ACIPC
Australasian College
for Infection Prevention and Control

Community and Home Care Vehicles

Cleaning and Transportation of Equipment and Consumables Guide

1. Purpose

This guideline provides direction for the cleaning, stocking, storage and transportation requirements for vehicles used to support home and clinical community care.

It is based on the requirements for fleet clinical community care vehicles and approved healthcare worker-owned vehicles. Its purpose is to ensure that vehicles, supplies and equipment are maintained and transported in a manner that supports the requirements for vehicle cleanliness, consumable supply, storage, transportation and management of contamination.

The requirements within this guideline should be applied according to the type of vehicle and its intended use.

2. Scope

This guideline applies to two types of vehicles used for home and clinical community care:

Fleet community care vehicles are vehicles owned, leased or managed by the organisation and used for work-related clinical community care activities.

Healthcare worker-owned vehicles are personal vehicles approved for use in the delivery of home or clinical community care.

Both vehicle types require appropriate arrangements for vehicle cleanliness and the storage and transportation of care supplies and equipment. Fleet vehicles may have additional requirements where they are used to transport temperature-sensitive products, sharps, or clinical waste.

3. Background

Vehicles used in home and clinical community care may transport healthcare workers, care supplies, equipment and clients between multiple locations. To support safe practice, the vehicle and its designated storage areas must be maintained in a clean and orderly condition, and supplies and equipment must be protected during storage and transportation.

The requirements for vehicles differ according to their use. Some requirements apply to both vehicle types, while additional controls apply to vehicles used transporting specific products, equipment or waste.

4. Definitions

Term	Definition
Care products	Products used to support personal care, hygiene, continence care and skin care.
Community Aged Care Support Workers	Workers who provide general household assistance, transport emotional support and direct person-centred care for older people in their own homes. A health and social care professional who provides personalised support, personal care, and domestic assistance, transport to individuals in their private homes or community settings
Clinical Consumables	Single-use items used in the provision of clinical care – sterile products.
Clinicians	A qualified healthcare professional who provides direct, person-centred clinical assessment, diagnosis, treatment, and care management to individuals within their homes or community settings.
Consumables	Single-use or disposable items routinely used to support care and service delivery – Hand hygiene products and personal protective equipment (PPE).
Equipment – clinical/medical	Reusable devices or equipment used for clinical assessment, treatment, monitoring or care.
High-touch surfaces	Frequently handled areas within a work vehicle, including steering wheel, door handles (including boot latch), handbrake, gear selector, seat adjustment controls, light and window switches, infotainment/touch screens, radio controls, dashboard, glove compartment, petrol cap release, seats and seat belts (driver and passenger).
Fleet vehicles	Cars or other vehicles owned by a healthcare service provider used for work purposes by healthcare workers for transport to client, transporting clients, equipment or supplies. These vehicles are garaged at the health service or the healthcare workers home and may be modified for the purpose.
Staff owned vehicle	Cars or other vehicles owned by an individual health care worker which are used for work purposes for transport to client, transporting clients, equipment or supplies. These vehicles are garaged at the healthcare workers home.

5. Responsibilities

The organisation is responsible for determining the vehicles approved for use in home and community care and establishing the requirements for vehicle cleanliness, consumables, storage and transportation.

Clinical community care vehicles must be provided with the supplies and equipment required for their intended use, including any additional requirements for temperature-sensitive products, sharps, clinical waste or resident/client transportation.

Healthcare workers are responsible for maintaining the vehicle and designated storage areas in accordance with organisational requirements. This includes keeping the vehicle clean and tidy, protecting care supplies and equipment, checking stock, removing expired or damaged products and managing contamination promptly.

Any shortage of required supplies, damaged storage containers, contamination or other issue that may affect the safe use of the vehicle must be addressed or reported in accordance with organisational requirements.

6. Recommendations

6.1 Vehicle cleanliness and condition

The vehicle cabin and boot designated storage areas must be maintained in a visibly clean and tidy condition. Dust, debris, rubbish and unnecessary items should be removed so that vehicle surfaces and storage areas can be effectively cleaned and used for their intended purpose.

Vehicles should have a routine cleaning schedule, in addition the steering wheel, gear selector, door handles, touch screens, seat belts and other frequently touched surfaces should be cleaned after every use. The vehicle must also be cleaned when visible soiling, spills or contamination occur.

Personal belongings must be kept separate from care supplies and equipment. Food and drinks must not be stored with care supplies or equipment.

6.2 Consumables and care supplies

Vehicles must carry the consumables and care supplies required for the activities undertaken.

Consumables and care supplies must be protected from contamination and stored in a clean and dry environment. They must be maintained in usable condition and checked routinely to ensure stock availability.

Stock rotation must be undertaken to prevent expired products; all items must be within the manufacturer's use-by or expiry date and free from damage or compromise.

6.3 Storage and transportation

Consumables, care supplies and equipment must be stored in designated storage containers within the boot. Where sterile and non-sterile stock is transported, it must be stored separately.

They must be protected from excessive heat, cold and direct sunlight.

Storage containers must be clean, intact, in good condition and suitable for effective cleaning.

Designated storage containers should be clearly labelled according to their intended contents.

Supplies must be organised to protect them from contamination and unnecessary handling.

Cleaning products must be stored safely and separately from consumables and care supplies where appropriate.

Reusable medical and allied health equipment must be transported in a manner that protects it from contamination. Where equipment cannot be cleaned or reprocessed before being returned to the vehicle, it must be contained and separated from clean supplies and equipment during transportation.

6.4 Cleaning and management of contamination

The vehicle must have access to the cleaning products required to manage routine cleaning and contamination.

Neutral detergent wipes, or an equivalent product, should be used for routine cleaning. Detergent and disinfectant wipes must be available where activities require disinfection to be undertaken.

