

GUIDELINES FOR OPERATORS OF SKIN PENETRATION ESTABLISHMENTS

This guideline provides information regarding the requirements and minimum standards for any establishment which performs a skin penetration procedure in Western Australia.

What is a skin penetration procedure?

A skin penetration procedure is a procedure in which:

- (a) The skin is cut, punctured, torn or shaved; or
- (b) Mucous membrane is cut, punctured or torn.

Examples of skin penetration procedures include tattooing, body piercing, acupuncture, depilatory waxing, electrolysis, cosmetic tattooing, colonic irrigation procedures, lancing, manicures & pedicures.

What health regulations must a skin penetration operator comply with?

Standards which are supported by legislation helps to prevent the spread of infectious diseases associated with the skin penetration industry, such as;

- Viral infections (hepatitis B, hepatitis C, Human Immunodeficiency Virus (HIV), AIDS)
- Bacterial infections (*Staphylococcus aureus*, *Staphylococcus epidermidis*)
- Fungal infections (*Candida albicans*)

It is recommended that operators of skin penetration establishments familiarise themselves with both the *Skin Penetration Code of Practice* (available from the Department of Health website www.health.wa.gov.au or your Environmental Health Officer) and the *Health (Skin Penetration Procedure) Regulations 1998* (available from the State Law Publisher www.slp.wa.gov.au). It is mandatory for operators of skin penetration establishments to comply with both.

Starting up a skin penetration establishment

If you are considering establishing a skin penetration business in the region, you must first notify Environmental Health Services at the City of Busselton with details of the proposed establishment including:

- (a) the name and address of the intended establishment;
- (b) the proprietor;
- (c) the proposed layout of the establishment including details of the locations of fixtures such as hand basins and sinks, and materials used in the premises for shelving and flooring etc. (layout requirements are detailed below).

After receiving notification, an Environmental Health Officer will then conduct an inspection prior to opening to ensure compliance with the Code of Practice.

Specific Design Requirements for skin penetration establishments

It is essential that skin penetration procedures are carried out in property designed and constructed premises to promote good hygiene practices. The basic principles are:

- Equipment, furniture, fittings, floors and walls should be purpose built or purchased specifically for the task to be performed. They should be durable, safe and suitable for cleaning and maintenance, and constructed of sealed, nonporous material.
- There should be adequate lighting and ventilation throughout the premises.

- The premises should be planned to provide separate function-specific client and cleaning/sterilising areas.

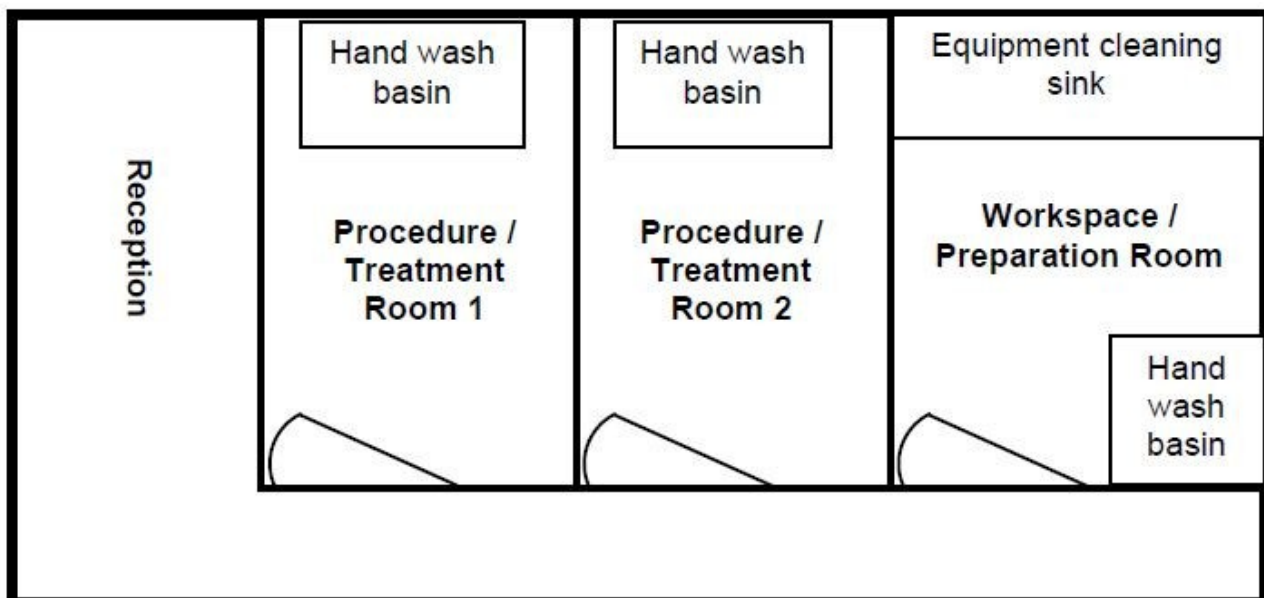
There are specific requirements for the layout of a skin penetration establishment which are outlined in section 7 of the Code of Practice. Some guidance is provided below:

