

Reprocessing of Reusable Equipment in Aged Care Toolkit

Reprocessing is the process of preparing reusable equipment for safe reuse through cleaning and, where required, disinfection or sterilisation, in accordance with the manufacturer's instructions. The AS/NZS 5369:2023 Reprocessing of reusable medical devices and other devices in health and non-health related facilities addresses the Spaulding Classification System which determines the level of reprocessing required by categorising equipment as critical (e.g. surgical instruments), semi-critical (e.g. laryngoscope blades) or non-critical (e.g. blood pressure cuffs, bed pans and lifting equipment), based on the risk of infection transmission.

In aged care, most reusable equipment is non-critical. Critical and semi-critical items used in this setting are generally either single-use (e.g. blades, scissors) or reprocessed off-site by an approved sterilisation service (e.g. podiatry instruments).

1. Key points:

- Reprocessing level depends on the items intended use and the level of infection risk they pose to the resident/individual
- Reprocess equipment after each use and on a routine schedule.
- Reprocessing frequency may increase during periods of heightened risk and during outbreak
- Always follow manufacturer's instructions for product compatibility and methods.
- Use only TGA-approved, (ARTG-listed Class IIb) equipment-grade cleaning and disinfectant products.
- Clean spills affecting equipment immediately
- Visually inspect equipment for cleanliness and functionality before storage or use

2. Best practices

- Train healthcare workers (HCW) involved in reprocessing.
- Provide ease of access to cleaning supplies



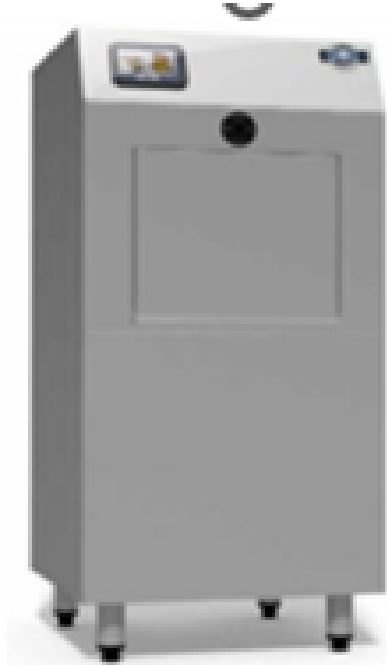
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- Establish a routine cleaning schedule, include role responsible.
- Use appropriate personal protective equipment.
- Maintain documentation for quality assurance – as appropriate.

3. Tool Kit:

Thermal (heat) and chemical reprocessing:

Sanitizer	Washer Disinfector
For bedpan, commode bowl, slipper pan and urinal use only. Process: Heat (hot water) disinfection only. 	For all reusable items: bedpans, urinals, tooth mugs, bowls. Process: Pre-rinsing, detergent washing, hot water disinfection, rinsing and cooling 



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Reusable Shared Equipment	Frequency	Procedure
Bedpans, urinals, urine jug, commode pan 	After use	- Contents of the bedpan or urinal may be emptied into the toilet at the point of care as practical or transported to dirty utility/sluice room for emptying. - Bedpans and urinals whether clean or soiled must be covered with a paper cover when being transported - Place item directly into the washer disinfector after use. - Used items should not be stacked and left on the top of the washer disinfector - Ventilated area, clean area, rack storage
Washing bowl 	After use and daily	- Use Washer Disinfector - Where there is no machine: - HCW to wear PPE - apron and gloves - Clean bowl with warm water and detergent after use and rinse. - Store bowls separately and inverted to reduce contamination

Chemical (cold/warm) reprocessing:

The appropriate chemical product should be selected in accordance with a risk assessment and the manufacturer's instructions for use (IFU).

Reusable Shared Equipment	Frequency	Procedure
Shower chair 	Contact points after use, and detail daily (weekly if single user)	- Use compatible detergent or combined detergent/disinfectant wipes or solution. - Wipe base and back of chair - Wipe underside of seat - Wipe chair legs - Include in routine cleaning schedule



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Commodes 	Contact points after use, and detail daily (weekly if single user)	• Use compatible detergent or combined detergent/disinfectant wipes or solution. • Contact points: ○ Wipe base, back and armrests of chair • Daily detail clean: ○ Wipe base, back and armrests of chair ○ Wipe underside of seat ○ Wipe chair wheels and foot plates • Ensure pan/bowl is clean post use in washer disinfectant • Include in routine cleaning schedule
Observation machine and blood pressure cuff 	Contact points after use and detail daily	• Use compatible detergent or combined detergent/disinfectant wipes or solution. • Clean contact points: ○ Wipe all parts of the machine, accessories and cuff • Daily detail clean: ○ Wipe all parts of the machine, accessories and cuff ○ Wipe over the frames and throughout container ○ Wipe stand and wheels • Include in routine daily cleaning schedule
Glucometer 	After use	• Where possible, blood glucose meters should be assigned to an individual resident • Use compatible detergent or combined detergent/disinfectant wipes or solution. • Wipe over all parts
Syringe driver 	Daily when in use and between residents	• Use compatible detergent or combined detergent/disinfectant wipes or solution. • Wipe over all surfaces and buttons • Wipe handles and fixtures • Wipe over any cords • Include in daily routine cleaning schedule (when in use)



