

Netherland guidelines for infection prevention in the operating theatres

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The Dutch Working Party Infection Prevention (WIP) is a cooperative activity between the Dutch Society of Infectious Diseases, the Dutch Society of Medical Microbiology and The Dutch Society of Infection Control Nurses. The aim of the WIP is to develop guidelines for the Dutch health care system on infection prevention. The Ministry of Health considers the guidelines professional standards.

The Dutch Working Party Infection Prevention has currently produced two guidelines for operating theatres. These guidelines are published on the website of the WIP in both Dutch and English languages (www.wip.nl).

The guideline “prevention of postoperative wound infections” focuses on the prevention of postoperative wound infections by outlining hygiene measures before, during and after operations. Many recommendations in this guideline are based upon what is known about the pathogenesis of wound infections in patients who have undergone surgery and on risk factors that increase the chance of a wound infection. The literature was studied

extensively and if systematic reviews were available they were used for this guideline. If no systematic review was available, the Working Party evaluated the studies through its own systematic review.

The guideline “circumstances during (minor) surgical and invasive procedures” describes the structural and climatic requirements that must be met both inside and outside the surgery department in order to work safely and prevent wound infections. Requirements per location for performing (minor) surgical and invasive procedures are provided for category 1 surgery departments, category 2 surgical departments, and independent treatment rooms. The difference between category 1 and 2 operating departments is that the standard ventilation system is sufficient for a category 2 surgery department. The conditions that an independent treatment room, e.g., in a outpatient clinic, must meet in order for procedures to be performed safely are also described. Finally the guideline provides criteria on which procedures can be performed in which type of operating room.

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