Skin Penetration Procedures Area

The skin penetration procedures area is the area where the skin penetration procedure will be performed. For example, the area where the client will be pierced, tattooed, or waxed. Design requirements for this area include;

- All floors, floor coverings, walls, ceiling, shelves, fittings and other furniture shall be constructed of materials suitable for the procedures undertaken and shall be kept clean and in good repair. It is important to ensure all surfaces are smooth and impervious to help prevent surfaces from harbouring bacteria, moulds and other microorganisms, and allow for easy cleaning and disinfection.
- Surfaces that come into direct contact with a client's skin or mucous membrane must be smooth, impervious and in good repair. For example client chairs or beds must be made of a material that can be easily cleaned after use by a client.
- A hand basin supplied with hot and cold water, soap and paper towels must be available in the **immediate area** where skin penetration procedures are undertaken.
- Immediate area: The intent is for the hand basin to be located **within** the area where skin penetration procedures are to be carried out. The hand basin should be easily accessible to allow the operator to wash their hands thoroughly before and after performing a skin penetration procedure.
- It is recommended that liquid soap from a pump dispenser is used when washing hands.
- For new premises or premises that are undergoing refurbishment an approved hands free type hand basin supplied with hot and cold water through a single outlet must be installed in the immediate area where a skin penetration procedure is undertaken. The hand basin shall be supplied with soap and disposable paper towels.

The following diagram, from the Western Australia Department of Health provides a guide to an appropriate layout of a procedure area of a skin penetration establishment:

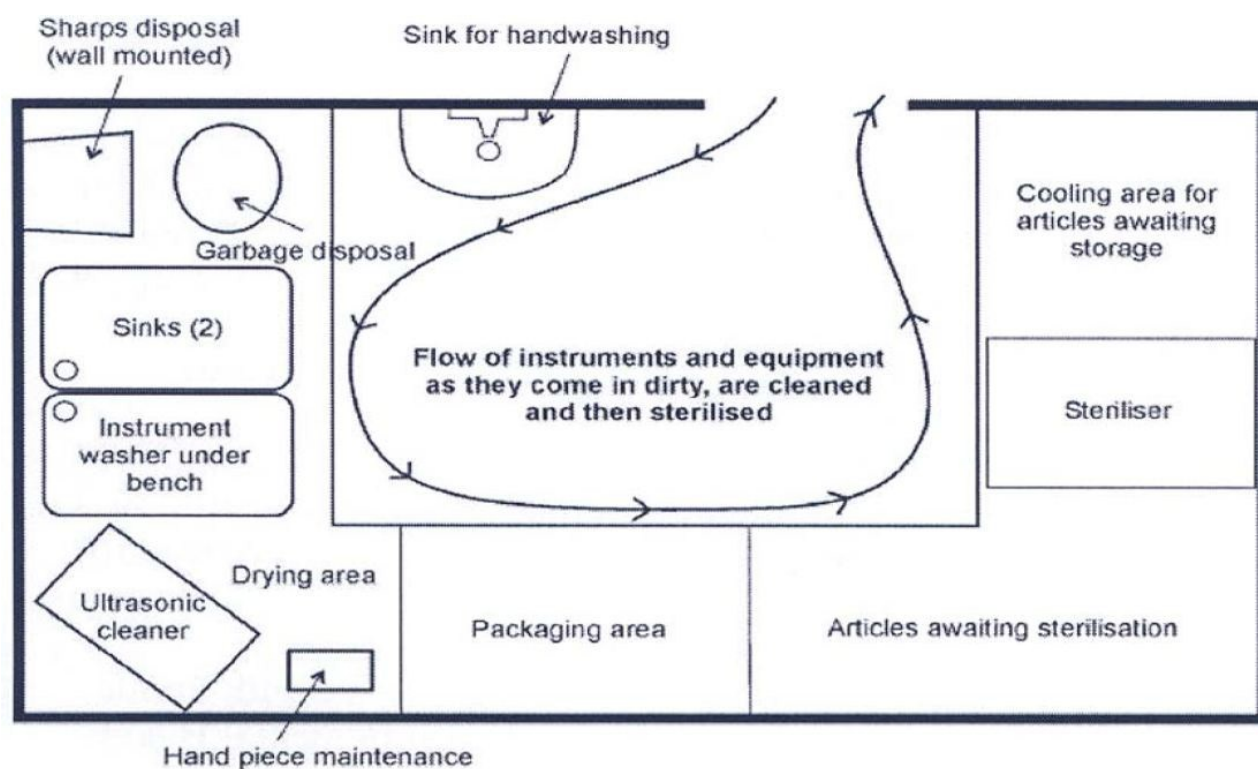


Work Space/Preparation Area

The work space is the area where appliances are stored. The preparation area is the area where appliances are prepared before use on a client.

