



**Health  
Information  
and Quality  
Authority**

An tÚdarás Um Fhaisnéis  
agus Cáilíocht Sláinte

Regulation of  
Health and Social  
Care Services

# Assessment judgment framework for Regulation 27 – Protection against Infection

Designated centres for persons (children  
and adults) with disabilities

September 2021

*Safer Better Care*

## About the Health Information and Quality Authority

The Health Information and Quality Authority (HIQA) is an independent statutory authority established to promote safety and quality in the provision of health and social care services for the benefit of the health and welfare of the public.

HIQA's mandate to date extends across a wide range of public, private and voluntary sector services. Reporting to the Minister for Health and engaging with the Minister for Children, Equality, Disability, Integration and Youth, HIQA has responsibility for the following:

- **Setting standards for health and social care services** — Developing person-centred standards and guidance, based on evidence and international best practice, for health and social care services in Ireland.
- **Regulating social care services** — The Chief Inspector within HIQA is responsible for registering and inspecting residential services for older people and people with a disability, and children's special care units.
- **Regulating health services** — Regulating medical exposure to ionising radiation.
- **Monitoring services** — Monitoring the safety and quality of health services and children's social services, and investigating as necessary serious concerns about the health and welfare of people who use these services.
- **Health technology assessment** — Evaluating the clinical and cost-effectiveness of health programmes, policies, medicines, medical equipment, diagnostic and surgical techniques, health promotion and protection activities, and providing advice to enable the best use of resources and the best outcomes for people who use our health service.
- **Health information** — Advising on the efficient and secure collection and sharing of health information, setting standards, evaluating information resources and publishing information on the delivery and performance of Ireland's health and social care services.
- **National Care Experience Programme** — Carrying out national service-user experience surveys across a range of health services, in conjunction with the Department of Health and the Health Service Executive (HSE).

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## Introduction

This assessment judgment framework is in line with HIQA's established 'Authority Monitoring Approach' (AMA) and the Health Act 2007, as amended<sup>1</sup>.

This programme of inspections will focus specifically on Regulation 27 Protection against infection, to assess how the registered provider has implemented the *National Standards for infection prevention and control in community services* (2018).

Regulation 27 requires that the registered provider ensure that procedures consistent with these standards are implemented. Consequently, registered providers must implement these standards in order to be compliant with Regulation 27. In addition, the Health Act 2007, as amended, requires that registered providers comply with standards set by the Authority under section 8(1)(b).

## Guidance for registered providers

The registered provider must have a governance framework in place, that sets out the authority and accountability for infection prevention and control within the designated centre. Regulation 27, the National Standards, guidance from the Health Service Executive (HSE), Health Protection Surveillance Centre (HPSC) along with best available infection prevention and control evidence, provide registered providers with the framework to confidentially assess that infection prevention and control is effective, in order to deliver its intended benefits for residents, staff and the environment in which residents live.

The Chief Inspector has produced a number of guidance and tools to support registered providers in applying the regulations, standards and making improvements in their services, particularly during any outbreak of infection, including during a pandemic for the safety and welfare of residents. Notwithstanding this assessment judgement framework and accompanying guidance, registered providers should continue to employ the guidance and tools produced by the Chief Inspector in relation to COVID-19 and infection prevention and control practices. The guidance includes:

- The *assurance framework for registered providers - preparedness planning and Infection prevention and control measures* and *Guidance for the assessment of designated centres for for persons (children and adults) with disabilities people* are the accompanying guidance for this assessment judgment framework. This framework includes:
  - Guidance
  - Self-assessment tool
  - Quality improvement plan

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<sup>1</sup> <https://www.hiqa.ie/reports-and-publications/guide/enhanced-authority-monitoring-approach-ama-guidance> and <https://www.hiqa.ie/reports-and-publications/guide/regulation-handbook>

- Short video resource
- The *Guidance for the assessment of designated centres for persons (children and adults) with disabilities* supports providers in complying with the Regulations<sup>2</sup>.

