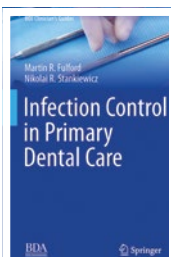


BDJ Clinician's Guide: Infection control in primary dental care



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Authors: Martin R. Fulford and Nikolai R. Stankiewicz
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Book review

Infection control in primary dental care is a concise, informative overview of infection control relevant to a dental setting. This clinical guide draws in your attention initially by describing the evolution and history of infection control. The different historical theories previously believed responsible for the spread of infection and high mortality rates associated with surgery are summarised by the authors. The constant struggle of the progressive clinicians to change the common beliefs is evident. Some barriers to infection control such as cost and time are clearly still issues to this day. The important topic of reducing our impact on the environment is touched on, with emphasis on finding a balance between single use items versus the ability to decontaminate or sterilise instruments. The guide gives further background information of the dynamic relationship between microbes and humans, giving the reader further insight into the crucial need for an effective, reliable decontamination protocol in practice. These chapters on background science certainly increase the reader's understanding and reasoning behind vaccination of dental care professionals and the decontamination regimes described later in the handbook.

Further chapters go on to describe the different equipment available for decontaminating and sterilising instruments. As the book is not specific to one country, no guidelines or minimum standards are explicitly set out, more an overview to educate and inform the dental team, enabling clinicians to make a better informed decision with regard to infection control in practice.

Both authors are experienced in microbiology and in dental practice, making the information provided highly applicable to practice. The intended audience for this guide includes all dental professionals, and the clinical guide caters to this broad group very well, with applications ranging from a dentist setting up or renovating a practice, to the dental nursing staff working daily in the decontamination unit.

Overall, this clinical guide to infection control is informative for the dental professional. Interest is generated through the well written historical overview of the spread of infection, and the guide educates the reader in the background science, allowing them to make more informed decisions going forward. Infection control is a dynamic issue further progressing with new science and technology, and a sound understanding is essential for all clinical personnel.

By Miriam Crowley



Author Q&A with Nikolai Stankiewicz

Why should people read this book?

Infection control is a fundamental aspect of the safe delivery of dental care. Maintaining a contemporary knowledge of how this can be achieved is essential.

Who is it aimed at?

Effective infection control depends upon the whole dental team playing their part. Subsequently we wrote it with the whole team in mind.

Did you enjoy writing it?

It was certainly a challenge! We both are passionate about this subject, and the writing process really allowed us to delve deep into researching each topic. It was hard not to get side tracked (too often) by the vast amount of information we had to wade through to draw out what would be salient for our readers.

What made you write it?

We recognised the need to make an accessible guide for the whole dental team. Technical guidance documents don't tend to explain the rationale for why various infection control measures are undertaken. We are of the opinion that if the dental team understands infectious risks and prevention they will be better at what they do.

What are the key issues in this area?

The safe delivery of dental care is a primary goal of infection control. The fundamental areas covered by standard precautions remain key issues including. Hand hygiene compliance and effective reprocessing of instruments are areas where we cannot be complacent. An interesting and challenging contemporary issue is how this integrates with sustainability in healthcare.

What do you do in your spare time?

I enjoy exploring the outdoors with my family (and dog) through geocaching and caving.

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