

Neurophysiology

Standards & Guidelines

Electroencephalography

April 2016 v21



College of
Physicians
& Surgeons
of Alberta

Serving the public by guiding the medical profession

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1.0 Introduction

Alberta's *Health Professions Act* provides for the accreditation of medical services in non-hospital facilities by the College of Physicians and Surgeons of Alberta. Section 8.1 in Schedule 21 of the *Act* states:

8.1(1) A regulated member shall not provide a prescribed health service, or cause a prescribed health service to be provided, in a facility unless the facility is an accredited medical facility or a facility referred to in subsection (2).

(2) Subsection (1) does not apply with respect to a prescribed health service provided in

- (a) an approved hospital within the meaning of the *Hospitals Act*,
- (b) a hospital operated by the Government of Canada,
- (c) a health care facility operated by the Government of Canada or the Government of Alberta,
- (d) a hospital, clinic or centre operated by a regional health authority under the *Regional Health Authorities Act*,
- (e) a facility within the meaning of the *Mental Health Act* or an accredited health centre established for the purpose of section 49(b) of the *Mental Health Act*, or
- (f) a facility that is prescribed in the regulations.

Neurophysiology services are one of many health services for which the College requires accreditation. A complete list of prescribed health services is contained in the College's by-laws and available on the College's website.

The College also applies its accreditation standards to Neurophysiology services in approved hospitals through contract with Alberta Health Services.

The Advisory Committee on Clinical Neurophysiology is a standing committee of the College of Physicians and Surgeons of Alberta which advises the Medical Facility Accreditation Committee (MFAC) of the College with respect to all matters pertaining to neurophysiology facilities. The College provides this service to those facilities approved under the *Hospitals Act* through contract with Regional Health Authorities.

The Committee may consider issues related to the provisions of neurophysiology services, and these issues may include, but are not restricted to, the following:

1. Develop and maintain evidence based standards/guidelines for clinical neurophysiology practice;
2. Monitor compliance with College approved standards through on-site assessments for accreditation;
3. Assess physicians' qualifications and preparedness to interpret neurophysiology studies against College approved training requirements for EEG, EMG and EP;
4. Provide education to promote safety and quality improvement initiatives;
5. Facilitate the introduction of new services;
6. Respond to the needs of stakeholders for improved clinical neurophysiology services in Alberta;
7. Review and audit of the business practices of the facility to ensure compliance with relevant College by-laws.

The College requires all accredited medical facilities to have a Medical Director (i.e. a practitioner who is registered with the Alberta College of Physicians & Surgeons) who is accountable for the practice of medicine within the facility. Medical Directors shall be satisfied as to the standing of other professionals with their respective regulatory bodies and as to the safety of their practices.

Note: This document incorporates standards and guidelines in a diagnostic and treatment facility approved by the MFAC/Council:

- “shall” is used when a section is a requirement for accreditation;
- “should” is used when a section is recommended; and
- “may” is used when a section is discretionary.

Due to the constantly changing spectrum of medicine, these standards/guidelines will be reviewed on a regular basis and revised when necessary. Input from facilities is encouraged to assist in keeping the document up to date.

2.0 Role of the College

2.1 Accreditation of Facilities

- 2.1.1 All neurophysiology facilities shall register with and maintain accreditation by the College.
- 2.1.2 Applications for accreditation of new facilities shall be made to the College.
- 2.1.3 Requests for additional modalities shall be made to the College.
- 2.1.4 The Standard of Practice #20 – Direction and Control of Medical Practice as established by the Council of the College are applicable for privately owned facilities.
- 2.1.5 Accreditation involves:
 - 1. A review of a pre-assessment data verification form completed by the facility for each modality;
 - 2. A review of selected tracings, requisitions/in-house worksheets and reports from the facility;
 - 3. A review of the facility’s manuals outlining policies and procedures;
 - 4. A review of qualifications and training of medical and technical personnel.
- 2.1.6 The review, which is completed by one or more physicians (with expertise in the appropriate area of medical practice) and an Assessment Coordinator designated by the College, is either a distance review, an on-site review, or a combination of both.
- 2.1.7 "Full Accreditation" is granted to those facilities with no identified deficiencies.
- 2.1.8 "Provisional Accreditation" may be granted for a 30-day period to those facilities with minor deficiencies to allow for their correction. A written response to each deficiency is required from the medical director/consultant of the facility. A follow-up assessment may be required at the sole discretion of the College. "Full Accreditation" will be granted when responses to deficiencies have been corrected to the satisfaction of the College.
- 2.1.9 Requirements shall be met before accreditation will be granted or renewed by the College.
- 2.1.10 The College may revoke accreditation if practice in the facility is considered unsafe.
- 2.1.11 A "Certificate of Accreditation" will be issued by the College to all facilities with "Full Accreditation".
- 2.1.12 Accreditation is limited to 4 years from the last date of approval unless extended by the College and may be renewed through a process of re-accreditation which will follow the same steps as those for accreditation (refer to Section 2.1.5).
- 2.1.13 Payment to the College for the cost of the assessment is the responsibility of the Medical Director of the facility. (Private facilities only)
- 2.1.14 "Spot" assessments conducted without prior notice may also be conducted. These are at no cost to the facility.

2.2 Administration

- 2.2.1 A record of each facility shall be kept on file at the College.
- 2.2.2 The College shall be advised of any change of ownership of the medical practice or Medical Director of the facility.
- 2.2.3 Each facility is required to pay an annual fee, set by Council, for the administration of the accreditation program. (Private facilities only)

3.0 Personnel

All physicians practicing electroencephalography in Alberta are encouraged to complete the EEG examination of the Canadian Society of Clinical Neurophysiologists (CSCN) or the American equivalent.