- The work space and preparation area must be separate from the client treatment area;
- This area must have at least two sinks:
 1. Sink designated for hand washing only and;
 2. Sink designated for cleaning and decontaminating equipment only.
- All sinks must be made of suitable materials e.g. stainless steel;
- There must be sufficient bench space to accommodate necessary equipment and for good working practices;
- All work surfaces shall be smooth and impervious, and the floors must be smooth and impervious and non-slip;
- The cleaning area should be designed to ensure movement of instruments/equipment in a one-way direction from dirty to clean to sterile areas;

The following diagram, reproduced from AS/NZS 4815:2006 (Reusable containers for the collection of sharp items used in human and animal medical applications) provides a guide to an appropriate layout of a prep/work area in a skin penetration establishment:



NOTES:

1. Arrow direction indicates the flow of instruments and equipment from dirty→clean→sterile;
2. Personnel working in the processing area should wash hands after handling soiled items and removal of gloves, before handling clean items and before handling sterile items;

Disinfecting skin

Disinfecting solutions are to be provided in adequate quantities. See Code of Practice for procedure on disinfecting skin prior to a procedure.

The following solutions have been approved for disinfecting skin.

- a) 70% W/W isopropyl alcohol;
- b) 80% V/V ethyl alcohol;
- c) 60% V/V isopropyl alcohol;
- d) Alcoholic (isopropyl and ethyl formulations of 0.5 - 4% W/V chlorhexidine); or
- e) 10% W/V aqueous or alcoholic providine iodine (1% W/V available iodine).

Disinfecting appliances

All appliances that may come into contact with blood, mucosa or other body fluids shall be disinfected before use on a client.

Approved procedures for disinfection of appliances:

- (a) Clean and dry appliances;
- (b) If appliances can withstand heat and moisture and do not require sterilisation, thermal disinfection is the simplest and most efficient method of disinfection. The minimum surface temperature, time relationship for disinfection is greater than or equal to 80°C, minimum time of 2 minutes; 75°C minimum time of 10 minutes; and 70°C minimum time of 15 minutes;
- (c) Chemical disinfection should only be used when thermal disinfection is unsuitable;
- (d) A 2% solution of glutaraldehyde is the only chemical disinfectant recommended by AS4187, however glutaraldehyde is an intense irritant and is highly toxic. Special care must be taken if using glutaraldehyde. Glutaraldehyde is not a substitute for sterilisation.

Sterilising appliances

Sterilisation is the complete destruction of all organisms including bacterial spores. All reusable appliances used in procedures involving contact with normally sterile areas of the body or contaminated with blood or body substances shall be cleaned and sterilised before being reused on another client. Appliances shall be sterilised by one of the following methods:

(a) Steam under pressure (moist heat) sterilisation - autoclaving

TEMPERATURE PRESSURE AND HOLDING TIME

Temperature	Pressure		Penetration Time (plus safety factor*)
°C	kpa	Psi	Minutes
121	103	15	15
126	138	20	10
132	186	27	4
134	206	30	3

*applies to unwrapped items only

- Steam sterilisation equipment must be regularly tested and calibrated in accordance with AS4187. If the temperature of the steam inside the steam steriliser exceeds 137°C, or the pressure of the chamber is lower than it should be, the steam will not be able to kill all microbes in the chamber.

(b) Dry heat sterilisation

- Appliances shall be maintained in a dry air steriliser at 160°C for a minimum of one hour plus penetration time. This is a sterilising time which commences when the equipment to be sterilised reaches the required temperature;
- Sterilisers must comply with AS2487 and manufacturer's recommendations are to be followed;
- All items that are subjected to sterilisation shall be packaged and wrapped to ensure sterility;

Hand washing

Hand washing is the most important and most basic technique in preventing the spread of infection.

When should hand washing be done?

- Before and after contact with each client;
- Before resuming a procedure if interrupted, for example, answering the telephone;
- Immediately prior to putting on new disposable gloves;
- Immediately after removing disposable gloves for any reason;
- After handling the nose, mouth or handling a nasal tissue or handkerchief;

- Before and after smoking, eating or drinking;
- After going to the toilet; and
- After contact with blood or other bodily fluids (of self or other person).

The reason for washing hands following removal of gloves is:

- hands perspire in gloves, increasing the concentration of bacteria on the skin.
- gloves are not perfect protection. They have a failure rate due to holes in the material. These holes are not always noticeable.

Washing the hands following removal of gloves will reduce the risk of transmission of bacteria and blood borne viruses to the operator and client.

This is a guideline only. The Code of Practice has special requirements for beauty therapy, body piercing, acupuncture and tattoo procedures. For more information please contact Environmental Health Services at the City of Busselton on 9781 0444.