



# Saint John of God Kerry Services

Hospitality - Compassion - Respect -

## Guidelines on the Safe Storage Of Medical Gloves

37

Saint John of God Kerry Services

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Storage of Medical Gloves

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# Procedure

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## 1.0 Introduction

Saint John of God Kerry Services is committed to the highest standards on health, safety and risk management. All staff providing supports within Saint John of God Kerry Services will adhere to these guidelines in relation to the safe storage of medical gloves. Inadequate storage of medical gloves may result in a breach of regulations and of failing to provide sufficient care to people in particular those with a diminished sense of safety awareness. Maintaining a safe environment is crucial to the well-being of the people we support.

## 1.1 Policy Statement

It is the policy of Saint John of God Kerry Services to use this guideline for the secure and safe storage of medical gloves.

## 1.2 Purpose

The purpose of this document is to ensure all staff understand how to store gloves in a safe and secure manner.

## 1.3 Scope

All staff providing supports within Saint John of God Kerry Services

## 2.0 Legislation/Other Related Policies

No specific guidance available however the Health Information Quality Authority (HIQA) have concerns regarding the likelihood of a service user ingesting gloves and have asked how services safely store gloves to prevent choking incident in service users and also visitors and how they risk assess. HIQA have highlighted these concerns in a number of inspection reports. For example,

1. A resident at risk of ingesting latex gloves and toiletries had a risk assessment which outline all gloves must be locked away at all times to reduce the risk of harm. Inspectors found accessible gloves and toiletries located in numerous bathrooms in the centre” (HIQA report 14 April 2015, St John of God Community Services, Kildare)
2. “However, risk assessment in relation to safe storage of gloves and aprons throughout the centre was required” (HIQA report Mayo Nursing home 07 May 2014)
3. “Gloves and aprons were stored in a room with a door and associated key pad to limit access by residents. Gloves and aprons were also stored in cupboards on the corridors. These had an added security of a magnet lock to ensure residents did not have access” (HIQA report Galway Nursing home 23 April 2014 19:00)
4. “However, not all areas of risk in the centre had been identified and assessed. For example, the storage of latex gloves, unrestricted window openings and hose-piping” (HIQA report, Laura Lynn 04 June 2014).

## 3.0 Roles and Responsibilities

All staff providing supports within Saint John of God Kerry Services are responsible for complying with this guideline.



Regional Directors, General Manager, Programme Managers, Person in charge, Coordinators, Clinical Nurse Managers, Social Care Leaders and authorised staff are responsible for ensuring compliance to this guideline.

#### **4.0 Guideline**

The safe storage of disposable gloves in our workplace is the responsibility of all staff providing supports to service users. Gloves should be treated as any other hazardous material and stored in a locked cupboard in areas where they are most likely to be used. This is to support the removal of the possible risks of ingestion of gloves by any person receiving services from Saint John of God Kerry Services. The use of disposable items like gloves should be considered in terms of need, to remove any unnecessary use.

- Store in cool (< 25°C), dry, well-ventilated area away from strong oxidising agents, sunlight, fluorescent lights.
- Ensure all gloves are stored in accordance with the assessed risks and support needs of individuals in each area.
- Where there is a risk of ingestion identified, ensure gloves are stored in secure areas, in a locked press.
- Ensure a planned clinical assessment to establish the function of an individual's behaviour is completed where a resident has a history of ingestion of non-food items.
- Individual protocols will be required for some service users, where there are complex support needs and where risks have been identified. "Items of protective clothing, such as disposable gloves and aprons should be provided [for intimate care]. There should be no re-use of disposable gloves" (HIQA 2013).
- Include all necessary measures taken in the Risk Management Policy document for the location.
- Ensure used gloves are disposed of correctly and safely.
- Where protocols are developed specific to service users with complex needs, all staff involved in the care and support of the individual should be advised.

#### **4.1 Storage re: shelf life of gloves**

When considering the shelf life of vinyl and latex gloves, it's important to remember proper storage practices. To maximize the useful life of any type of gloves, they must be stored in cool dry conditions, shielded from ozone and UV light. Gloves always should be stored away from steam pipes, radiators and other heat sources. Glove shelf life depends on how products are stored and the materials used to manufacture the products. Vinyl



gloves have a nominal shelf life of 5 years from the date of manufacturing. In general, a normal glove can be stretched without creating cracks in the material. If you are concerned about the shelf life of your latex or vinyl gloves, give them a firm pull. If you see cracks in the material throw them out, if not then they are still viable and can be used (CDRH 2008).

#### **4.2 Disposal**

- Disposal: in accordance with local waste regulations. Used: gloves must be disposed of in accordance with SJOGCS infectious waste requirements.

#### **5.0 Implementation Plan**

All staff providing supports within Saint John of God Kerry Services are responsible for being aware of and implementing this guideline.

Regional Directors, General Manager, and Programme Managers are responsible for ensuring the guideline is accessible and for staff education required in order to implement the guideline.

Persons in Charge, Coordinators, Clinical Nurse Managers, Social Care Leaders and authorised staff are responsible for the service user (if applicable) with regard to education and training that will be required for the individual in order to implement the guideline. The guideline should be reviewed and audited at an appropriate time.

#### **6.0 References and bibliography**

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## SIGNATURE PAGE

I have read, understand and agree to adhere to the attached Procedure:

**Print Name**

**Signature**

**Area of Work**

**Date**

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