3.1 Medical Director

3.1.1 Qualifications

1. The director of each facility shall be:

A physician licensed to practice medicine in Alberta and certified as a specialist in Neurology (adult or pediatric), Neurosurgery, Psychiatry, or Pediatrics (with extra training in Neurology, which is suitable to Council).

-and-

2. Qualified and accredited to interpret electroencephalograms in Alberta.

3.1.2 Role

1. The Medical Director shall have direct control and be responsible for provision of neurophysiology services.
2. Responsibilities may include, but is not restricted to, the following:
 - a. The day to day direction and supervision of the practice of medicine.
 - b. Providing continuous, adequate and effective direction and supervision of assistant electroencephalographers and technical staff.
 - c. Ensuring an adequate quality assurance program is in place.
 - d. Selection of testing procedures and equipment used.
 - e. Ensuring the "Minimal Technical Standards" of the **Canadian Association of Electroneurophysiology Technologists, Inc. (CAET)** are met.
 - f. Ensuring the "Minimal Standards for Electroencephalographic Laboratories" of the **Canadian Society of Clinical Neurophysiologists (CSCN)** are met.
 - g. Establishing and maintaining effective and appropriate safety procedures.
 - h. Ensuring appropriate "manuals" are in place and up-to-date.
 - i. Remitting an annual fee as determined by Council (private facilities only).
 - j. Making available for accreditation the requested documentation.
3. The Medical Director shall ensure that all physicians interpreting EEG studies are current in their practice as defined in 3.4.2.

3.1.3 Continuing education is recommended.

3.2 Medical Director (Local)

3.2.1 Facilities without a medical director who is qualified to interpret studies, require a qualified consultant. A Medical Director (Local) shall be appointed and the responsibilities include:

1. Overseeing the day-to-day operation of the facility, but not the technical elements involved in producing studies and reports.
2. Supervising technical staff in regard to patient care issues.
3. Maintaining effective and appropriate safety.
4. Ensuring required documentation is complete.
5. Working with the consultant to meet the technical and other accreditation standards for these facilities.
6. Representing the facility in local and regional administrative matters.

3.3 Consultant

3.3.1 Qualifications

1. A physician licensed to practice medicine in Alberta and certified as a specialist in Neurology (adult or pediatric), Neurosurgery, Psychiatry, or Pediatrics (with extra training in Neurology, which is suitable to Council).

-and-

2. Qualified and accredited to interpret electroencephalograms in Alberta.

3.3.2 Responsibilities of a consultant include:

1. Ensuring maintenance of standards set by provincial and federal authorities
2. Instituting and ensuring maintenance of an adequate quality assurance program including the periodic review of quality control results.
3. Ensuring appropriate manuals are in place and up-to-date.
4. Visiting the facility to assist in meeting these standards.
5. Participating in the preparation of an annual report of the facility for the Regional Health Authority which may include:
 - a. equipment evaluation
 - preventative maintenance
 - service type and volume
 - calibration
 - quality control
 - b. quality assurance activity
 - c. policy and procedure manuals
 - d. assessment of technologist(s) performance

3.4 Interpreters

3.4.1 Approval

Physicians performing Electroencephalography shall:

1. a. Be a physician licensed to practice medicine in Alberta and certified as a specialist in Neurology (adult or pediatric), Neurosurgery, Psychiatry, or Pediatrics (with extra training in Neurology, which is suitable to Council).

-and-

- b. Complete a minimum of a six-month block of full-time formal EEG/epilepsy training or an equivalent training completed within a two-year period

Note: Training shall be completed in an encephalographic laboratory, which performs a minimum of 1,500 electroencephalograms annually for a wide variety of adult, pediatric and psychiatric patients

-and-

- c. Provide evidence of satisfactory completion of training
2. Physicians completing training after July 1, 2005, shall pass the Canadian Society of Clinical Neurophysiologists (CSCN) examination in electroencephalography or an equivalent certification examination in another country acceptable to Council **within two years** of completion of the above training.

-or-

3. Notwithstanding the above, an individual with a PhD degree with training in Neurophysiology which is acceptable to Council may be approved
4. Physicians who completed training described in section 1 and 2 prior to July 1, 2005 and who have remained in the active practice of EEG are eligible for approval to interpret EEG in Alberta.
5. Continuing education in electroencephalography that is eligible for credits in the Maintenance of Certification Program of the Royal College of Physicians and Surgeons of Canada is recommended.

3.4.2 Re-approval

1. An interpreter who has been accredited or grandfathered, but who has not been in the active practice* of EEG for the last three years, shall review with a preceptor approximately one hundred twenty-five (125) EEGs including a variety of abnormals, such as are available in teaching files.

Note: The following will be used as a guide in reviewing requests for reaccreditation:

- a. *Original training*
- b. *Experience in practice*
- c. *Extent of related activity during time away from relevant practice.*
- d. *Content of a retraining program, including an expectation of:*
 - *Completion over a reasonably brief time (i.e. weeks or months, but not years);*
 - *Review of relevant current literature;*
 - *Degree of supervision;*
 - *Method of evaluation of competence.*
- e. *Credentials of the preceptor and details contained in the letter attesting to his or her satisfaction with the applicant's abilities.*

* "Active practice" refers to interpreters interpreting a minimum of 100 EEG studies per year.

3.5 Technologists

- 3.5.1 Personnel performing EEG procedures shall be registered with Alberta College of Medical Diagnostic and Therapeutic Technologists (ACMDTT).
- 3.5.2 Personnel should participate in continuing education.
- 3.5.3 Technologists should maintain current certification in cardiopulmonary resuscitation.
- 3.5.4 Adequate procedures should be in place for training new staff.
- 3.5.5 All personnel in the facility should have job descriptions.
- 3.5.6 Annual evaluations of technologists should be performed.

