

HEALTHCARE INDUSTRY INSIGHTS - VOL 3

HOW CLEANING EQUIPMENT SHOULD BE CLEANED AND STORED IN A HOSPITAL



TABLE OF CONTENTS

1. Introduction
2. Understanding the Chain of Infection part 1
3. Understanding the Chain of Infection part 2
4. How Can Cleaning Equipment Cause Infection?
5. Avoiding HAI - Sanitising Cleaning Equipment
6. Avoiding hai - Storing Equipment
7. Conclusion

INTRODUCTION

Proper care of hospital cleaning equipment is essential for avoiding Hospital Associated Infections (HAIs). In fact, due to poor cleaning and infection control, Australia currently sees 165,000 HAIs each year. This results in approximately 380,000 extra hospital bed days and millions of dollars in additional costs.

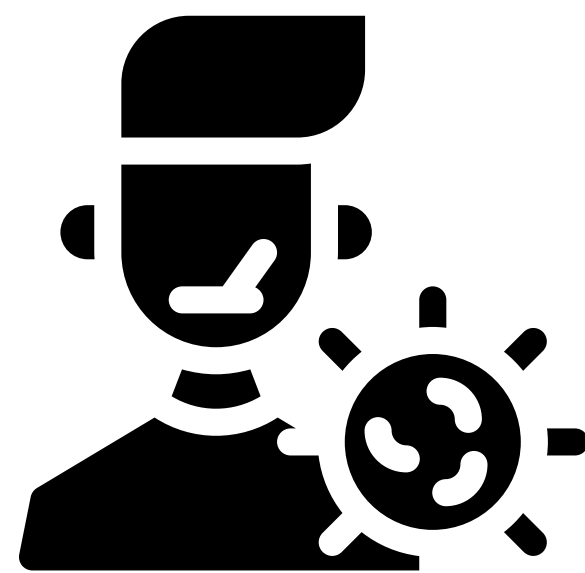
These HAIs have proven to be detrimental to patient health. However, hospital stakeholders must understand they are preventable with the right cleaning, cleaning storage and care of cleaning equipment.

Source: www.cec.health.nsw.gov.au



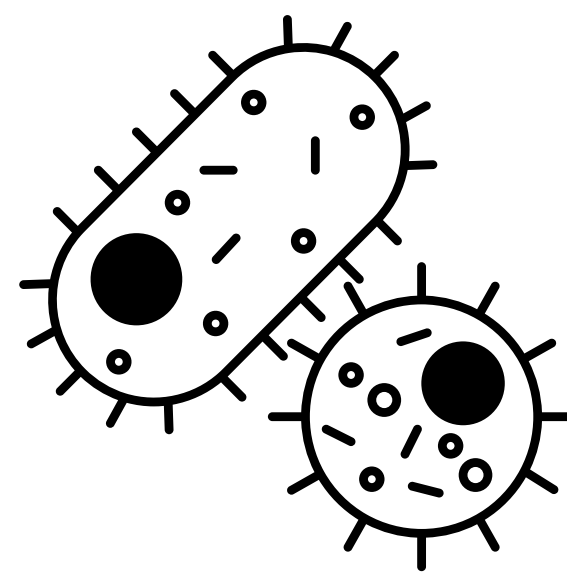
UNDERSTANDING THE CHAIN OF INFECTION - PT 1

There are many ways that infections can spread throughout a hospital facility. They include:



The Susceptible Host:

Current patients or vulnerable workers who are stressed, sleep deprived or already sick.



Infectious Agent:

This includes harmful pathogens in the form of bacteria, viruses, fungi or parasites



Reservoir:

There are places where pathogens grow, including human sources and man-made sources, such as door handles

UNDERSTANDING THE CHAIN OF INFECTION - PT 2



Portal of Exit:

Pathogens can also leave the reservoir by being touched, picked up, or through coughing and sneezing.



Mode of Transmission:

Infections can be carried through many different paths, including the wind, touch or food.



Portal of Entry:

This involves discovering the point where a pathogen was able to enter the body, such as breaks in the skin, through the mouth and through hospital equipment.