The guidance can be found on HIQA's website under the provider guidance section:

<https://www.hiqa.ie/guidance-providers/providers-disability-services>

### **Assessment-judgment framework**

The assessment-judgment framework should be applied in conjunction with the following:

- Health Act 2007 (Care and Support of Residents in Designated Centres for Persons (Children and Adults with Disabilities) Regulations 2013.
- *National Standards for infection prevention and control in community services 2018.*
- Guidance on the assessment of Regulation 27 – protection against infection.
- COVID-19 An assurance framework for registered providers - preparedness planning and Infection prevention and control measures 2020.
- *National Standards for infection prevention and control in community services 2018.*
- Regulation Handbook: A guide for providers and staff of designated centres.

### **Regulation 27**

Regulation 27 requires that the registered provider shall ensure that residents who may be at risk of a healthcare-associated infection are protected by adopting procedures consistent with the standards for the prevention and control of healthcare-associated infections published by the Authority. The standards that are assessed under this regulation are the *National Standards for infection prevention and control in community services 2018.*

In assessing Regulation 27, the extent to which a provider has implemented the standards outlined below will be considered. A judgement of compliance will be made against Regulation 27. The judgment descriptors for Regulation 27 are:

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<sup>2</sup> Health Act 2007 (Care and Support of Residents in Designated Centres for Persons (Children and Adults with Disabilities) Regulations 2013

- **Compliant:** a judgment of compliant means the provider and or the person in charge is in full compliance with Regulation 27 and by extension the *National Standards for infection prevention and control in community services* (2018).
- **Substantially compliant:** a judgment of substantially compliant means that the provider or person in charge has generally met the requirements of Regulation 27 and the *National Standards for infection prevention and control in community services* (2018) but some action is required to be fully compliant. This finding will have a risk rating of yellow, which is low risk.
- **Not compliant:** a judgment of not compliant means the level of compliance does not assure the Chief Inspector that the provider or person in charge has taken all necessary steps to ensure compliance with Regulation 27 and the *National Standards for infection prevention and control in community services* (2018). The absence of these steps means that residents are at risk. The provider and or the person in charge is required to take urgent action.

For the purpose of reporting the findings, the following standards will be described under the **Capacity and Capability** section in the inspection report. Any non-compliance with the regulation will be reported under Regulation 27:

<b>Dimension: Capacity and capability</b>	
<b>Leadership, Governance and Management</b>	
Standard 5.1	The service has clear governance arrangements in place to ensure the sustainable delivery of safe and effective infection prevention and control and antimicrobial stewardship.
<b>Lines of Enquiry</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Are there governance structures in place that can assure the provider as to the effectiveness and quality of the infection prevention and control practices?</li> <li>2. Has the provider identified a person with overall responsibility for the management of infection prevention and control within the centre?</li> <li>3. Is the provider assured that the roles and responsibilities of staff are clearly defined and that staff discharge their responsibilities,</li> </ol>

	<p>which includes effective infection prevention and control practices?</p> <p>4. Does the provider have a system in place to monitor and report on infection prevention and control activities to identify opportunities for improvement to the safety and quality of care provided taking into account the standards, national guidance and best available evidence?</p> <p>5. Does the provider have well-prepared contingency arrangements in place to respond to an outbreak of infection or other emergencies?</p>
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<b>Leadership, Governance and Management</b>	
Standard 5.2	There are clear management arrangements in place to ensure the delivery of safe and effective infection prevention and control and antimicrobial stewardship within the service.
<b>Lines of Enquiry</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Has the provider identified a person or persons with appropriate knowledge and skills, to manage key areas of infection prevention and control within the centre?</li> <li>2. Are there clear arrangements in place for the:               <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a) identification</li> <li>b) management</li> <li>c) control</li> <li>d) review of; and</li> <li>e) learning from</li> </ol>               infection prevention and control risks in the centre?             </li> <li>3. Do staff have access to up-to-date information, such as new or revised guidelines, safety alerts and national updates and specialist staff with expertise in infection prevention and control to support, train and help staff?</li> </ol>

<b>Workforce</b>	
Standard 6.1	Service providers plan, organise and manage their workforce to meet the services' infection prevention and control needs.