4.0 Facility Operation

4.1 Physical

4.1.1 Space for the following should be adequate:

1. Patient waiting facilities
2. Patient washroom facilities
3. Clerical facilities
4. Supply storage
5. Record storage

4.1.2 The following should be adequate:

1. Room temperature control
2. Facility ventilation
3. Facility lighting
4. Emergency lighting
5. Noise level
6. Cleanliness
7. Stretcher access

4.2 Communication

4.2.1 There should be sufficient telephones.

4.2.2 There shall be written criteria for significant abnormal findings that require urgent notification.

4.2.3 There shall be a written process for notification of significant abnormal findings by telephone or hand-delivery.

4.2.4 All notifications shall be documented.

5.0 Electroencephalography Procedures

5.1 Procedures Appropriate for Private Facilities:

1. Electroencephalogram, Technical and Interpretation

5.2 Procedures Restricted to Hospital Facilities:

1. Electrocortography, per 15 mins
2. Insertion of special electrodes for epilepsy
3. Long-term EEG Monitoring (Telemetry)
4. Brain Mapping (not accredited)

6.0 Request for Procedure

6.1 Information documented by the facility prior to procedures being performed:

6.1.1. Shall include the following:

1. Patient's name
2. Patient's contact information
3. Patient's birthdate
4. Name of referring physician or nurse practitioner
5. Second patient identifier –which shall be the unique lifetime identifier whenever possible.

6.1.2. Should include the following:

1. Pertinent history, including medications

7.0 Patient Preparation

7.1 Documentation

7.1 The pre-test documentation shall include:

1. Confirmation that the procedure was explained to the patient by either the technologist or physician.
2. Any additional relevant clinical information obtained.
3. Any contraindications to testing.
4. Additional comments if appropriate.
5. Any previous EEGs.

7.2 Head Measurement

7.2.1 Electrodes shall be placed in accordance with the International 10-20 Electrode Placement System.

7.2.2 Electrode positions shall be carefully measure and marked with a non-toxic pencil/marker.

7.2.3 All marks shall be removed as appropriate on completion of the test.

8.0 Testing/Recording Procedures

The testing/recording procedure should meet or exceed the Minimal Technical Standards of the **Canadian Association of Electroneurophysiology Technologists, Inc. (CAET)** and the Minimal Standards for Electroencephalographic Laboratories of the **Canadian Society of Clinical Neurophysiologists (CSCN)**.

8.1 Documentation

8.1.1 Documentation within the EEG record shall contain the following. These items may be recorded electronically or on a face sheet and/or a separate technologists data sheet.

1. Patient's name
2. Second patient identifier - which shall be the unique lifetime identifier whenever possible.
3. Patient's age and gender
4. Level of consciousness
5. Medication
6. Patient history
7. Handedness
8. Time of last nourishment
9. Clinical observations
10. Comments on cephalic asymmetries and surgical scars
11. Name of recording technologist
12. Technologist impressions
13. Date of recording
14. Sensitivity (noted at the beginning of each montage)
15. Filter setting (noted at the beginning of each montage)
16. Eyelid and head position (noted on change)
17. Annotation of recording changes (technical and clinical) shall be made directly on the recording at the time of occurrence.
18. Record of spontaneous sleeps if possible.

8.1.2 Abbreviated annotations shall be standardized within the laboratory.

8.2 Eye Opening and Closure

8.2.1 There shall be periods of eye opening and closure during each montage when appropriate.

8.3 Level of Consciousness

8.3.1 The patient's level of consciousness/clinical status (awake, drowsy, sleeping or comatose) shall be documented.

8.3.2 Any changes shall be documented by the technologist on the EEG at the time of occurrence.

8.3.3 Any commands or signals to the patient, the use of activation/stimulation procedures, movement, the presence and/or absence of clinical signs/responses shall be documented at the time of occurrence on the EEG record.

8.3.4 Periods of alert wakefulness shall be recorded if the recording is dominated by sleep.

8.4 Activation

8.4.1 Hyperventilation

1. Hyperventilation shall be performed for at least 3 minutes with the time documented at 30 second intervals, unless contraindicated for clinical reasons.
2. Qualitative assessment of the patient effort during hyperventilation shall be documented on the recording.
3. The EEG shall be recorded for at least 1 minute before and 2 minutes after hyperventilation, on the same montage.

8.4.2 Photic Stimulation

1. Intermittent photic stimulation should be performed during eye closure and eye opening covering a frequency range of 1-25 flashes/second.
2. At least one stimulus train shall occur at a frequency of 15-18 flashes/second.

8.4.3 Sleep

1. Spontaneous sleep shall be recorded whenever possible.
2. The opportunity for sleep shall be enhanced by periods of unstimulated recording.
3. Bipolar and referential montages which include midline derivations shall be used during drowsiness and sleep.

