

USE OF PORTABLE, OSCILLATING FANS IN THE HEALTHCARE ENVIRONMENT

PURPOSE:

To prevent the transmission of infections among patients, staff, and visitors.

INFORMATION:

HVAC is the abbreviation describing a facility's overall air handling system: heating, ventilation, and air conditioning. The Engineering Services area of the Facilities Management Department is responsible for all HVAC throughout NMCP command. HVAC of surgical and critical care areas, patient care areas, ancillary services, diagnostic/treatment areas, sterilizing/supply, and other services are maintained to unique and specific requirements. These requirements include: air movement relationship to adjacent areas, minimum air changes of outdoor air per hour, minimum total air changes per hour, all air exhausted directly outdoors, re-circulation by means of room units, relative humidity, and design temperature.*

*2006 *Guidelines for the Design and Construction of Healthcare Facilities*, Facility Guidelines Institute (FGI) and the American Institute of Architects ([AIA](#)).

POLICY:

While no formal statement or recommendation from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention has been issued regarding the use of fans in the healthcare environment, The Joint Commission takes a negative stance on their use in medical care facilities. Therefore, there will be no use of portable, oscillating fans in any patient care areas, waiting rooms, or ancillary services.

Any HVAC problems/issues identified should be referred to the Facilities Management Department at 953-5663.

EXCEPTION:

Recognizing there may be specific incidents when a portable, oscillating fan may be necessary to be used in the healthcare setting, consultation with Infection Control is required BEFORE instituting these measures.

Reference: *APIC Text of Infection Control and Epidemiology*, 3rd Edition, 2009, Chapter 104.

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