For Further Information

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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 HCAIs.

What Standards Do the Hospital Use?

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

- 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