8.5 Response Testing

8.5.1 In stuporous or comatose patients, and patients with an invariable EEG pattern, the following stimuli shall be applied:

1. Auditory
2. Pain

The following stimulus is recommended:

1. Visual

8.5.2 The patient's response to the stimuli shall be documented on the recording.

8.5.3 When generalized paroxysmal complex EEG discharges or electrographic seizures occur in the absence of overt behavioral changes, the following response testing shall be carried out in a systematic manner:

1. Simple motor response.
2. Verbal probe recall.

8.5.4 The following response testing is recommended:

1. Serial subtraction tasks.

8.5.5 The type of response testing and patient response shall be documented on the recording.

8.6 Extra-Cerebral Monitoring

- 8.6.1 Extra-cerebral monitoring (EOG, ECG, respiration) shall be performed when it is necessary to distinguish cerebral activity from physiological artifact.
- 8.6.2 Electrocardiogram (ECG) shall be recorded whenever possible and as a minimum monitored when there are paroxysmal events with neurological symptoms or when ECG artifact is prominent in the recording.
- 8.6.3 Electro-oculogram (EOG) shall be recorded when EEG shows frontal abnormality or prominent eye movement artifact.
- 8.6.4 Electrode placements for each eye lead shall be indicated on the record.
- 8.6.5 Labeling shall be standardized.

8.7 Calibration (For Analog Equipment)

- 8.7.1 A series of square wave calibrations shall be applied simultaneously to each channel at the beginning and end of each recording with settings clearly marked at a paper speed of 30 mm/sec.
- 8.7.2 Calibration deflections shall be examined for correct linearity, sensitivity, high and low frequency response, pen alignment and damping.
- 8.7.3 The interchannel resting baseline of each pen shall be symmetrical.
- 8.7.4 Calibration shall be performed at the beginning of the record using the same parameters as for the first montage of the recordings.
- 8.7.5 An appropriate input voltage shall be used to produce a pen deflection of at least 5 mm, but not more than 10 mm.
- 8.7.6 Similar calibration using an input voltage to produce a pen deflection between 1 and 3 mm shall be used.
- 8.7.7 Calibration at the end of the recording shall include each instrument setting used during the recording, again with appropriate input voltages to produce pen deflections between 5 and 10 mm, and 1-3 mm with all settings clearly marked.
- 8.7.8 Biologic calibration (bio-cal) of at least 10 seconds duration shall be performed at the beginning and end of the recording.
- 8.7.9 Bio-cal shall be performed using the same pair of widely spaced electrodes (anterior-posterior derivation) in all channels.
- 8.7.10 All calibrations shall be fully annotated.

8.8 Calibration (For Digital Equipment)

- 8.8.1 Equipment shall be calibrated at least weekly and this shall be documented.
- 8.8.2 A sampling rate of >200/second shall be met. Refer to CSCN standards.

8.9 Montages

- 8.9.1 Longitudinal-bipolar, transverse-bipolar and referential montages shall be recorded.
- 8.9.2 If contamination of the reference occurs, another reference shall be chosen and the change clearly noted on the recording.
- 8.9.3 Bipolar connections should run straight unbroken anteroposterior or transverse directions with equal inter-electrode distances.
- 8.9.4 Anterior electrodes should be placed above posterior electrodes on the recording page.
- 8.9.5 Each montage shall be fully annotated with the electrodes at each derivation specified.
- 8.9.6 Each montage shall be recorded for a minimum of 2 minutes, (12 pages at paper speed of 30 mm/sec) under normal circumstances.

8.10 Sensitivities

- 8.10.1 A standard sensitivity setting of approximately 7 uV/mm should be used
- 8.10.2 Depending on the signals and special features being recorded, appropriate sensitivity adjustments should be made so that the maximum deflections remain within the dynamic range of pens, i.e. 10-20 mm (maximum of 10 mm on either side of the baseline).
- 8.10.3 When sensitivity settings are changed, recorded signals shall be free from pen/amplifier blocking and distortion of the recording.
- 8.10.4 Appropriate adjustments shall be made in order to record low voltage signals.
- 8.10.5 When a sensitivity lower than 7 uV/mm is used for a significant portion of the recording in order to record high voltage signals, periods shall be run at a sensitivity of approximately 7 uV/mm in order to display low voltage fast activities and posterior dominant frequencies.

8.11 Filter Settings

- 8.11.1 Notation of filter settings shall be made at the beginning of each montage.
- 8.11.2 All filter setting changes shall be indicated on the record at the time of the change.
- 8.11.3 Filter settings shall accurately reproduce signals from 0.5-70 Hz.
- 8.11.4 The low frequency (high-pass) filter shall be set no higher than 1 Hz (-3dB) for the majority of the recording (with corresponding time constants of 0.16 seconds).
- 8.11.5 The high-frequency (low-pass) filter shall be set no lower than 70 Hz (-3dB) for a portion of the recording.
- 8.11.6 Selective filter setting changes should be made to enhance or investigate possible irregularities and abnormalities.
- 8.11.7 The 60 Hz (notch) filter shall be off and only used when attempts at eliminating 60 Hz interference have failed.

8.12 Paper Speed

8.12.1 Paper speed of 30 mm/sec shall be used for the majority of the recording.

8.12.2 Slower or faster paper speeds shall be used when clinically or electrographically indicated.

8.13 Length of Recording

8.13.1 The baseline EEG recording shall contain a minimum of 20 minutes of artifact-free recording, not including activation procedures.

9.0 Recordings

9.1 All recordings shall include the following:

1. Patient's name
2. Patient's age and gender
3. Date of birth
4. Date of recording
5. Name of recording technologist
6. Technologist comments, including clinical observations.
7. Second patient identifier - which shall be the unique lifetime identifier whenever possible.

9.2 Recordings should include the following:

1. Name of referring physician

9.3 Appropriate notations should be made on the tracing throughout the recording.

9.4 Significant abnormal findings should be reported to an interpreting physician promptly.

10.0 Reports

10.1 Demographics

10.1.1 Reports shall include the following:

1. Laboratory name, address, and phone number
2. Patient's name
3. Name of referring physician
4. Description of EEG activity
5. Handedness
6. Time of last nourishment
7. Comments on cephalic asymmetries or surgical scars
8. Date of procedure
9. Date of interpretation
10. Date of transcription
11. Initials of technologists
12. Second patient identifier - which shall be the unique lifetime identifier whenever possible.

