Cleaning up of Bodily Fluids

Introduction.

The purpose of this instruction is to set out the safety procedures to be followed when dealing with the cleaning up and disposal of Group A waste, namely body tissues and fluids. On no account are these instructions to be changed without the approval of the Safety Office and such standards are to be complied with at all times.

Procedures:

The cleaning up of Group A human tissue, tissue contaminated materials and bodily fluids MUST always be treated as potentially hazardous. No matter how embarrassing the situation or objectionable the situation, personal safety and thoroughness must not be compromised for the sake of speed.

If the owner/originator of the contaminant is available they should be asked to clear up the mess; this should greatly reduce the risk of any secondary infections. Where this takes place, cleaning or housekeeping staff will still be required to carry out a second clean to ensure standards are maintained.

Training:

All staff that maybe required to clean up or control an area that has been contaminated by bodily fluids must be thoroughly briefed by their supervisor on their induction training. The training must include what actions should be taken to contain the hazard. i.e., safety clothing to be worn, personal safety and hygiene standards to be observed, decontamination of soiled items and the safe disposal of contaminated materials.

This training should be repeated before the start of each academic year or at times considered by the supervisor to be of heightened risk.

Contaminated Areas:

Areas that have been contaminated should be secured and sealed off as soon as possible to prevent the spread and risk of secondary contamination. Under no circumstances should this be prioritised at the risk to your own personal safety.
Safety Clothing:

Plastic aprons, plastic or rubber gloves are provided and must be worn. Where cleaning liquids or water is likely to cause splashing the cleaner/housekeeper should consider wearing waterproof footwear (Wellingtons) eye goggles and a facemask.

Personal Safety:

Your personal safety is paramount, a mistake or carelessness today may not manifest itself as a problem for years to come. If you are in any doubt, seek advice. Always wear the protective clothing provided and be meticulously thorough with your own personal hygiene. Whilst undertaking a cleaning operation casual breaks for food or drinks should be delayed until it is complete. Toilet breaks should be avoided if possible as they will require you to dispose of the safety clothes being worn and you to carry out your own personal decontamination before leaving the area. You will need to reapply fresh protective clothing on re-entering the area.

Where staff suspect they may have been infected they must seek medical attention as soon as possible.

Decontamination of soiled areas:

Where possible, faeces, vomit and urine should be collected and flushed down the nearest toilet, or a Bio Hazards disposal pack should be used following the instructions on the kit. Where practical the area should then be thoroughly flushed with running water, after firstly ensuring that any water run off is going straight to a drain. The area should then be cleaned with a preparatory antiseptic/antibacterial cleaner. Carpets that can be wet and dry vacuumed can be left in place. Where this is not possible or heavy soiling has taken place these too should be disposed of. Care should be taken to wipe down handles, walls and work surfaces that the owner of the contaminant may have come into contact with.

Disposal of Contaminate items

Once the area has been thoroughly cleaned and disinfected care must be taken to cleanse and/or dispose of any items used. Cloths, mop heads or absorbent material should be bagged up at the location into ‘yellow bio hazard’ bags and disposed of in the Yellow Hazardous Waste bins in the Sports Centre, Eliot College (Sick Bay), Keynes College, and the Medical Centre.

Items such as buckets, litter picker or solid reusable equipment (non electrical) should be thoroughly flushed with running water ensuring any run off water is controlled straight to a drain, and the where possible left overnight to soak in a disinfectant solution.
External Areas that may have been contaminated.

The cleaning of external areas depends on where the area is and the type of surface contaminated, and the surrounding areas that may be affected. In most cases, contaminated materials should be scrapped together using a Bio Hazard Disposal Pack and placed in the Yellow Bag provided. This should then be disposed of in the Yellow Hazardous Waste Bags in the previously mentioned sites. The area should then be flushed with copious amounts of water and then the area cordoned off until it has dried.

Items contaminated by Blood:

Items contaminated by blood should be treated with the same or a higher degree of care as that already mentioned. Contaminated absorbent materials must always be place in a yellow bag along with gloves, aprons or a mask that may have been used. These bags must then be placed in the Yellow Hazardous Waste Bins located in the Sports Centre, Eliot College (Sick Bay) Keynes College and the Medical Centre

Remember sensible precautions and heightened personal hygiene will prevent you being put at risk.