

GUIDELINES ON BLOOD CHOLESTEROL AND BLOOD GLUCOSE MEASUREMENT

(Clause 10, Public Health (Skin Penetration) Regulation 2000)

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1 INTRODUCTION

These Guidelines are published for the purpose of Clause 10, Public Health (Skin Penetration) Regulation 2000. They are intended as a minimum standard legislative guideline for blood cholesterol and blood glucose measurement.

For information on best practice the publication “Blood Cholesterol and Blood Glucose Code of Best Practice” should be consulted. The Code of Best Practice goes beyond these guidelines and the requirements of the regulation and explains in more detail hygiene practices, cleaning, disinfection procedures, sterilisation procedures, waste disposal, and health and safety in the workplace.

2 INTERPRETATION

The information contained in these Guidelines is based on the requirements of the Public Health (Skin Penetration) Regulation 2000. Where it is stated that an action or requirement 'must' or 'shall' be carried out, it is a requirement under the regulation. It is an offence if the requirements in the regulation are not carried out.

3 POWERS OF ENTRY OF ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH OFFICERS

The Public Health Act gives the power to environmental health officers (EHOs) to enter and inspect premises believed to be used to carry out skin penetration procedures and to take certain action in relation to those premises. These powers allow EHOs to:

- inspect the premises;
- make inquiries;
- ask questions;
- examine, inspect and test equipment;
- take samples;
- take photographs and videos;
- require records to be produced and
- to examine and copy the records.

A receipt for any equipment taken should be given to the skin penetration operator.

Local councils are able to charge a fee (under different legislation) for registration of the skin penetration premises and for each inspection carried out (see 5.1).

The Public Health Act specifies that EHOs must be properly authorised before they enter and inspect premises. EHOs may only enter and inspect premises at reasonable times, that is, when the business is open to clients or when the operator is working in the premises, unless in the case of a public health emergency.

Skin penetration requirements are specified in both the Public Health Act 1991 and the Public Health (Skin Penetration) Regulation 2000.

4 WHICH PROCEDURES DOES THE LEGISLATION APPLY TO ?

For the purpose of the legislation, skin penetration procedures include any of the following procedures:

- acupuncture,
- tattooing,
- ear piercing,
- hair removal,
- **any other procedure (whether medical or not) that involves skin penetration such as blood cholesterol and blood glucose measurement which involves the deliberate penetration of the skin.**
- any other procedure prescribed by the regulations (which now includes colonic lavage);

This legislation does not apply to procedures carried out in the practice of registered medical practitioner, dentist, chiropractor, osteopath, dental technician, nurse, optical dispenser, optometrist, pharmacy, physiotherapist, podiatrist, psychologist. Similarly it does not include a procedure carried out by a person acting under the direction or supervision of such a professional where the procedure is carried out as part of that professional practice. These professionals are governed by other legislation and infection control guidelines.

5 PUBLIC HEALTH (SKIN PENETRATION) REGULATION 2000 REQUIREMENTS

The Public Health (Skin Penetration) Regulation 2000 became law on **31 August 2000**. The intent of the regulation is to require skin penetration premises and operators to meet minimum hygiene standards and infection control requirements to reduce the risk of disease transmission.

The legislation specifies registration requirements, premises standards, operator hygiene, and requirements for articles or equipment used in skin penetration procedures.

**It is mandatory for all operators and premises to comply with the
Public Health (Skin Penetration) Regulation, 2000**

Penalties are expressed as penalty units, and at the date of publication one penalty unit was \$110. A breach of any of the following requirements carries a maximum penalty of 20 penalty units, which is equivalent to \$2,200.

5.1 Registration of Skin Penetration Premises

Operators taking blood cholesterol and blood glucose measurements must not carry out a testing or screening procedure unless they are registered with the local council. The council must be advised of the address of the premises used for testing procedures. Where the operator is mobile or if there is more than one premises then each appropriate local council must be notified. Under the Local Government Act, 1993, the local council may charge a fee for registration.

5.2 Premises

It is very important that the premises where the testing or sampling procedure is carried out is fitted out to a minimum standard to promote hygiene and protect both the operator and the client from disease transmission. A person must not carry out a blood cholesterol or blood glucose testing or screening procedure unless the premises where the procedure is carried out:

- are clean and hygienic;
- contains only clean and dry equipment in good working order;
- has a separate hand wash basin fitted with clean hot and cold running water. The water when mixed (preferably, although not required, though a single spout) must be capable of reaching 40°C.
- has soap or another substance for the cleaning of hands at the hand basin together with disposable or single use toweling or hand dryer. A shared towel is not acceptable;
- has a sink, separate to the hand wash basin, also supplied with clean hot and cold running water capable of producing mixed water of at least 40°C for cleaning and rinsing of equipment;
- has a waste disposal bin; and
- has a sharps disposal bin where disposable sharps are used.