10.1.2 Reports should include the following:

1. History or comments

10.2 Interpretations

10.2.1 An individual accredited to interpret EEGs is responsible for the recorded interpretation of tests and reporting them to the referring physician.

10.2.2 Interpretations shall indicate authorship and whether or not the contents of the report have been verified by the author. (A signature means that the contents have been verified by the signator.)

10.2.3 The minimum reporting standards of the **Canadian Society of Clinical Neurophysiologists (CSCN)** should be met.

10.2.4 Requests for urgent interpretations should be given a priority.

10.2.5 Reports should be in type written format.

11.0 Storage and Retention of Records

- 11.1 The entire interpretive report and a segment of continuous physiologic recordings, whether abnormal or not, sufficient to support the interpretation made, shall be retained for a minimum of ten years by electronic means or hard copy. In the case of minor patients, they shall be retained for ten years or two years after the age of majority, whichever is greater.
- 11.2 Records pertaining to quality assurance in the laboratory shall be kept for a minimum of two years.
- 11.3 The service provider shall maintain safeguards to protect the confidentiality of patient records and to protect against reasonably anticipated threats or hazards to the security, integrity, loss or unauthorized use, disclosure, modification or unauthorized access to health information. This applies to records in paper or electronic format.

12.0 Manuals

- 12.1 Laboratories shall have current and comprehensive manuals in place.
- 12.2 All procedures shall initially be approved and signed by the medical director.
- 12.3 Subsequent to initial approval, all procedures shall be reviewed annually and signed by the medical director or designate.
- 12.4 All changes to procedures shall be approved and initialed by the medical director.
- 12.5 The following manuals shall be available in the laboratory:

12.5.1 Equipment Manual

- 1. This manual shall include, as a minimum, for each piece of equipment:
 - a. List of contact personnel and phone numbers
 - b. Manufacturer operating and troubleshooting instructions
 - c. Copy of maintenance contract, if applicable
 - d. Preventative maintenance schedule
 - i. Daily
 - ii. Weekly
 - iii. Monthly
 - iv. Annually
- 2. This manual shall include records for:
 - a. Preventative maintenance
 - b. Repairs
 - c. Electrical checks

12.5.2 Policy Manual

- 1. This manual shall include, as a minimum, the following sections:
 - a. Organizational chart
 - b. Staff/office policies
 - c. Procedure policies

12.5.3 Procedure Manual

1. This manual shall include, as a minimum, the following for each procedure performed:
 - a. Name of procedure
 - b. Equipment used
 - c. Patient preparation
 - i. reception/documentation
 - ii. head measurement
 - iii. electrode placement, application, removal
 - d. Recording Procedure
 - i. Documentation throughout recording
 - ii. Calibration
 - iii. Montages
 - iv. Sensitivities
 - v. Filter settings
 - vi. Paper speed
 - vii. Length of recording
 - viii. Response testing
 - e. Activation Procedures
 - f. Special Precautions, Safety, Notes
 - g. Critical Abnormalities
 - h. References

12.5.4 Safety Manual

1. This manual shall include, as a minimum, the following sections:
 - a. General Safety
 - b. Fire Safety
 - c. Electrical Safety
 - d. Infection Control (Appendix A)
 - e. Medical Emergencies
 - f. Waste Disposal
2. This manual shall include records for:
 - a. Incidents
 - b. Electrical checks

13.0 Equipment

13.1 General

- 13.1.1 Equipment shall meet or exceed the standards of the **Canadian Society of Clinical Neurophysiologists (CSCN)** 2002 guidelines Section C.
- 13.1.2 A minimum of 16 channels of simultaneous EEG activity should be recorded.
- 13.1.3 The electrical safety of the equipment shall be ensured by the CSA.

13.2 Electrodes

- 13.2.1 Surface cup/disc electrodes should be used.
- 13.2.2 All electrodes used on a patient shall be of the same material.
- 13.2.3 The International 10-20 System of Electrodes Placement shall be used.
- 13.2.4 Impedances between electrodes shall be checked prior to recording.
- 13.2.5 Impedances shall measure 1000-5000 Ohms.
- 13.2.6 Impedances should be checked during the recording if an abnormality is evident.
- 13.2.7 The output should be shown on the tracing.
- 13.2.8 Corrections shall be made when there are concerns regarding artifactual patterns.

13.3 Photoc Simulator

- 13.3.1 Photoc stimulation shall be used when appropriate.

13.4 Ancillary Equipment

- 13.4.1 All ancillary equipment shall be approved by the CSA.
- 13.4.2 There shall be yearly maintenance checks, and this shall be documented.

14.0 Safety

14.1 General Safety

- 14.1.1 The laboratory shall have a Safety Manual (Refer to Section 16.0 Manuals), which is specific to the laboratory that the staff shall follow.
- 14.1.2 It should be readily available to all personnel and there should be evidence that they are aware of its content.
- 14.1.3 Policies and procedures should be developed regarding the documentation of all incidents.

NOTE: An incident is an occurrence, which either harmed or could have harmed a patient or a staff member.

14.2 Fire Safety

- 14.2.1 This shall be specific for the laboratory and be in conformity with that of your institution and local fire department.

14.3 Electrical Safety

- 14.3.1 All equipment shall be checked for grounding and current leakage at least annually, and this shall be documented.
- 14.3.2 Precautions regarding electrical safety shall be as per CSCN standards and CAET. (Standard One: Minimal Technical Standards Clinical Electroencephalography Routine Adult.)

