

I am making a submission on behalf of our DHB dental department with regard to the proposed Infection Prevention and Control Practice Standard

I am disappointed for a number of reasons. Firstly, why make all the unvaccinated the same risk? Children under 12 years of age are, at present, unable to have vaccines, yet their household may be. The risk levels are different from an adult who has refused to have a vaccine. These patients should be managed by their risk profile and children, with vaccinated parents should be treated as vaccinated themselves (as recommended by hospital infection control teams)

If the proposed standard is so important (to be considered a standard and not a guideline) why can a multi chair clinical set up be exempt while single surgery set up having to stand down. There is a higher risk with the multi chair set up- and yet they can avoid the stand down, that is considered so important to keep patients safe. This is inconsistent and their needs to be one rule for all. The stand down periods will affect all services and the number of reduced appointments available will cause harm to children

The airflow requirements are confusing. My understanding is that air purifiers are the most effective measure and yet the standard only talks about airflow turnover to reduce stand down times

I cannot understand why there is no difference in procedures. While I accept, there is now evidence, suggesting a lower risk from aerosol production as previously thought – surely, a quick review should not be seen as the same risk as a lengthy aerosol producing procedure. A long stand down time for a short non-aerosol procedure, on a child, seems excessively and for no benefit

Hospitals have full time infection control teams. Hospital dental departments should be able to work under hospital standards- developed by these teams, covering all medical specialities and hospital departments. There needs to be an exemption for dental departments, who have plans, written by experts

I can only encourage you to review these guidelines. Thanks you

Regards

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