

Infection Prevention and Control: Top Tips for Community Pharmacy

Here's a concise list of 10 key tips that covers the essential aspects of infection prevention and control in an NHS Community Pharmacy.

<p>1</p>	<p>1. Prioritise Hand Hygiene</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Wash hands with liquid soap and warm water for at least 20 seconds. Use alcohol-based hand rub (ABHR) with $\geq 60\%$ isopropyl alcohol when hands are not visibly soiled. Ensure handwashing stations are accessible and well-stocked. 	<p>6</p>	<p>Support Staff Health</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Provide IPC training covering hygiene, PPE, waste, and injury procedures. Offer Hepatitis B vaccinations to relevant staff. Encourage reporting of injuries and IPC concerns.
<p>2</p>	<p>Promote Respiratory Hygiene</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Use disposable tissues to cover nose/mouth when coughing or sneezing. Encourage symptomatic customers to wear masks. Regularly clean high-touch surfaces in areas where coughing/sneezing may occur. 	<p>7</p>	<p>Foster a Safety Culture</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Create an environment where staff feel safe to raise concerns. Reinforce adherence to IPC protocols through leadership and peer support.
<p>3</p>	<p>Use PPE Appropriately</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Wear gloves and aprons during tasks involving exposure to bodily fluids. Use fluid-repellent masks and eye protection when splash risk is present. Change PPE between patients/tasks and perform hand hygiene before and after. 	<p>8</p>	<p>Follow SOPs and Local Guidelines</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Always refer to your pharmacy's Standard Operating Procedures. Stay updated with local IPC regulations and best practices.
<p>4</p>	<p>Maintain a Clean Environment</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Keep consultation and testing areas tidy and clutter-free. Use detergent for routine cleaning; follow SOPs for spills. Clean reusable equipment per manufacturer and local guidelines. 	<p>9</p>	<p>Ensure Equipment Hygiene</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Clean BP monitors, stethoscopes, and testing devices as per guidance. Use appropriate disinfectants and document cleaning schedules.
<p>5</p>	<p>Manage Waste Safely</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Segregate waste correctly (general, clinical, sharps). Dispose of sharps immediately in puncture-resistant containers. Never overfill sharps bins; store waste securely before collection. 	<p>10</p>	<p>Engage with IPC Support</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Reach out to NHS England Midlands IPC team for guidance or site visits. Consider volunteering for the IPC assurance audit trial.