14.4 Infection Prevention and Control

These standards have been adapted from *Health Canada – Infection Control Guidelines – Hand Washing, Cleaning, Disinfection and Sterilization in Health Care* and *Health Canada – Infection Control Guidelines – Routine Practices and Additional Precautions for Preventing the Transmission of Infection in Health Care*.

Routine infection control practices should be incorporated into everyday patient/resident/client care. Institutional policy should provide for education of every care provider in the principles of routine precautions, provision of adequate equipment to implement them, and a means by which compliance with practice can be monitored and audited.

To minimize the risk of transmission of infection, patients/residents/clients (referred to henceforth as “patients”) should be assessed for infection or potential infections upon admission. Each facility should endeavor to have some assessment procedure in place; the results should be communicated to other personnel providing care and should be documented in the patient record.

In situations requiring additional precautions, these precautions must be instituted as soon as indicated by triggering mechanisms such as diagnosis, symptoms of infection, laboratory information, or assessment of risk factors.

The institution/facility is responsible for ensuring that appropriate precautions are taken for specific patients.

All personnel (physicians, nurses, technologists/technicians, students, volunteers and others) are responsible for complying with routine and additional precautions and for tactfully calling observed infractions to the attention of all offenders. There are no hierarchical exceptions to precautions, and everyone has a responsibility to monitor his

or her own practice as well as the practice of other care providers. There are no exceptions, and all should teach by example.

14.4.1 Occupational Health/Immunization

The *Occupational Health and Safety Act, Regulation and Code* will also apply. Copies of the OHS Act, Regulation and Code, and “*A Physician’s Guide to Occupational Health and Safety Responsibilities*” are available on-line at www.worksafely.org.

1. All personnel, including physicians should have their immunization status reviewed and documented at the time they commence employment at the facility and periodically thereafter.
2. Personnel that are unable to provide acceptable evidence of adequate immunity against hepatitis B, influenza, measles, mumps, rubella, and varicella; should be advised to speak to their physician about immunization.
3. Employers should consider measles, mumps, rubella, hepatitis B and varicella immunity as a condition of employment.
4. Tuberculin skin testing is recommended for all personnel at the beginning of their employment.
5. All personnel shall understand and adhere to “*Routine Practices*” which incorporate universal blood and body fluid precautions such as described in the “*Health Canada Infection Control Guideline: Routine Practices and Additional Precautions for Preventing the Transmission of Infection in Health Care*. (This guideline is available on-line at <http://www.phac-aspc.gc.ca/publicat/ccdr-rmtc/99pdf/cdr25s4e.pdf>).
6. There shall be a policy and procedure for the management of significant exposures (e.g. needle-stick injuries).
7. Consultation with a specialist in infectious disease shall be obtained prior to workers with blood-borne pathogens starting work in the facility. “*Health care workers who perform exposure-prone procedures have an ethical obligation to know their serologic status for hepatitis B virus (HBV), human immunodeficiency virus (HIV) or hepatitis C virus (HCV) and to follow the recommendations in ‘Proceedings of the Consensus Conference on Infected Health Care Workers: Risk for Transmission of Bloodborne Pathogens,’* (This document is available on-line at http://www.phac-aspc.gc.ca/publicat/ccdr-rmtc/98vol24/24s4/24s4b_e.html).

14.4.2 General Infection Prevention Measures

1. Adequate hand washing sinks shall be appropriately located throughout the facility. Waterless, alcohol based antiseptic hand agents are an acceptable alternative to soap and water, if there is no visible soiling.
2. Hands shall be washed between patients, after removal of gloves, when visibly soiled and after contact with any contaminated objects.
3. Hand washing with an antiseptic agent shall be used:
 - a. before performing invasive procedures;
 - b. before contact with immunocompromised patients;
 - c. before contact with patients with extensive skin damage.
4. There shall be no re-use of critical or semi-critical medical equipment labeled as single-use by the manufacturer.
5. Masks, eye protection and face shields shall be worn for protection of mucous membranes of the eyes, nose and mouth during procedures likely to generate splashes or sprays of blood, body fluids, secretions or excretions.

6. Clean non-sterile gloves shall be worn:
 - a. for contact with blood, body fluids, secretions and excretions, mucous membranes, draining wounds or non-intact skin (open skin lesions or exudative rash);
 - b. when handling items visibly soiled with blood, body fluids, secretions or excretions;
 - c. when the healthcare worker has open lesions on the hands.
7. Gloves are to be changed between care activities and procedures with the same patient after contact with materials that may contain high concentrations of microorganisms.
8. Gloves are to be removed immediately after completion of care or procedure, at point of use and before touching clean environment surfaces.
9. There should be a designated person responsible for the maintenance and enforcement of infection control and occupational health standards in the facility.

