BAG TECHNIQUE

PURPOSE:
To prevent contamination of bag and equipment, avoid cross infection and establish a clean work area.

CONSIDERATIONS:
1. Clinical staff is responsible for maintaining the cleanliness and completeness of the bag.
2. As homes differ greatly, clinical staff will need to use judgment in selecting an appropriate work area. Considerations include cleanliness of home, adequate lighting, low traffic area, areas away from direct currents from windows, heat or air conditioning vents and areas away from pets and children.
3. The homecare bag is a noncritical item. Although it may contain some critical or semi-critical items, the bag itself does not come into contact with the patient.
4. Consider separating items in the bag as follows:
   a. Soap, towels, disinfectant.
   b. Non-critical items used on multiple patients, e.g., blood pressure cuff, thermometer.
   c. Single use, sterile items and personal protective equipment (PPE).
5. Bag and contents must be thoroughly cleaned if soiled and cleaned periodically as needed or according to agency policy.
6. Disposable equipment is used whenever possible.
7. The inside and contents of the bag are always considered “clean.”
8. Outside of the bag is always considered “dirty.”
10. Rolling bags, if used, should not to be placed on clean surfaces in the home. DO NOT allow the bottom of the bag to get wet.
11. Avoid taking bag into the home of a patient who is on contact precautions or where the home is infested with roaches or pests. Place items needed for the care of the patient, including PPE, in a plastic bag.

EQUIPMENT:
Hand-carried/rolling bag
Hand hygiene products
Barriers, per agency policy
Approved disinfectant

PROCEDURE:
1. Adhere to Standard Precautions.
2. Select a clean flat surface or a doorknob for the bag. Use discretion and consideration when placing bag on patient’s furniture. Never place bag on patient's bed or on upholstered furniture.
3. Perform hand hygiene.
4. Remove needed items from bag and place on clean area or barrier. Close bag.
5. Perform hand hygiene prior to re-entering bag for any reason.
6. Following care:
   a. Clean, reusable items, e.g., blood pressure cuff, stethoscope and oximeter, that will be returned to the bag.
   b. Disposable items are discarded per agency policy.
   c. Soiled reusable items must be cleaned and disinfected prior to returning to the bag, per agency protocol.
   d. Once reusable items are cleaned, place them on a clean surface.
   e. Perform hand hygiene.
   f. Replace items into bag.
   g. In the event soiled items cannot be cleaned in the home, bag and label item to transport to your agency’s designated area.
7. Perform hand hygiene.

AFTER CARE:
1. Instruct patient and caregivers on importance of keeping supplies left in home in clean area.

REFERENCE: