

Cleaning Assignments

In healthcare settings, all staff are responsible for maintaining a clean and safe environment. Cleaning assignments may not always be clearly defined and as a result, surfaces/objects or areas may be inadvertently overlooked.

To ensure surfaces and objects are routinely cleaned, facilities should form a team to identify potential gaps in cleaning and establish protocols. The team should include environmental services/housekeeping personnel, kitchen personnel, maintenance, infection preventionists and clinical staff.

Measures to Ensure a Clean and Safe Environment

- **Assess** your facility's routine cleaning protocols
- **Identify** which surfaces/objects may not be on a cleaning routine or assigned to a particular department and as a result may not be cleaned as often as needed. For example:
 - Nurse's station/charting area.
 - Medication cart/medication room.
 - Supply rooms.
 - Portable/mobile computer charting stations.
 - Medical equipment such as blood pressure cuffs, electronic thermometers, glucometers, wheelchairs, lifts, oxygen carts.
 - Activity equipment/supplies such as bingo cards, balls, etc.
 - Resident personal items such as electronics, mobility devices, etc.
 - Resident common areas such as dining room, lobby, porch, designated smoking areas, etc.
 - Staff support areas such as offices, break rooms, storage areas, etc.
- **Discuss** assignments and establish who will be responsible for cleaning specific items or areas. Include these assignments in your cleaning policy or schedule.
- **Develop** cleaning checklists.
- **Educate** staff regarding cleaning assignments. Education should include:
 - Proper cleaning technique including contact time
 - Personal protective equipment (PPE) use
 - Cleaning products approved and utilized by the facility
 - Location of Safety Data Sheets (SDS) for the products
- **Develop** "quick charts," that can be strategically posted defining assignments for specific areas and surfaces/objects.
- **Reassess** the effectiveness of cleaning continuously.
 - A useful tool for assessing effectiveness is a fluorescent marker, powder, or gel and a portable black light. Put the fluorescent material on a surface or object. The black light will illuminate where the fluorescent material has been placed and simulates biofilm or germs. Once the surface/object has been cleaned, use the black light to assess cleaning effectiveness. If a surface or object still illuminates after cleaning, cleaning was not effective.