



Prioritizing infection prevention training

Infection prevention must be a priority in every practice. The information below is provided in the CDC's *Summary of Infection Prevention Practices in Dental Settings: Basic Expectations for Safe Care*, published in 2016. For additional information, visit [CDC.gov/oralhealth/infectioncontrol/pdf/safe-care2.pdf](https://www.cdc.gov/oralhealth/infectioncontrol/pdf/safe-care2.pdf) and [CDC.gov/oralhealth/infectioncontrol/training-resources.html](https://www.cdc.gov/oralhealth/infectioncontrol/training-resources.html).

Q What is the role of the infection prevention coordinator?

A The CDC recommends that at least one individual – an OMS or other dental healthcare professional – be identified to coordinate the practice's infection prevention program. This person will be responsible for developing and maintaining written infection prevention policies and procedures based on evidence-based guidelines, regulations or standards; monitoring and evaluating the program; and implementing quality improvement measures as needed. Policies and procedures should be tailored to the OMS practice and reassessed on a regular basis or in accordance with state and federal requirements.

Additionally, the infection prevention coordinator should maintain communication with practice staff to address any concerns or issues related to infection prevention and ensure the appropriate equipment and supplies are available, such as hand hygiene products and PPE.

Q How often should OMS practice staff complete infection prevention and control training and who should receive training?

A OMS practice staff should receive ongoing infection prevention and control training to ensure established policies and procedures are understood and followed. At a minimum, education and training should be provided to new staff during their orientation, to all staff annually and whenever a new task or procedure is introduced. The OMS(s), assistants, students and trainees, contractual personnel and other workers potentially exposed to infectious agents should all receive training.

Q What topics should be included in training?

A Training should cover the basic principles and practices for preventing the spread of infections and include both staff and patient safety, emphasizing job- or task-specific needs. Training topics should include:

- Review of CDC Standard Precautions.
- A description of their exposure risks.
- Review of prevention strategies and infection prevention policies and procedures.

- Discussion of how to manage work-related illness and injuries, including postexposure prophylaxis.
- Review of work restrictions for the exposure or infection.

Be sure to maintain all training records according to state and federal requirements.

Q Where can OMS practice staff access infection prevention and control training resources?

A The CDC provides training materials and other resources to increase the knowledge, skills and ability of dental healthcare personnel to adhere to CDC guidelines and recommendations, and resources related to infection prevention and control in dental healthcare settings. Available training materials include:

- **Basic Expectations for Safe Care** – This training series of 10 modules covers the basic principles of infection prevention and control, including hand hygiene, PPE, respiratory hygiene and cough etiquette, sharps safety, safe injection practices, sterilization and disinfection, environmental infection prevention and control, dental unit water quality and program evaluation.
- **Foundations Media training videos** – This audiovisual material is designed to be used in conjunction with Basic Expectations for Safe Care to enhance the learners' understanding of the basic principles of infection prevention and control.
- **Foundations: Building the Safest Dental Visit** – This web-based, interactive, self-paced training with three learning modules provides an overview of basic expectations for safe care in the dental setting, including Foundations of Infection Prevention and Control; Protecting Patients, Protecting Yourself; and Sterilization, Disinfection and the Dental Environment.
- **The Foundations: Building the Safest Dental Visit** – This course is a free resource available through CDC TRAIN, an affiliate of the Public Health Foundation's TRAIN Learning Network. Visit [TRAIN.org/CDctrain](https://www.train.org/CDctrain). ■

*Those interested in learning more about infection control and prevention can view the on-demand webinars *Instrument Processing: Step-by-step with Quality Assurance Systems and Needlestick and Sharps Injuries: Risks, Management and Safety Protocols*, now available in the AAOMS CE on Demand library at [AAOMS.org/CEonline](https://www.aaoms.org/CEonline).*