14.4.3 Additional Precautions

1. Airborne Transmission Precautions
 - a. Patients with known or suspected infectious tuberculosis, measles, varicella or disseminated zoster should be placed directly in a single examination room and the door shall remain closed.
 - b. Those patients shall wear a surgical/procedure mask during transport and movement through the facility.
 - d. High efficiency dust/mist masks shall be worn by all healthcare workers who enter the examination room of a patient with infectious tuberculosis.
 - e. High efficiency dust/mist masks shall be worn by non-immune healthcare workers who absolutely must enter the examination room of a patient with varicella, disseminated zoster or measles.
2. Droplet Transmission Precautions
 - a. Patients with known or suspected meningococcal infection, rubella, mumps, pertussis, diphtheria, or hemorrhagic fevers should be placed in a single examination room. If this is not possible the patient shall maintain a one meter spatial separation between other patients.
 - b. Surgical/procedure masks should be worn by all healthcare workers that must come within one meter of the patient.
 - c. The patient shall wear a surgical/procedure mask during transport and movement through the facility.
3. Contact Transmission Precautions
 - a. Patients with know or suspected diarrhea, extensive skin or wound infection not contained by dressings, hemorrhagic fevers, meningitis, hepatitis, herpes simplex-disseminated, scabies (extensive or Norwegian/crusted), varicella, disseminated or extensive uncovered zoster and Antibiotic Resistant Organisms (ARO) should be placed in a single examination room. If this is not possible, a spatial separation of one meter shall be maintained between patients.
 - b. Gloves should be worn when entering the patient's room or designated examination space.
 - c. Gloves shall be removed before leaving the patient's room or designated examination space.
 - d. Hands shall be washed immediately, first with soap and water if visibly soiled, then an antiseptic agent.
 - e. Equipment and surfaces in direct contact with the patient or infective materials shall be cleaned before the room is used by another patient.

14.4.4 General Environmental and Equipment Cleaning

1. A barrier (sheet or paper) should be placed on the examination table. The barrier shall be changed between patients.
2. If no barrier is used, the examination table shall be cleaned between patients.
3. The examination table shall be cleaned between patients if visibly soiled.
4. Items touching mucous membranes or non-intact skin shall be appropriately disinfected between patients.
5. Chairs, cabinets and charts are not usually an infection risk, but should be cleaned on a regular basis.
6. Walls, blinds and curtains should be cleaned regularly and when soiled.
7. Floors should be cleaned regularly, with damp mopping preferred.
8. Carpets/upholstery should be vacuumed regularly and shampooed as necessary.
9. Toys shall be regularly cleaned, disinfected with a low level disinfectant, thoroughly rinsed and dried.

14.4.5 Equipment Cleaning, Disinfecting and Sterilization

1. There shall be written policies and procedures for cleaning and sterilizing specialized equipment as described in *Health Canada – Infection Control Guidelines – Hand Washing, Cleaning, Disinfection and Sterilization in Health Care*. This guideline is available on-line at www.phac-aspc.gc.ca/dpg_e.html#infection.
2. Personnel involved in the cleaning, disinfecting and sterilization of equipment shall be properly trained.
5. There shall be a designated area for soiled supplies. This area shall be physically separated from patient care areas and from areas housing clean and sterile supplies.
6. Personnel working in the soiled area shall have proper protective apparel for their personal protection.
7. Clean and sterile supplies shall be stored in an area protected from dust and moisture, with access limited to authorized personnel.
8. Sterile supplies shall be clearly marked.
9. The **Infection Control Guidelines for Neurophysiology Facilities** of the College of Physicians and Surgeons shall also apply. (Appendix A)

14.5 Medical Emergencies

14.5.1 There shall be policies and procedures in place to deal with medical emergencies.

14.5.2 The following medical emergency equipment and supplies shall be kept in stock:

1. Stethoscope and Blood Pressure Cuffs
2. Oral Airways: Adult and Pediatric
3. Pocket Mask (bag valve mask optional)

14.5.3 Technologists should be trained to maintain an airway.

15.0 Quality Assurance

15.1 A quality assurance program shall be in place to ensure minimal technical standards of the **Canadian Association of Electroneurophysiology Technologists** and reporting standards of the **Canadian Society of Clinical Neurophysiologists** are met.

15.2 The content and format may be flexible, but the program at a minimum should monitor:

15.2.1 Structure

1. Staff Competency – Interpreters

- a. A mechanism shall be in place to provide feedback between the interpreter and technologist and that this be documented.
- b. A peer review process shall be in place for interpreting physicians to participate in the cross-reading of EEG cases annually and that this be documented.

2. Staff Competency - Technologists

- a. Technologists should be observed periodically by a peer or a qualified physician while performing studies and this shall be documented.
- b. Technologists should be given timely feedback on the quality of tracings by the interpreter and this shall be documented.
- c. There should be a formal review of technologists at regular intervals and this shall be documented at least annually.

3. Equipment Performance

- a. There should be a checklist for routine preventative maintenance to ensure proper and safe operation of neurophysiological testing equipment and all service and repairs shall be documented.

15.2.2 Process

1. Laboratory Technique and Procedure

- a. There should be a checklist for consistent technique and operation of the equipment in the event that staff who may be unfamiliar with the facility are called on to perform testing.

2. Reporting

- a. Facilities should monitor turnaround time and set targets for achievement.

3. Medical Records

- a. There should be a periodic review of the legibility and completeness of medical records.

15.2.3 Outcome

1. Client Satisfaction
 - a. Facilities should solicit feedback from patients and physicians using the facility on a regular basis, regarding their satisfaction with the service.
2. Safety
 - a. Facilities should maintain a distinct log of critical incidents, including the action taken to prevent future occurrences.
3. Utilization
 - a. Medical Directors should provide educational feedback to referring physicians when indicated.

Appendix A - Infection Control Guidelines for Neurophysiology Laboratories

All patients are considered to be potential sources of hepatitis B, hepatitis C, HIV, and other infectious organisms. Personnel having potential contact with sharps or blood are encouraged to be immunized against hepatitis B.

General Recommendations

1. Hands shall be washed immediately before and after procedures.
2. The use of gloves is mandatory when handling blood or sharps contaminated with blood in most clinical situations. This is particularly important when the worker's skin barrier is broken.
3. Gowns, goggles and masks should be available for special circumstances such as droplet infection and where aerosolization of blood is possible.
4. Prior to disinfection and sterilization, all instruments shall first be thoroughly cleaned to remove all organic matter (blood & tissue) and other residue.

