



Recognizing Risk Using Reservoirs

Session 1

What Does It Mean to Recognize a Risk?

Project Firstline Infection Control Training Toolkit



U.S. Department of
Health and Human Services
Centers for Disease
Control and Prevention



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Overview of Session Plan

The following session plan is provided to support you, as a facilitator of a Project Firstline training, in using Project Firstline materials to create well-rounded training events and to educate your audience about infection control.

Facilitator Instructions

This content can be offered as a stand-alone session, or combined with other Project Firstline sessions to create a longer training event. This session plan includes recommendations for using chat functions and other tools and activities to draw your audience into the material when your time is limited. When you schedule your session, use your knowledge of your audience's availability and learning needs to adapt these materials as needed.

Session Materials

- *What Does It Mean to Recognize a Risk?* session plan
- Corresponding PowerPoint slide deck
- Participant booklet

Using the Materials

This session plan is one of three in a series that explores the concept of recognizing the risk for germs to spread in healthcare. Whether you offer the full series or this session alone, following are things to know:

- Use the session plan and slides as guides for your training presentation.
- The slide numbers in the session plan correspond to the companion slide deck.
- You are encouraged to customize or adapt the sample facilitator scripts to better match your own voice and audience.
- The time recommendations are provided as a guide for short 20-minute training sessions. As needed, take more time with specific sections.

Conducting a Session

Schedule and announce the sessions according to your organization's needs and requirements. Each session should include, at a minimum:

- specific learning objectives,
- the presentation of core content, and
- opportunities for participants to learn more, understand and connect with the key messages for each topic, act on their learning, and engage with others.

Educational Content at a Glance

Learning Objectives

- Understand the concept of risk recognition, especially in healthcare.
- Apply the concept of risk recognition to infection control actions.

Key Takeaways

- Risk recognition is seeing the potential for a problem to happen. You see risk every day at home and at work, and you take steps to minimize it.
- You can help control infections in healthcare by learning to recognize the risks for germs to spread and cause infection, and not letting it happen.
- Healthcare is a unique setting – we consider germs differently in healthcare than we do in other places, like at home or in the community.
- The work that we do in healthcare presents many opportunities for germs to spread.
- Everyone, no matter your training or role, can recognize an infection risk and take action to keep germs from spreading.

Session 1: What Does It Mean to Recognize a Risk?

Session Slides and Facilitator Notes

1. Welcome and Introductions



1 minute



Slide 1: Welcome and Introductions



Facilitator Notes

- Participants log in and get settled.



Slide 2: Agenda



Facilitator Notes

- Welcome the group and add a greeting to the chat box.
- If this session is part of an ongoing series, you may choose to say “welcome back,” “thank you for joining us again,” etc.
- Announce housekeeping notes, either orally or via chat. If needed, provide additional notes specific to the platform you’re using (e.g., how to “raise your hand,” how to post questions).
- Provide an overview of the agenda.
- Adapt this section of the session as needed: for instance, you may choose to spend additional time on introductions if there are new faces, or if participants do not know each other.



Sample Script

“Welcome to Project Firstline. Thank you for joining us! Before we begin, a few housekeeping notes. We’ll meet today for about 20 minutes. Please keep your videos on, to the extent possible, and keep your microphone muted when you are not contributing to the discussion. It’s great to see you all here today!

“Today, we’ll discuss the concept of risk recognition, and how you can apply it to help prevent infections in healthcare. We’ll have an opportunity to reflect before we wrap up for the day.”

2. Recognizing Risk



6 minutes



Slide 3: Recognizing Risk

(Transition slide)



Slide 4: Discussion Question: What Is “Risk”?



