I. PURPOSE

To assure that all pieces of medical equipment are appropriately decontaminated in order to eliminate the spread of infectious and communicable diseases.

II. DEFINITIONS none

III. PROCEDURES

A. General requirements

1. The designated Infection Control RN will monitor to ensure that:
   a. Medical equipment (exam tables, wheelchairs, stretchers, etc.) are cleaned on a regular basis using an approved disinfection cleaner that is EPA registered. Gloves and other appropriate protective equipment are worn by the individuals conducting these cleaning duties.
   b. Medical instruments are never used more than once without proper decontamination between uses.
      1) Reusable sharps must be discarded into a container in the room where the procedure occurred. The container must be:
         a) puncture resistant;
         b) leak proof on bottom and sides;
         c) color-coded or labeled;
         d) maintained in an upright position;
         e) closeable; and
         f) sealed for transport.
      2) Reusable instruments are to be:
         a) soaked in a surgical and laboratory ware detergent solution for a minimum of ten minutes;
         b) scrubbed with a brush, being sure to open all hinges, locks, etc.;
         c) rinsed carefully;
         d) dried thoroughly;
         e) placed in sterilization pouches or wrapped in autoclavable wrap;
      3) staff must wear a gown, gloves and face protection when scrubbing instruments; and
      4) packaged instruments are to be taken to the dental office and sterilized in the autoclave by trained personnel.

IV. CLOSING

Questions concerning this operational procedure will be directed to the Health Services Manager.

V. ATTACHMENTS none