<b>Lines of Enquiry</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Are staffing levels maintained at levels that can safely meet the service’s infection prevention and control needs and activities, including out-of-hours and deputising arrangements?</li>   <li>2. In determining the skill mix of staff, has the provider considered the infection prevention and control needs of the service?</li> </ol>
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<b>Workforce</b>	
Standard 6.2	Service providers ensure their workforce has the competencies, training and support to enable safe and effective infection prevention and control and antimicrobial stewardship practices.
<b>Lines of Enquiry</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Have all staff received training at induction and ongoing training in infection prevention and control appropriate to their specific role and areas of responsibilities?</li>   <li>2. Do staff have access to education and suitable training in infection prevention and control appropriate to their role and in line with National, HSE and HPSC guidance and which includes but is not limited to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ standard precautions including but not limited to, hand hygiene, use of personal protective equipment (PPE)</li> <li>▪ transmission-based precautions</li> <li>▪ healthcare-associated infections and antimicrobial resistance</li> <li>▪ medical device management and decontamination</li> <li>▪ infection prevention and control risk assessment</li> <li>▪ antimicrobial stewardship</li> <li>▪ outbreak management</li> <li>▪ national updates on prevention, control and management of infections, as made available.</li> </ul> </li> </ol>

For the purpose of reporting the findings, the following standards will be described under ***Quality and Safety*** section of the inspection report. Any non-compliance with the regulation will be reported under Regulation 27:

<b>Dimension: Quality and safety</b>	
<b>Person-Centred Care and Support</b>	
Standard 1.1	People are provided with appropriate information and are involved in decisions about their care to prevent, control and manage healthcare-associated infections and antimicrobial resistance.
<b>Lines of Enquiry</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Is infection prevention and control discussed with residents and information available to them in a way that they can understand?</li> <li>2. Are residents involved in decisions about their care and informed of infection prevention and control measures needed to protect them and others from infection risks?</li> <li>3. Are residents informed of any infections or outbreaks that directly affect them or their life in the designated centre?</li> <li>4. Do residents have timely access to healthcare services based on their assessed needs and expressed choices?</li> </ol>

<b>Effective Care and Support</b>	
Standard 2.1	Infection prevention and control is part of the routine delivery of care to protect people from preventable healthcare-associated infections.
<b>Lines of Enquiry</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Do staff adhere to standard precautions <b>all</b> of the time for all residents, whether infection is known to be present or not?</li> <li>2. Do staff adhere to additional precautions, known as transmission-based precautions, when standard precautions alone may be insufficient to prevent cross-transmission of specific infectious agents?</li> <li>3. Is information about resident's colonisation or infection status documented in their care record?</li> <li>4. Do staff share necessary information about a person's colonisation or infection status on admission, discharge and transfer within and between services, while respecting the</li> </ol>

	privacy and confidentiality of the person to whom the information relates?
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<b>Effective Care and Support</b>	
<b>Standard 2.2</b>	Care is provided in a clean and safe environment that minimises the risk of transmitting a healthcare-associated infection.
<b>Lines of Enquiry</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Is the centre clean and well maintained?</li> <li>2. Are the arrangements in place for cleaning and disinfecting the premises adequate, especially in the event of an outbreak?</li> <li>3. Are the arrangements in place for: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Laundry (where residents require support)</li> <li>• Waste disposal, including clinical waste</li> <li>• Maintenance and refurbishment of the premises appropriate to promote safe and effective infection prevention and control?</li> </ul> </li> <li>4. Are environmental and equipment hygiene audits regularly undertaken and learning from measurement data used to improve the safety and quality of the care provided?</li> </ol>

<b>Effective Care and Support</b>	
<b>Standard 2.3</b>	Equipment is decontaminated and maintained to minimise the risk of transmitting a healthcare-associated infection.
<b>Lines of Enquiry</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Has the provider ensured that all equipment (either single use or reusable) is only used in line with its stated purpose and stored appropriately?</li> <li>2. Is all equipment clean and decontaminated, in line with the manufacturer's instructions/relevant guidelines?</li> </ol>

	3. Are staff who undertake decontamination processes trained to do so?
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Safe Care and Support	
<b>Standard 3.4</b>	Outbreaks of infection are identified, managed, controlled and documented in a timely and effective manner.
<b>Lines of enquiry</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Are staff monitored for signs and symptoms of infection in line with national guidelines to facilitate prevention, early detection and control the spread of infection?</li> <li>2. Are outbreak preparedness and outbreak management plans in place and are staff aware of these plans to enable them to act promptly when required?</li> <li>3. Are outbreak reports prepared after an outbreak to include a review of the management of the outbreak and lesson learned?</li> <li>4. Does the outbreak management plan include a plan for communication with the support of residents during an outbreak?</li> </ol>



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