

Decontamination of Communication Aids

The three main methods of decontamination are:

- **Cleaning** is a general method for the treatment of low risk equipment such as communication aids. We advise that a communication aid owned and being used by a single individual is at the least, regularly cleaned using this method.
- **Disinfection** is the process of destroying pathogenic microorganisms. However, Disinfection does not necessarily kill all microorganisms, especially resistant bacterial spores. We recommend that shared communications aids, such as those in a loan banks or those being used as assessment devices are cleaned using this method.
- **Sterilisation** is any process that eliminates (removes) or kills all forms of life, including transmissible agents (such as fungi, bacteria, viruses, spore forms, etc.) present on a surface, contained in a fluid, in medication, or in a compound. This process is **not** applicable for communication aids as the process would, in any case, destroy such a device.

CLEANING YOUR COMMUNICATION AID AND ACCESSORIES

The specific advice for general cleaning of communication aids is as follows:

1. Put on protective gloves if necessary.
2. Wipe down all the external surfaces of the device and accessories with a disposable paper wipe moistened with warm detergent solution.
3. Allow the surfaces to dry.
4. Wipe the surfaces with a commercially available alcohol-impregnated disposable wipe.
5. Apply some glass cleaner (or any non-abrasive, non-corrosive general cleaner) to a cotton swab and clean inside all cracks and crevices. Alternatively, you may wish to use a small soft-bristled brush.
6. Blow the device off with an air hose or wipe it dry.
7. Accessories such as TouchGuides and Keyguards may be washed with a soft cloth in warm soapy water and then thoroughly dried.

(Note: fabric Carry Bags cannot be decontaminated and should be disposed if cross-infection is a possibility).

DISINFECTING YOUR COMMUNICATION AID AND ACCESSORIES

Note: This section applies only when multiple clients will be using the same device. In that situation, it's vital to effectively disinfect the device and accessories that have been used by a client before handling and use by another client. Disinfection kills most pathogens on a surface but not necessarily all!

Step 1: Put on protective gloves**Step 2: Clean the device and accessories**

1. Wipe down all the external surfaces of the device and accessories with disinfectant wipes (Virucidal, Bactericidal, Pseudomonocidal, Tuberculocidal, Fungicidal) — we currently use Metrex CaviWipes™. Follow the disinfectant product manufacturer's instructions for *cleaning*.
2. Apply some glass cleaner (or any non-abrasive, non-corrosive general cleaner) to a cotton swab and clean inside all cracks and crevices. Alternatively, you may wish to use a small soft-bristled brush.
3. Blow the device off with an air hose or wipe it dry.

Important! Make sure all solid debris, soil or grit is removed from the device and accessories. This is vital before proceeding to disinfecting the equipment.

Step 3: Disinfect the device (accessible surfaces) and accessories

1. Wipe down all the external surfaces of the device and accessories with a new disinfectant wipe (Virucidal, Bactericidal, Pseudomonocidal, Tuberculocidal, Fungicidal) — we currently use Metrex CaviWipes. Follow the disinfectant product manufacturer's instructions for *disinfecting*.
2. Make sure to clean inside all cracks and corners, and wipe more than once if necessary to keep the device wet for a minimum of three (3) minutes.
3. Allow the device and accessories to dry.

Step 4: Wipe the touch screen

1. When the device and accessories are dry, wipe down the viewing area (device touch screen) with glass cleaner, so the screen doesn't discolour.

Allow the equipment to dry.