

Inspection of cannulated devices, cleaning of personal items, arm covering in SPD

by Ray Taurasi, MBA, CRCST, CHL, FCS, ACE, Principal, Healthcare CS Solutions



Q Borescopes have become the new wave for inspecting cannulated items on the clean side along with ATP testing. We do not have a borescope with a diameter that is small enough to fit through the very small channels of some scopes and small instruments, such as the baron suctions. Is there an alternative for inspecting these items? I know many hospitals fill a syringe with water and flush over a white linen towel to inspect for blockage or debris. Same is done with lap instruments that cannot be taken apart. Is this still an acceptable practice? Is there a water requirement?

A In last month's *HPN* edition, I addressed the importance of cleaning verification for cannulated medical devices and provided information and recommendations that would address your concerns. Visit the November "CS Solutions" column (<https://hpnonline.com/21159592>) to learn more. If it is absolutely necessary that you do this inspection on your clean side, I would recommend that you have a designated/segregated workstation dedicated to this function and that the staff performing the inspection process wear the appropriate PPE.

Q I am the manager of surgical services, which includes the OR, SPD, and RR. All these areas occasionally have outside consultants, service personnel, vendors, and educators coming into their work areas. We require them to change into scrubs or jumpsuits and basically follow the same dress code as the personnel in the work area they are visiting. Frequently they come in with briefcases and carrying cases that they need to bring into the area where they are meeting. We try to discourage them from doing this, but often they really do need the contents during the meeting. We currently do not address this matter in our policies. What would you recommend?

A Unclean items brought into the OR and other areas you mentioned can be contaminated with dust, microorganisms, bacteria, and pathogens. Any personal items, such as briefcases, backpacks or other carrying cases, should be cleaned prior to bringing them into your restricted

or semi-restricted areas. If this becomes an issue, then I would suggest they remove what is needed and place it in a clean hospital tote box or container that they can bring into the area. Once cleaned, any of these carrying cases should not be placed on the floor.

Frequently I get questions relative to other personal items, such as cell phones and tablets, being brought into semi-restricted and restricted areas; these items should be cleaned before and after use in these areas. Ultraviolet (UV) sanitization or disinfection units are quite popular for These units are effective, with a rapid cycle of three minutes or less. (See Figure 1.)

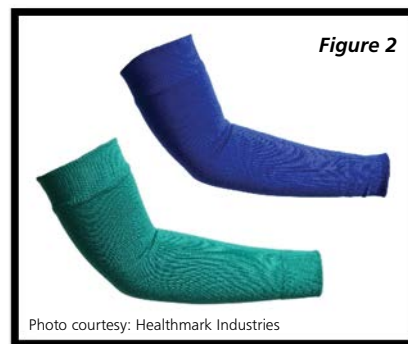


Q We have a new manager who has changed our dress policy, which now requires that we wear scrub jackets in the instrument assembly and packing area. She claims that the long sleeves support a cleaner work area preventing foreign particles from possibly falling into sets and packages. I, as well as other staff members, dislike wearing the jackets as they are uncomfortable and very warm. Many of my coworkers are wearing the same jackets for several days without laundering them, which certainly cannot be very sanitary. What do you suggest?

A Sterile processing personnel who are preparing and packaging surgical instrument sets should wear scrub attire that covers the arms fully and is fitted at the cuffs. Wearing long-sleeved attire, such as warm-up jackets, prevents the shedding of scaled skin (squames) and hairs on bare

arms from depositing into instrument sets or packages. Organic matter, such as skin or hair, could attach to instruments and be transferred to the surgical incision site, exposing the patient to a greater risk of getting a surgical site infection or other serious postoperative complications.

An option for the warm-up jacket that many find more comfortable and cooler are arm sleeves. (See Figure 2.) Just as is the case with scrub attire, a clean warm-up jacket should be worn each day and be changed whenever it becomes soiled during the day. Hospital attire, such as scrub wear and warm-up jackets, should only be laundered by the healthcare facility's laundry services and not allowed to be laundered at home. Both AAMI and AORN standards and guidelines address these issues. **HPN**



Note to readers - In 2021, my life's career path will transition to one of new opportunities and adventures. As a result, after nearly 19 years and 225 CS Solution columns, this edition will be my last.

"All changes, even the most longed for, have their melancholy; for what we leave behind us is a part of ourselves; we must die to one life before we can enter another." - Anatole France

I wish you and your loved ones a healthy and joyful holiday season and a beautiful New Year! God Speed, Ray

<https://www.facebook.com/pages/category/Local-Business/Healthcare-CS-Solutions-1288573061153887/>

email: raytaurasi@gmail.com