HOW CAN CLEANING EQUIPMENT CAUSE INFECTION?



Cleaning equipment intends to trap pathogens and harmful bacteria to prevent them from spreading to other surfaces. However, during this process, they can become a new source of contamination. Cleaning staff must be mindful not to become a new source of contamination when they are cleaning.

As an example, this may occur if a staff member is using a wet mop to clean a floor. If they place an infected mop into the cleaning solution, this solution then becomes infected. Any contact with this solution can then also infect their person; leading to the spread of HAIs.

AVOIDING HAI - SANITISING CLEANING EQUIPMENT

Any equipment that comes in contact with pathogen reservoirs; surfaces like floors and door handles, should be cleaned after each use.

For example, cleaning clothes should be laundered under high heat to kill bacteria and similar pathogens.

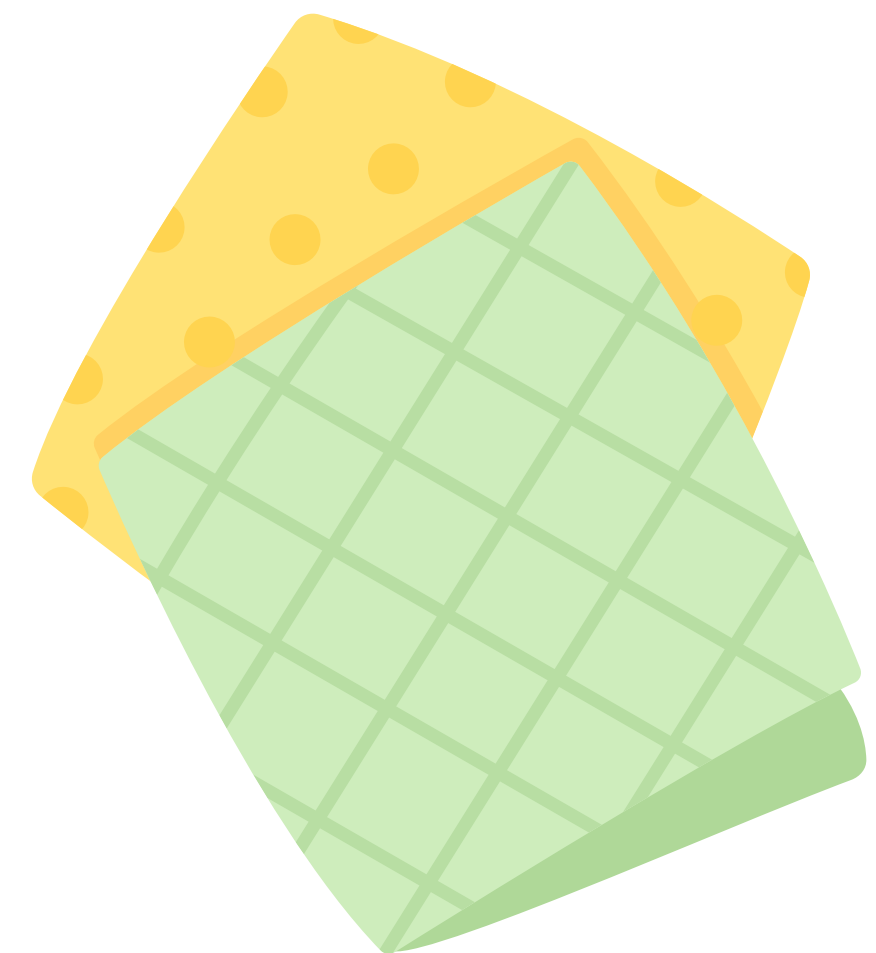
Many healthcare facilities are switching to disposable microfibre systems to reduce the risks associated with multi-use products.

Wet mops are a common source of infection. Staff members may clean an area of the floor and then accidentally touch a damp part of the mop, potentially spreading pathogens to their hands and clothes.

Professional microfibre mop kits can eliminate the need for liquid cleaning chemicals.

In addition, switching to biohazard spill mops further reduces the risk of spreading pathogens.