Facilitator Notes

- Open discussion by asking participants to name a recent time or event in which they saw a risk, or a possibility that something could go wrong, at home or at work, and took action as a result. Invite them to type their answers into the chat, or you may call on volunteers to unmute and share their thoughts.
 - ▶ Provide a non-healthcare example to stimulate ideas, such as intervening when a toddler tries to climb up on a table; slowing down when you see a dog on the side of the street as you drive by; turning the handles of pots on the stove away from the edge so the pots won’t be knocked off; or wiping up a spill so others don’t fall.
 - ▶ Depending upon your audience, you may wish to incorporate examples of recognizing risk and changing behaviors and actions from the COVID-19 pandemic, such as wearing a mask to the grocery store, avoiding large gatherings, or getting vaccinated.



Sample Script

“Thinking about the question of what risk is and how you recognize it, can you think of a time when you spotted a risk at work or at home, and took action to stop something bad from happening? And how did you know it was a risk – had you seen it happen before, or was it something you were taught? Feel free to put your answers in the chat.”



Slide 5: Risk Recognition Definition



Facilitator Notes

- Acknowledge responses and link them to the definition of “risk recognition” on the slide.
- Note that we recognize risk all the time in our daily lives, and we act to keep bad things from happening.



Sample Script

“Those are great examples, thank you! A simple definition of risk recognition is ‘seeing the potential for a problem to happen.’ But seeing it doesn’t mean it has to happen. You all had examples of seeing a *potential* problem and doing something to stop it from becoming a *real* problem – and that’s important. You recognize risk, and you act on it! Now, we’ll see a brief clip of these ideas in action.”



Slide 6: Video: Healthcare Risk Recognition in Action



Facilitator Notes

- This slide includes a video clip that reviews key points about recognizing the risk for germs to spread in healthcare. You have two options to present this information.
 - ▶ Show the video clip. After the clip, link the concepts of recognizing risks at home and at work with recognizing infection risks at work, **and then proceed past slides 7–9 to slide 10: How Healthcare Is Different.**
 - Depending upon your audience and time frame, you may wish to open the floor for volunteers to contribute their own examples of recognizing risk at work in healthcare, either in the chat or by unmuting and sharing aloud.

- ▶ If you choose not to show the video clip, proceed **past slide 6 to slides 7–9**, which cover the concepts included in the clip. Once you have reviewed those slides, **proceed to slide 10: How Healthcare Is Different.**
- Access the video here on the CDC website: <https://www.cdc.gov/infectioncontrol/projectfirstline/videos/RiskRecognition-inAction-LowRes.mp4>.



Sample Script

“Now, we’ll see a brief clip of these ideas in action.”

(Show video.)

“The concepts of recognizing risk when we’re at work in healthcare, like seeing the potential for a patient to fall down and stepping in to help, also apply to infection control. When there’s a risk for germs to spread, you do certain things – like clean your hands before giving a patient an injection, put on PPE before doing certain tasks, and clean and disinfect high-touch surfaces like door handles and light switches. Thinking further about the idea of recognizing risk, can you think of times at work when you recognized the risk for germs to spread? What have you done to stop germs from spreading before they caused problems?”

(Advance to slide 10.)



Slides 7, 8, 9: Risk Recognition Examples

(Alternative to video)



Facilitator Notes

(Alternative to video)

- If you elect not to show the video clip, use these slides to link the concept of recognizing risk in daily life to the ways healthcare workers recognize risk at work and take action. Build on that idea to introduce the concept of recognizing risks for germs to spread and taking action to stop it.
- Depending upon your audience and time frame, you may wish to open the floor for volunteers to contribute their own examples of recognizing risk at work in healthcare, either in the chat or by unmuting and sharing aloud. If you use these slides in instead of the video clip, adapt the script for the next slides as appropriate.



Sample Script

(Alternative to video)

“Our examples showed ways that we recognize risk in everyday life, and how we act to keep ourselves and others safe.”

(Advance to slide 8.)

“At work in healthcare, we do the same thing – by cleaning up spills, checking medication dosages, or stepping in to help if we see a patient who’s unsteady on their feet and could fall.”

(Advance to slide 9.)