Hoists 	Contact points after use, and detail daily (weekly if single user)	• Use compatible detergent or combined detergent/disinfectant wipes or solution. • Clean contact points: ○ Wipe handlebars and grips ○ Wipe controls • Daily detail clean: ○ Wipe over the frames ○ Wipe handlebars and grips ○ Wipe base and wheels ○ Wipe controls • Include in daily/weekly routine cleaning schedule.
Slings 	Weekly/monthly and as required (or as manufacturer's instructions)	• As possible, assign to an individual resident • Additional wash if soiled • Use washing machine • Where shared: Number slings and wash as per their number schedule • Launder in accordance with manufacturer's washing instructions (cycle, heat and chemicals) • Hang to dry - Do not tumble dry • If heavily soiled or infectious, follow organisation's laundering processes • Include in weekly/monthly routine cleaning schedule
Slide sheet 	After use (weekly if single user)	• As possible, assign to an individual resident • Additional wash if soiled • Use washing machine ○ Launder in accordance with manufacturer's washing instructions (cycle, warm wash and detergent) • Hang to dry - Do not tumble dry • If heavily soiled or infectious, follow organisation's laundering processes



Walking frames 	After use and detail daily (weekly if single user)	• Use compatible detergent or combined detergent/disinfectant wipes or solution. • Clean contact points: ○ Wipe over all parts of the frames including handles and legs • Daily detail clean: ○ Wipe over all parts of the frames including handles and legs ○ Wipe support bars and rubber floor grips • Include in daily/weekly routine cleaning schedule
4 Wheel walker 	Contact points after use, and detail daily	• Use compatible detergent or combined detergent/disinfectant wipes or solution. • Clean contact points: ○ Wipe handle grips and brakes ○ Wipe arms and front bar and padding ○ Wipe storage container lid/seat • Daily detail clean: ○ Wipe handle grips and brakes ○ Wipe arms, legs and cross bars ○ Wipe container lid/seat and container outsides ○ Wipe inside container (removing contents) ○ Wipe wheels • Include in daily routine cleaning schedule
Wheelchairs 	Contact points after use, and detail daily	• Use compatible detergent or combined detergent/disinfectant wipes or solution. • Clean contact points: ○ Wipe base and back of chair ○ Wipe handle grips ○ Wipe wheelchair arms • Daily detail clean: ○ Wipe base and back of chair ○ Wipe handle grips ○ Wipe wheelchair arms ○ Wipe underside of seat ○ Wipe wheels and foot plates • Include in daily routine cleaning schedule



Weigh chairs 	Contact points after use and detail daily	• Use compatible detergent or combined detergent and disinfectant wipes or solution. • Contact points: ○ Wipe base, arms and back of chair ○ Wipe screen panel ○ Wipe any handle grips • Daily detailed clean: ○ Wipe base, arms and back of chair ○ Wipe screen panel ○ Wipe underside of seat and bars ○ Wipe any handle grips ○ Wipe wheels and foot plates • Include in daily routine cleaning schedule
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General equipment	Frequency	Procedure
Linen skip frames 	Daily and detail weekly	• Use compatible detergent or combined detergent/disinfectant wipes or solution. • Daily: ○ Wipe the lid top/under ○ Wipe the entire frame • Weekly: ○ Wipe the lid top/under ○ Wipe the entire frame ○ Wipe foot pedals ○ Wipe the base and wheels • Include in weekly routine cleaning schedule
Medication trolley 	Contact points after use and daily. Detail weekly	• Use compatible detergent or combined detergent/disinfectant wipes or solution. • Contact points and daily: ○ Wipe over all external surfaces and handles ○ Empty waste compartment • Detail weekly clean: ○ Wipe over all external surfaces and handles ○ Take items out of drawers and wipe inside drawers and compartments ○ Wipe over wheels



