

A self-reflection tool for infection prevention and control

December 2025

Your responsibilities in minimising infections spreading

The Podiatry Board of Australia (the Board) expects all registered podiatrists and podiatric surgeons to practise in a way that minimises the spread of infection.

Your professional obligations are outlined in the Board's registration standards, codes and guidelines. It is your responsibility to be aware of and comply with these, and other legal or regulatory requirements relating to infection prevention and control.

You must comply with professional, legal and regulatory requirements, even where the responsibility for infection prevention and control tasks is shared with other practitioners, practice staff or assistants, and even where you are not the practice owner. You should apply a risk-based approach, having regard to your practice setting.

More information, including a fact sheet, is available on [the Board's infection prevention and control webpage](#). Read these documents in conjunction with using this tool.

Purpose of this tool

Maintaining and developing knowledge, skills and professional competency are key to good practice. Self-reflection and participation in professional development, practice improvement and performance appraisal can help you continually develop professional capabilities.

This self-reflective tool can help you identify areas for development or improvement in your infection prevention and control practices. The tool is designed to be used across a wide range of practice settings. Completing the tool is not required by the Board under any registration standard, code or guideline.

How to use the self-reflective tool

To use the self-reflective tool, you need to:

- reflect on your practice and consider the questions and statements in the document
- make notes against the question or statement (where applicable)
- identify gaps in your knowledge, skills, systems and protocols, and
- where necessary, make an improvement plan.

The more you consider and reflect and the more detail you write, the more useful the tool will be. You can use it as often as you like. For example, you could consider using it as part of planning for your [continuing professional development](#) (CPD) cycle.

The tool can help you talk about infection prevention and control with your teams, mentors, assistants and other colleagues. This can be in peer-based and CPD settings.

In many places of practice, infection prevention and control tasks are not solely managed by podiatrists and podiatric surgeons. You can use this tool to reflect on whether the systems and processes in your place of practice are adequate.

This tool is not a substitute for the Board's standards, codes and guidelines, or a definitive list of infection prevention and control requirements. This is not an audit tool. The notes you make are for your own purposes. It will help you reflect on your practice and assess whether you need to improve your practice, but it will not state whether you meet the requirements.

Reflect on your infection prevention and control practices by responding to these questions

Name:

Date:

Tips for answering the questions

1. List the information sources you use to guide you on infection prevention and control. Check the information is current and evidence-based.
2. Check you understand what legal or regulatory requirements apply in your state or territory.
3. Check the policies and procedures used in your place of practice. You should ensure they are consistent with evidence-based guidelines and legal or regulatory requirements.
4. When answering the questions below, consider how your practice compares to the evidence-based guidelines and legal or regulatory requirements.

Key components of infection prevention and control	Question	My response
Pre-treatment screening and management of infection risks	<p>How do you approach pre-treatment patient screening for transmissible infections, and in what ways do your protocols and procedures protect others?</p> <p>In your response, consider:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• the steps you take to identify infection risks before treatment• how your protocols minimise transmission to staff, patients and others, and• the factors that influence your screening and decision-making (e.g. symptoms, history, guidelines). <p>Reflect on what works well, any challenges you face, and opportunities for improvement.</p>	
Environmental infection risks	<p>How do you identify and address environmental infection risks in your practice?</p> <p>In your response, consider:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• the steps you take to assess the physical environment for potential infection hazards	

Key components of infection prevention and control	Question	My response
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • how you evaluate the safety and suitability of new and existing equipment, medical devices and products • the processes for ongoing monitoring and maintenance, and • the factors that influence your decisions (e.g. regulatory standards, evidence-based guidelines). <p>Reflect on what works well, any challenges you face, and opportunities for improvement.</p>	
Clean environment	<p>How do you ensure your clinical environment consistently supports infection prevention?</p> <p>In your response, consider:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • how you manage the separation of clean and contaminated areas • cleaning routines and frequency • storage practices for sterile and non-sterile items • waste disposal processes, and • equipment maintenance and servicing. <p>Reflect on how confident you are that these measures are effective, what works well, and any challenges or opportunities for improvement.</p>	
Handwashing and hand hygiene	<p>How do you integrate effective handwashing and hand hygiene into your daily practice?</p> <p>In your response, consider:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • the steps you take to ensure compliance with best-practice standards, and • how you monitor and assess whether your approach consistently meets these standards. 	

Key components of infection prevention and control	Question	My response
	Reflect on what works well, any challenges you face, and opportunities for improvement.	
Linen management	<p>How do you ensure linen laundering and management in your practice consistently meet infection prevention standards?</p> <p>In your response, consider the processes you use for handling, transporting, and storing clean and contaminated linen, and how you monitor these.</p> <p>Reflect on what works well, any challenges you face, and opportunities for improvement.</p>	
Standard and transmission-based precautions	<p>How do you decide when and how to apply standard and transmission-based precautions in your practice using a risk-based approach?</p> <p>In your response, consider:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> the factors that influence your decisions (e.g. patient presentation, risk assessment, guidelines), and how you ensure these precautions are implemented consistently. <p>Reflect on what works well, any challenges you face, and opportunities for improvement.</p>	
	<p>How do you decide when to apply contact, droplet, and airborne precautions in your practice using a risk-based approach?</p> <p>In your response, consider:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> the factors that influence your decisions (e.g. patient symptoms, diagnosis, risk assessment, current guidelines), and how you ensure these precautions are implemented correctly and consistently. 	

