

## For Further Information

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# Decontamination of Medical Devices

## An Information Leaflet For Parents and Carers

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## What is Decontamination ?

Decontamination is a process which includes cleaning, disinfection and sterilization.

It is used to make a reusable medical device safe to use on a patient.

### Definitions

**A Medical Device** is a piece of equipment used during a procedure or treatment such as surgery.

**Cleaning** is a process using detergents that physically removes soiling/ dirt including large numbers of germs.

**Disinfection** is a process using disinfectants or heat which removes virtually all disease causing germs.

**Sterilization** completely kills or destroys all germs.

All medical devices are decontaminated after each patient use.

Note: the decontamination method chosen depends on the procedure for which the devices are used.

## Why is Decontamination Important ?

You may have heard of the term **Healthcare Associated Infections (HCAI)**. Healthcare Associated Infections are not new. They are a possible side effect of treatments received in a health care setting.

The decontamination of medical devices is important as it helps to reduce the risk of HCAs.



## What Standards Do the Hospital Use ?

The staff of the Children's University Hospital follow the:

Health Service Executive (HSE) Standards and Recommended Practices for Reusable Invasive Medical Devices Version 2 (2011).

And

HIQA Standards for Safer Better Care (2012).

Decontamination practices in Children's University Hospital are monitored and controlled by a multidisciplinary group from all areas of the hospital including:

- ★ Decontamination
- ★ Infection Prevention and Control
- ★ Hygiene Services
- ★ Quality and Risk Management
- ★ Senior Hospital Managers