		○ Wipe waste compartment lid and waste bin compartment • Include in weekly routine cleaning schedule
Procedure trolley 	Utilised surfaces and contact points before and after use. Detail weekly	• Use combined detergent/disinfectant wipes or solution • Contact points ○ Wipe over top and bottom platform ○ Wipe frame around platforms ○ Wipe trolley legs • Ideally procedure trolleys have no draws. Where drawers are present: ○ Wipe over drawer front and handle • Detail weekly clean: ○ Wipe over top and bottom platform ○ Wipe frame around platforms ○ Wipe over drawer front and handle ○ Take items out of drawers and wipe inside drawers ○ Discard opened, damaged or not required items ○ Wipe trolley legs ○ Wipe wheels • No items to be stored on the bottom shelf • Include in weekly routine cleaning schedule
Medication / vaccination or specimen fridges 	Detail weekly	• Use compatible detergent or combined detergent/disinfectant wipes or solution. • Detailed clean: ○ Remove all items out of fridge, discard any out-of-date items ○ Ensure medications/vaccinations are stored in a validated alternative storage solution and recommended temperature range is maintained in accordance with National Vaccine Storage Guidelines ○ Strive for 5 ○ Wipe all racks and shelves ○ Wipe containers



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		○ Wipe internal walls, ceiling and floor ○ Wipe external walls top and door • Include in weekly routine cleaning schedule
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Technical equipment	Frequency	Procedure
Desk and computers on wheels, laptops and keyboards 	Clean daily, and when visibly soiled	• Use compatible detergent wipes or solution ○ Use paper towel to ensure surfaces are dry • Wipe over all surfaces, stands and buttons • Wipe over cords and attachment • Consider keyboard protective covers or washable keyboards • If on wheels: ○ Weekly detailed clean of platform, stand, wheels ○ Include in weekly routine cleaning schedule • Include in daily routine cleaning schedule.
Deck phone 	After use and each shift	• Use compatible detergent wipes or solution ○ Use paper towel to ensure surfaces are dry • Wipe over the entire phone surface • Wipe over charging holder per shift • Include in shift routine cleaning schedule.



Single user equipment	Frequency	Procedure
Nebulizers 	After use and daily	• Use compatible detergent wipes or warm water and detergent solution • Wipe over the entire surface • Wipe under compartment covers and in storage parts • Wipe over tubing and mask • Change tubing and mask weekly (or as manufacturer's instructions) • Include in daily routine cleaning schedule
Spacer 	Weekly	• Use compatible detergent wipes or warm water and detergent solution • Dismantle spacer • Clean all parts, including mouthpiece. • Do not rinse ○ Note: bubbles add an antistatic coating to the spacer. • Parts to air dry ○ Note: drying with a cloth or paper towel results in static building up on the inside of the spacer, resulting in medication sticking to the sides. • When completely dry, reassemble • Include in weekly routine cleaning schedule
Concentrator, tubing and nasal prongs 	Contact points after use and detail monthly	• Use compatible detergent wipes or warm water and detergent solution • Contact points: ○ Wipe over the touched surface points ○ Wipe the handle and control panel ○ Wipe over tubing and prongs • Detailed monthly clean: ○ Wipe over the entire surface ○ Wipe the handle and control panel ○ Wipe under covers and in storage parts ○ Wipe over tubing and prongs



		• Maintenance: ○ Change tubing and prongs weekly (or as manufacturer's instructions) ○ Ensure filter change as per manufacturer's instructions • Include in routine monthly cleaning schedule
CPAP/BPAP 	After use and detail weekly/monthly	• Use detergent wipes or warm water and detergent solution • Cleaning varies depending on the product/brand – follow manufacturer's instructions • Include in weekly/monthly routine cleaning schedule
Denture cup and toothbrush holder 	After use	• Use warm water and detergent, then rinse • Store in resident/individual bathroom • Should be replaced as per manufacturer's instructions

4. Acknowledgments

ACIPC Aged Care Working Group
ACIPC Advancing Practice and Standards Committee
Terry McAuley (Medical Device Decontamination expert) Director – Steam Consulting

5. Resource:

Webinar: Reprocessing of reusable medical devices and equipment in the aged care setting.
Terry McAuley – Director – Steam Consulting
<https://www.acipc.org.au/acipc-aged-ipc-webinar-series/reprocessing-of-reusable-medical-devices-and-equipment-in-the-aged-care-setting/>



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3. Australian Government Department of Health, Disability and Ageing. National vaccine storage guidelines: Strive for 5. 4th ed. Canberra (ACT): Commonwealth of Australia; 2025. Available from: <https://www.health.gov.au/resources/publications/national-vaccine-storage-guidelines-strive-for-5>
4. Standards Australia Ltd. AS/NZS 5369:2023 Reprocessing of reusable medical devices and other devices in health and non-health related facilities (incorporating Amendment No. 1:2026). Sydney (NSW): Standards Australia; 2023. Available from: <https://store.standards.org.au/product/as-nzs-5369-2023-amd-1-2026>

7. Endorsement / Approval

Version	Date	Addition/Amendments	Author	Review By
1.0	Dec 2025	Addition of non-medical equipment	C Spinks	Aged Care IPC CNC group, Terry McAuley (Medical Device Decontamination expert)
2.0	August 2026	Branded and format change - endorsed	C Spinks, ACIPC Aged Care Working Group	Advancing IPC Practice and Standards Committee

8. Contact Information

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