non-contact clinical-grade quality infra-red thermometer (click here for an example), assesses temperature without directly contacting or touching the person; thus decreasing the risk of cross-contamination. These thermometers allow quick, accurate temperature checks when used in accordance with manufacturer’s instructions.

2.2 Acceptable choices:

These thermometers allow quick (within a few seconds) and accurate temperature checks when used in accordance with manufacturer’s instructions:

- a temporal thermometer (click here for an example) that contacts the intact skin of the forehead and side of face/neck to assess body temperature, or
- tympanic thermometer (click here for an example) that contacts the ear canal to assess body temperature.

- Use a disposable cover with both the temporal and tympanic thermometer. If a disposable cover is not used with the thermometers; clean and disinfect before use on the next person.
- Discard the disposable cover after use.
- Attach a new disposable cover before use on the next person.

2.3 Least preferred choice:

- Single-use disposable thermometers, e.g., Tempa-DOT™, may be used to obtain axillary temperature. Tempa-DOT™ may be used to obtain an oral temperature only if the healthcare provider can read and report their own temperature. The time required to obtain an accurate temperature assessment is longer than with the other options listed.

2.4 Not recommended:

- Rectal thermometers.
- Reusable oral thermometers.
Thermometers used for Staff and Visitor COVID-19 Screening

3. Cleaning

3.1 Follow product-specific manufacturer’s instruction for use (MIFU) for cleaning.
   - Clean and disinfect the thermometer if it is contaminated, i.e., direct contact and/or no cover used. Do not disinfect the thermometer lens. Confirm the lens is clean and shiny before reuse.

3.2 Wipe the exterior of the thermometer with an AHS approved disinfectant wipe at each screener shift change.

4. Resources


For more information contact
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