Unlike regular mops, innovative spill mop pads are designed to absorb bodily fluids and turn them into a gel to prevent dripping. The entire mop head can then be disposed of in a biohazard receptacle.



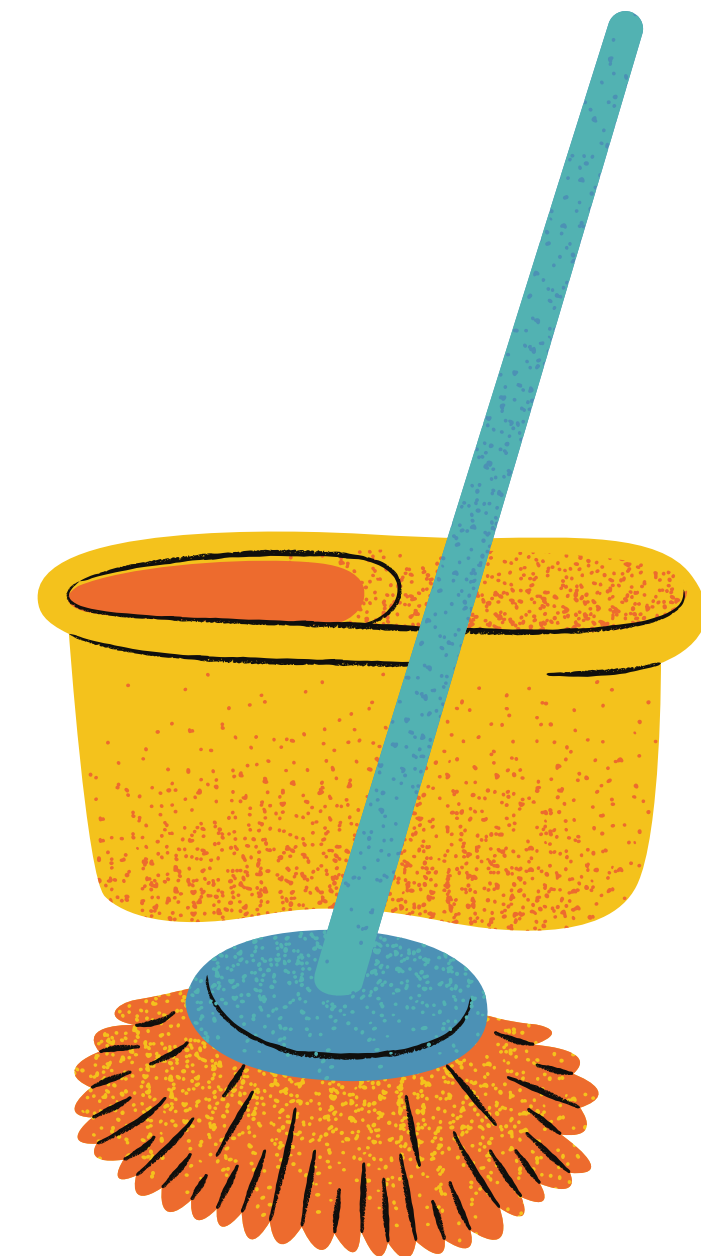
AVOIDING HAI - STORING EQUIPMENT

Cleaning equipment should always be stored in dry areas away from patients and other people.

Limiting access to cleaning supplies ensures that only authorised staff members use them.

Storing cleaning supplies in designated caddies keeps everything separate.

For instance, cleaning clothes should never come in contact with mopping equipment.



AVOIDING HAI - STORING EQUIPMENT

Using racks and shelves to keep supplies apart reduces the chance that pathogens will move from one item to another.

Staff members should maintain up-to-date inventory lists for each supply closet. Expired products should be removed promptly. In addition, the supply closet itself should be cleaned regularly. For example, if products drip on the floor, the spill should be cleaned immediately.

Breaking the chain of infection with proper cleaning procedures helps keep patients safe and reduces unnecessary healthcare costs. Maintaining cleaning equipment with the latest best practices can stop the spread of HAIs.





rubbermaidcommercial.com.au

1800 639 355