Note: Organic matter shields organisms from destruction and may inactivate some disinfectants.

Technique

- *The cleaning process shall be carried out using appropriate protective apparel - gloves, masks, and gowns or aprons, if splashing is anticipated.*
- *The articles shall be washed in hot sudsy water with bottle- or special-brushes or scrubbers, keeping below the water line when possible, to reduce aerosolization.*
- Care shall be taken to remove all organic matter as appropriate to the article, (e.g. ports and channels).

Definitions

- High-level disinfectants: 2% glutaraldehyde, 6% hydrogen peroxide, peracetic acid
- Intermediate to high-level disinfectants: Chlorine compounds
- Intermediate-level disinfectants: Alcohols, Iodophors
- Steam autoclaving: Adequate steam autoclaving requires 20 minutes at 15 PSI and 121°C. To ensure proper sterilization, controls shall be included with each run. A quality control program should be developed in consultation with an expert in Infection Control and performance records kept for 2 years.

Electroencephalography and Evoked Potential Laboratory

1. Electro-caps:
 - Clean electro-caps as described in the attached manufacturer's excerpt, and
 - **In cases of known or suspected blood borne infectious disease or where broken skin or blood are present on the scalp, soak for a minimum of 10 minutes in a high-level disinfectant (such as 2% glutaraldehyde), and**
 - Rinse in hot water and allow to dry.
2. Cup Electrodes:
 - Clean cups as per general recommendations and soak in a high level disinfectant.
3. Headbox, paste tube, tape measure, marking pencil, stimulating electrode, ground bands:
 - Wipe with an intermediate or high-level disinfectant.

Note: If the patient has a head wound: discard the tape and pencil.
4. Sandpaper or wooden sticks used for skin preparation:
 - Discard after use on each patient.
5. Blunt needles used for application of paste:
 - Clean as described above, and
 - Sterilize by steam autoclaving, and
 - Store in sterile wrapping.

Note: If the patient has known or suspected Jakob-Creutzfeld Disease or other Prion disease, discard the needles in a puncture-proof container sent for incineration. Arrangements for incineration can be made through hospitals or biohazardous-waste disposal contractors.

Electromyography Laboratory

1. Needle electrodes:
 - Clean as described above, and
 - ***Soak in high-level disinfectant for 12-14 hours, rinse in sterile water, and allow to dry, or steam autoclave as described above, or gas sterilize, and***
 - Store in sterile wrapping.

Note: Soaking needles in glutaraldehyde solution does not damage Teflon sleeves but repeated soaking or sterilization may raise impedance at needle tips, making disposal necessary. Vortexing or strong agitation is recommended during chemical disinfection of needles with sleeves or channels.

Note: If the patient has known or suspected Jakob-Creutzfeld Disease or other Prion disease, discard the needles in a puncture-proof container sent for incineration.

Needlestick Incidents

1. There must be a policy in place that references a Regionally approved protocol for management of needlestick injuries.

ELECTRO-CAP CLEANING AND PREVENTIVE MAINTENANCE

The following information is taken from an Electro-cap manufacturer's instruction manual.

*Electro-caps must be cleaned frequently for sanitary reasons. In addition, if all the gel is not washed from a cap, the material will lose its elasticity; the life of the cap will be dramatically shortened. **USE ONLY IVORY® OR PALMOLIVE® LIQUID DETERGENT FOR WASHING ELECTRO-CAPS!** Other soaps and detergents, especially those common in hospitals, leave a residual film on the electrode metal. After a few washings the soap film builds up and coats the electrode. Excessively high electrode impedances and overwhelming electrode artifacts result.*

The dye from the cap material may bleed during the first few washings. Do not wash different colored caps together. Before washing a cap, always unsnap and remove the cap straps.

The cap straps are washed separately because the strap material is thick; drying may require several hours. It is advisable, however, to wash the straps thoroughly with a brush and soapy water once a week.

TO WASH CAPS

1. *Unsnap and remove the straps; place to one side.*
2. *Fill sink with LUKEWARM tap water.*
3. *Add a small amount of Ivory® liquid detergent to the water.*
4. *Submerge ONLY the cap. **DO NOT** allow the blue connector to get wet. Let the cap sit in the water a few minutes*
5. *Clean the gel from the electrode mounts with an "orange stick" or cotton swab. Another method is to alternate each mount, in turn, under rapidly running water. The water pressure will force most of the softened gel from the mounts.*
6. *Rinse the cap thoroughly.*
7. *Blot the cap gently in a terry cloth towel or hang it up to dry.*

IMPORTANT

*When drying the cap, **HANG IT SO THE CAP IS LOWER THAN THE BLUE CONNECTOR.** If the connector is lower than the cap, water will run down the multicolored cable into the blue connector. The water will quickly corrode the terminals; artifacts will result.*

8. *When the cap is dry, replace the straps.*
9. *Once a month, scrape the metal electrode disks thoroughly with an orange stick or the wooden end of a cotton swab. Oxide gradually builds up on the electrode disks and should be periodically scraped away.*

In most geographic areas, an Electro-cap will air dry in about one hour. However, high humidity will extend the drying time. The straps will normally dry overnight if they are washed at the end of the work day.

If there is not enough time for the cap to air dry between patients, blot the cap with a terry cloth towel. The cap may feel damp to the touch, but will be sufficiently dry for immediate application.

A small hair dryer may also be used to quickly dry a cap. However, use only a "WARM" setting. The "HIGH" or "HOT" setting on some hair dryers is too hot and will weaken the elastic material; the cap life will be severely shortened.