If blood cholesterol and/or blood glucose sampling is carried out in a mobile location such as a shopping centre where it is physically impossible to supply a hand wash basin with hot and cold running water, waterless alcohol based hand cleansers can be used in lieu of soap and running water to clean hands. However, if hands are visibly soiled then they must be cleaned with soap and warm running water.

All persons carrying out blood cholesterol or blood glucose screening or testing should wash their hands before and after attending each client.

5.3 Articles and Equipment used in Skin Penetration Procedures

Equipment or items that may penetrate the skin must be sterilised and maintained in that condition. Items which have penetrated the skin and which are to be reused, must be cleaned and sterilised and maintained in that condition until used again. If such equipment cannot be cleaned and sterilised it must be appropriately disposed of into a sharps container immediately after the procedure.

<p>Any equipment which is used to penetrate the skin or which is capable of penetrating the skin must be STERILISED and maintained in a clean condition</p>
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Where equipment which is not capable of skin penetration has been used in a procedure or has been touched by either the operator or client it must be cleaned and maintained in a clean, dry condition prior to it being used again. The operator may also disinfect this equipment after cleaning but it is not a legal requirement.

Items which are manufactured to be single use must only be used once and then disposed. If this item is a 'sharp' it must be disposed of in a sharps container.

It is recommended that all equipment used for testing blood cholesterol and blood glucose in all mobile operations be single use for ease of operation.

5.4 Keeping of Records by Skin Penetration Operators

As previously stated, reusable equipment or items which have penetrated the skin must be cleaned and sterilised. When the equipment is sterilised a record must be kept of the:

- time and date the item was sterilised.

If an autoclave is used to sterilise equipment then records must also be kept of:

- the **length of time** the equipment was sterilised, and
- the **temperature and the pressure** of the autoclave.

This is to ensure a quality control procedure is adopted which allows the sterilising process to be checked, and to demonstrate that sterilising was satisfactorily completed. Noting the time and date facilitates stock rotation so that the oldest stock is used first. It is a good idea to label the sterilised equipment packaging with the date of sterilisation.

5.5 Personal Protective Equipment (PPE)

The use of personal protective equipment (PPE) protects both the client and operator by providing a physical barrier to infection transmission caused by dirt, blood and excretions. The operator must wear PPE including single use gloves and a clean gown or apron for all blood cholesterol and blood glucose testing or screening procedures.

As the name implies, single use gloves are intended for single use only, and new gloves must be worn for each new procedure or when the procedure is interrupted by events such as a telephone call. Single use gloves must be disposed into the waste bin immediately the blood testing or sampling process is finished.

All persons carrying out blood cholesterol or blood glucose measurements must wear single use gloves during the procedure and dispose of them immediately when finished.

Some people are allergic to latex single use gloves and the powder placed on the glove. If an operator taking blood cholesterol or blood glucose measurements develops a rash or skin condition it is recommended that they consult a medical doctor. Single use gloves are also made of other materials.

5.6 Compliance with Guidelines as a Defence

When an operator does not comply with the Public Health Act or Public Health (Skin Penetration) Regulation but does comply with these Guidelines then this evidence may be used in court as a defence to prosecution.

6 LOCAL GOVERNMENT RESPONSIBILITIES

Local councils must keep a register of premises that carry out blood cholesterol and blood glucose measurements in their area. The register must include the following information:

- address of the premises; and
- the type of procedure/s carried out; and
- details of any inspections carried out.

The register must be made available at no charge, to any member of the public at the local council's head office during working hours.

It is recommended that the local council be requested to inspect any blood cholesterol or blood glucose measurement premises prior to it commencing operation.

An audit form has been developed by NSW Health to assist in determining the level of compliance of skin penetration operators and premises with the Public Health (Skin Penetration) Regulation 2000. This audit form can be used as a checklist by operators for self assessment, and is available from Public Health Units.

An annual or more frequent inspection can be carried out of skin penetration premises, and a fee may be charged under the provisions of the Local Government Act, 1993. The local council must keep inspection results in the register.