Visible contamination and spills must be managed promptly. Where blood or body fluid contamination is a foreseeable risk, the vehicle must have appropriate supplies available to manage the contamination.

A spill kit is required where identified through the relevant vehicle or service requirements. Where there is a risk of cytotoxic contamination, an appropriate cytotoxic spill kit must also be available.

Following contamination, affected vehicle surfaces and storage areas must be cleaned using neutral detergent and disinfectant products or spill management process. Contaminated supplies or equipment must not remain with clean supplies.

Additional Clinical Community Vehicle Requirements

The following requirements apply to clinical community care vehicles where the vehicle is used for the relevant activity.

6.5 Temperature-sensitive products

Where temperature-sensitive products are transported, they must be protected from excessive heat, cold and direct sunlight.

Products must be transported and stored in accordance with their specific storage requirements. Where required, a suitable cool box or temperature-controlled container must be available and maintained in a clean and intact condition.

Vaccination storage must be compliant with the National vaccine storage guidelines: Strive for 5.

Temperature monitoring must be available where required for the product being transported. Temperature-sensitive products should not remain in the vehicle when they are not required for transportation.

Where products are stored in a windowed boot area, appropriate measures should be taken to protect them from direct sunlight e.g. sun-covers may be required for windowed boots.

6.6 Waste Management

Where clinical waste is transported, it must be securely contained and stored separately from consumables, care supplies and equipment in the boot. Clinical waste transport containers are compliant with AS 3816:2018

Clinical waste transport containers must be appropriate for their intended use. Clinical waste must be removed from the vehicle in accordance with organisational requirements and at the end of the work shift where required.

General waste should be disposed of at the point at which it is generated and should not routinely be transported in the vehicle.

6.7 Sharps

Where sharps are generated or transported, a sharp container, compliant with AS/NZS 23907:2023, must be available.

The sharps container must remain secure, upright and protected during transportation. It must be closed when not in use and replaced before exceeding the designated fill line.

Sharps must not be transported loose within the vehicle or placed into general waste.

Each jurisdiction has different options and requirements for sharps disposal. The clinician's container can be transported to a hospital, community health centre, affiliated residential care home or multi-purpose service for final disposal. Client self-managing sharps containers can be taken to public hospitals, participating pharmacies or community sharps disposal bins.

6.8 Client transportation

Where a vehicle is used to transport a client, waterproof protective pads and vomit bags must be available.

If the vehicle or protective pad becomes contaminated, the affected area must be cleaned before the vehicle is returned to normal use.

Clients on transmission-based precautions must be assessed individually, considering the infection, precaution type, reason for transport and the organisation's ability to minimise transmission risks. Non-essential transport is postponed where risks cannot be adequately managed. For essential

transport, an ambulance is considered where appropriate, or all necessary precautions implemented to minimise transmission risk.

6.9. Review

Vehicle requirements should be monitored through the organisation's established processes to ensure that vehicles continue to meet the requirements for their intended use.

Where deficiencies are identified, appropriate action should be taken. This may include cleaning the vehicle, restocking consumables, replacing expired or damaged products, replacing unsuitable storage containers or reviewing the vehicle's storage and transportation arrangements.

This guideline should be reviewed in conjunction with the Home care and Fleet community care vehicle auditing tools.

7. Acknowledgements

ACIPC Aged Care Working Group

Silverchain Community Care

8. Related Documents

ACIPC Home and Community Care Vehicle- Cleaning and Transportation of Equipment and Consumables Audit Tool

8. References

1. National Health and Medical Research Council. Australian guidelines for the prevention and control of infection in healthcare [Internet]. Canberra: National Health and Medical Research Council; 2019 [cited 2026 Sep 21]. Available from: https://www.nhmrc.gov.au/about-us/publications/australian-guidelines-prevention-and-control-infection-healthcare-2019
2. Australian Commission on Safety and Quality in Health Care. *The aged care infection prevention and control guide* [Internet]. Sydney: Australian Commission on Safety and Quality in Health Care; 2024 [cited 2026 Sep 21]. Available from: https://www.safetyandquality.gov.au/publications-and-resources/resource-library/aged-care-infection-prevention-and-control-guide
3. Australian Commission on Safety and Quality in Health Care. *Options for implementation of preventing and controlling infections in primary care: community health services* [Internet]. Sydney: Australian Commission on Safety and Quality in Health Care; 2024 [cited 2026 Aug 10]. Available from: https://www.safetyandquality.gov.au/publications-and-resources/resource-library/options-implementation-preventing-and-controlling-infections-primary-care-community-health-services
4. Australian Government Department of Health, Disability and Ageing. *National vaccine storage guidelines: Strive for 5* [Internet]. Canberra: Australian Government Department of Health, Disability and Ageing; 2025 [cited 2026 Aug 10]. Available from:

https://www.health.gov.au/resources/publications/national-vaccine-storage-guidelines-strive-for-5
5. Standards Australia. AS 5369:2023 *Reprocessing of reusable medical devices and other devices in health and non-health related settings*. Sydney: Standards Australia; 2023.
6. Standards Australia. AS/NZS 23907:2023 *Sharps injury prevention—Reusable and single-use sharps containers.* Sydney: Standards Australia; 2023.
7. Standards Australia. AS 3816:2018 *Management of clinical and related wastes*. Sydney: Standards Australia; 2018.

9. Endorsement / Approval

Version	Date	Addition/Amendments	Author	Review By
1.0	November 2026	New Guideline	Carrie Spinks, Irene Barron, ACIPC Aged Care Working Group	ACIPC Advancing Practice and Standards Committee

10. Contact Information

ACIPC office: office@acipc.org.au