

## Portable fans

Portable fans have been linked to cross-infection in some health and social care settings. Dust and debris can naturally accumulate within the internal body of the blades of fans and this provides a reservoir for microorganisms. Each use and reuse should be risk assessed. Decontamination and maintenance schedules must be in place.

### Use of portable fans

Portable fans should not be used:

- During airborne outbreaks of infection or when a person is known or suspected to have an infection, e.g. *Clostridioides difficile*, MRSA, COVID-19, Norovirus, Influenza

Placement of portable fans:

- Aim the fan so that the air is pushed towards the outside, e.g. towards an open window, but do not aim the fan directly at the body
- The fan should be positioned at bed/chair level or higher
- The flow of air is positioned so as not to flow directly at the door or entrance to a room or across environmental surfaces
- Do not aim fans directly at smoke detector systems
- Ensure the flow of air does not blow directly into a person's face or onto open wounds
- In communal areas, ensure the airflow is directed within the area
- Fans must be turned off before the following activities take place:
  - Any sterile or aseptic procedure, e.g. cannulation, catheterisation, dressing changes
  - Any procedure that may result in splashes of blood and/or body fluids

### Decontamination

Consideration should be given as to whether the fan can be adequately decontaminated for safe reuse. Any portable fans determined by a risk assessment to present an infection risk should be removed from use.

Portable fans should be:

- Dedicated to individual use
- Removed from the area immediately and decontaminated after each individual use, refer to the 'Safe management of care equipment Policy'
- Cleaned as per the manufacturer's instructions.
- On the routine cleaning schedule
- Included in planned preventative maintenance and portable appliance testing (PAT)

Bladeless fans contain filters which must be cleaned and replaced as per manufacturer's instructions.

Hand hygiene must be performed before and after handling a fan to prevent contamination.