Key components of infection prevention and control	Question	My response
	Reflect on what works well, any challenges you face, and opportunities for improvement.	
Personal protective equipment	<p>How do you decide when you and your staff use Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) using a risk-based approach?</p> <p>In your response, consider:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • how you evaluate compliance in applying PPE correctly • what systems or checks you use to monitor adherence. <p>Reflect on what works well, any challenges you face, and opportunities for improvement.</p>	
Use of single-use medical devices¹	<p>How do you ensure your approach to using and disposing of single-use medical devices is safe and effective?</p> <p>In your response, consider:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • how do you evaluate compliance in applying correct disposal practices, and • what systems or checks you use to monitor adherence to best-practice standards. <p>Reflect on what works well, any challenges you face, and opportunities for improvement.</p>	

¹ 'Single-use medical devices' includes instruments or items used in podiatry that are intended to be used only once and then discarded.

Key components of infection prevention and control	Question	My response
Aseptic technique	<p>How do you understand and apply the principles of aseptic technique in your practice?</p> <p>In your response, consider:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • how you assess consistency in applying these principles • what factors guide your decision-making in different clinical situations • how do you determine effective technique. <p>Reflect on what works well, any challenges you encounter, and opportunities for improvement.</p>	
Management of sharps injuries	<p>How do you minimise the risk of sharps injuries in your practice?</p> <p>In your response, consider:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • what strategies you use to minimise risk, and • how you monitor compliance in applying these strategies. <p>Reflect on what works well, any challenges you face, and opportunities for improvement.</p>	
	<p>What is the process in your practice for managing a sharps injury?</p> <p>Reflect on what works well, any challenges you face, and opportunities for improvement.</p>	
Management of blood/body fluid exposures	<p>What is the process for managing the risk of exposure to blood or body fluids in your practice?</p> <p>Reflect on what works well, any challenges you face, and opportunities for improvement.</p>	

Key components of infection prevention and control	Question	My response
	<p>What is the process for responding to an exposure to blood or body fluids in your practice?</p> <p>Reflect on what works well, any challenges you face, and opportunities for improvement.</p>	
Waste management	<p>How do you comply with the waste management requirements set by the relevant regulatory authorities?</p> <p>In your response, consider how you ensure consistent compliance with these requirements.</p> <p>Reflect on what works well, any challenges you face, and opportunities for improvement.</p>	
Reprocessing of reusable medical devices²	<p>How do you ensure reusable medical devices are cleaned, reprocessed, stored, and transferred safely in your practice using a risk-based approach relevant to your practice setting?</p> <p>In your response, consider:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • what steps you take for each stage of the process, and • how you monitor and evaluate these processes for consistency and compliance. <p>Reflect on what works well, any challenges you face, and opportunities for improvement.</p>	
	<p>How do you ensure compliance with standards and/or manufacturers' recommendations for the testing, validation, and maintenance of reprocessing equipment in your practice?</p>	

² 'Reusable medical devices' include reusable instruments and equipment commonly used in podiatry.

Key components of infection prevention and control	Question	My response
	Reflect on what works well, any challenges you face, and opportunities for improvement.	
	<p>What is your process for tracking and tracing reusable equipment, instruments and medical devices ensure accurate identification?</p> <p>In your response, consider what safeguards are in place, how these processes support patient safety, and any opportunities for improvement.</p>	
Antimicrobial stewardship (for all practitioners, whether they prescribe, supply, administer and/or advise patients about antimicrobials)	<p>What strategies do you employ for minimising antimicrobial resistance within your practice setting?</p> <p>Consider what works well, what challenges you face, and opportunities for improvement.</p>	
Reporting and investigation of adverse events	<p>What is your process for investigating, communicating and reporting breaches of infection control and/or an adverse event within your practice?</p> <p>Reflect on what works well, challenges encountered, and opportunities for improvement.</p>	
Governance, monitoring and quality improvement	<p>What systems does your organisation use to monitor and improve infection prevention and control practices?</p> <p>In your response, consider:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • how these systems track compliance and identify risks • the processes for auditing and reporting • how data is used to inform improvements • the role of staff feedback and education • how feedback from patients is considered. 	

Key components of infection prevention and control	Question	My response
	Reflect on what works well, challenges faced, and opportunities for enhancement.	
	<p>What measures or indicators do you use to assess and improve the safety and quality of your infection prevention and control practices?</p> <p>Reflect on how these indicators inform decision-making, what works well, and where improvements could be made.</p>	
Delegation of tasks for infection prevention and control	What training, policies and procedures are in place to support delegated staff to undertake infection prevention and control processes within your practice setting?	
	Reflect on what works well, challenges faced, and opportunities for enhancement	

Consider your responses and how they can help you to address any gaps in your knowledge, skills, systems or protocols.

What to do if you identify gaps

There are steps you can take if you discover that your knowledge and skills about infection prevention and control or the systems and protocols you use are below expected standards for practice.

You could:

- review the Board's fact sheet on infection prevention and control for practitioners
- seek advice from government health departments, statutory entities, professional associations, your professional indemnity insurer, your employer or private consultants
- do mentoring, education or other learning activities
- seek advice from your peers or colleagues.

Consider setting learning, development or improvement goals to help you address any gaps you identify. Make sure that your goals are:

Specific	Your goals should outline clearly and in detail what you want to achieve
Measurable	You should be able to track or measure whether you have achieved the goal
Attainable	The goal should be realistic and capable of being carried out
Relevant	The goal should relate to your objectives, in this context, to addressing the gaps and improvements you identified after completing this tool
Time-oriented	Set a date by which you achieve your goal, to help keep you accountable

Completing education or other activities to improve your infection prevention and control practices can count towards CPD. [Information and resources](#) on the CPD requirements, including guidance on choosing a CPD activity, are available on the [Board's website](#).