

## Introduction

In recent studies and surveys it has been concluded that wireless mobile devices are being adopted more rapidly than hospital policies, with 69% of physicians using the technology appliances to view patient medical records and of that population 36% are using to collect data at the bedside<sup>4</sup>. This known dynamic places these devices into two CDC defined categories, **noncritical patient item** and **clinical contact surface**, as well as **enterprise mobile devices**. This is key as there are specific recommendations about these two categories when it comes to cleaning and disinfection. CDC definitions of cleaning and disinfection are also covered in this document. Important to note is the distinction between these two terms that are often used interchangeably.

## Cleaning

“Cleaning is the necessary first step of any disinfection process. Cleaning removes organic matter, salts, and visible soils, all of which interfere with microbial inactivation. The physical action of scrubbing with detergents and surfactants and rinsing with water removes substantial numbers of microorganisms. If a surface is not cleaned first, the success of the disinfection process can be compromised. Removal of all visible blood and inorganic and organic matter can be as critical as the germicidal activity of the disinfecting agent. When a surface cannot be cleaned adequately, it should be protected with barriers<sup>1</sup>.”

## Disinfection

“Disinfection destroys *most* pathogenic and other microorganisms by physical or chemical means<sup>1</sup>.”

## Enterprise Mobile Devices

“According to the CDC, after a device has been disinfected at the beginning of a workday, a good rule of thumb—or ratio for cleaning vs. disinfection of enterprise mobile devices—is 5-to-1. In other words, a device should be disinfected after it has been cleaned with a microfiber cloth five times<sup>2</sup>. “

### Noncritical Patient Care Item

“An item that comes into contact with skin but not mucous membranes. Ensure that, at a minimum, noncritical patient-care devices are disinfected when visibly soiled and on a regular basis (**such as after use on each patient or once daily or once weekly**)<sup>1</sup>

### Clinical Contact Surface

“A surface that might be touched frequently with gloved hands during patient care or that might become contaminated with blood or other potentially infectious material and subsequently contact instruments, hands, gloves, or devices. Barrier protective coverings (e.g., clear plastic wraps) can be used for these surfaces, particularly those that are difficult to clean (e.g., light handles, chair switches). The coverings should be changed when visibly soiled or damaged and routinely (e.g., between patients). **Protected surfaces should be disinfected at the end of each day or if contamination is evident. If not barrier-protected, these surfaces should be disinfected between patients with an intermediate-disinfectant<sup>1</sup>.**”

### Sources

- 1 – CDC, *Guideline for Disinfection and Sterilization in Healthcare Facilities, 2008*
- 2 - *Separating Myth from Reality: Cleaning and Disinfecting Mobile Devices How Your Mobile Devices Affect The 21ST Century Healthcare Environment, 2016*
- 3 - *Sterilization or Disinfection of Medical Devices, 2012*
- 4 - *3rd Annual HIMSS Analytics Mobile Survey. (2014, February 26).*