“The same idea applies to infection control. When there’s a risk for germs to spread, you do certain things – like clean your hands before giving a patient an injection, put on PPE before doing certain tasks, and clean and disinfect high-touch surfaces like door handles and light switches. Thinking further about the idea of recognizing risk, can you think of times at work when you recognized the risk for germs to spread? What have you done to stop germs from spreading before they caused problems?”

3. How Healthcare Is Different



2 minutes



Slide 10: How Healthcare Is Different

(Transition slide)



Slide 11: Risks of Germs in Healthcare



Facilitator Notes

- Explain why risks for germs to spread in healthcare are different from risks in other places.
- Emphasize that healthcare is a unique setting with different risks for germs to spread, which makes infection control especially important.
- You may wish to refer to the Content Outline in the Appendix for this session for additional discussion points.



Sample Script

“When we think about germs spreading in healthcare, it’s helpful to remember what makes healthcare a unique setting, with unique challenges and risks for infection control. We think about germs and their risks differently in healthcare than in other places, like at home or in the community.

“Why? Patients are coming in for care, so there’s a higher chance that they have an infection. Because many patients are ill and weak, they’re likely to be more vulnerable to infection, so the risks from germs spreading to them are higher. And sometimes, the things that we do as part of giving care can actually put people at risk of infection. If a patient needs an IV, their skin has to be broken. If there are germs on their skin or the needle, inserting the IV can push germs into their body.

“And, finally, the work that we do in healthcare brings opportunities for germs to spread. We usually have closer interactions with patients during care than people have in the community. We interact with many people, and we touch and share a lot of things and equipment throughout the day, which are all opportunities for germs to be spread. That’s why infection control is different in healthcare than in other places – and why it’s all the more important to recognize the risks for germs to spread throughout your workday.”

4. Where Is the Risk for Germs to Spread in Healthcare?



7 minutes



Slide 12: Where Is the Risk for Germs to Spread in Healthcare?

(Transition slide)



Slide 13: Instructions



Facilitator Notes

- Describe the group activity. The next three slides have pictures of common scenes or situations in healthcare.
- Invite participants to identify risks for germs to spread in each scene and note their observations in their participant booklets or share them in the chat or by unmuting. As observations are shared, acknowledge them and encourage additional discussion, such as by asking, “Have you recently been in a situation where you’ve seen a risk like this?”

- Depending upon your audience, you could choose to ask about actions they might take to keep germs from spreading, based on the risk they've identified. This activity should move relatively quickly. The goal is not to name every possible risk in the scene or to name "correct" risks, but to help participants apply the idea of recognizing risk to real-world healthcare scenarios.



Sample Script

"We've talked about recognizing risk in general, and about higher risks for germ spread in healthcare. Now let's work together to identify and discuss some infection risks. I'm going to show a slide with a picture of a common scene in healthcare. Please look at the picture and identify the risks for germs to spread. You can jot your ideas down in your participant booklet, share them in the chat, or unmute yourself and share them aloud. Ready?"



Slide 14: Scene #1



Facilitator Notes

- Allow participants a few moments to look at the scene, and then open the floor to responses.
- If no responses are offered, you may prompt discussion by naming a risk. Possible risks include: the patient appears to have a respiratory virus that could spread by respiratory droplets, even though they are masked; germs could spread from the patient to surfaces in the waiting room; the patient could touch surfaces in the waiting room that have germs on them and spread those germs to themselves when they wipe their eyes or blow their nose.



Sample Script

"What do you see in this scene?"

(Pause for responses.)

"Definitely, this person looks like a patient – and they look like they don't feel very good! What risks do you see for germs to spread?"

(If no responses) "They have a mask on, but they seem to have a runny nose. What other risks do you see?"



Slide 15: Scene #2



Facilitator Notes

- Allow participants a few moments to look at the scene, and then open the floor to responses.
- If no responses are offered, you may prompt discussion by naming a risk. Possible risks include: even though the patient looks healthy, they aren't wearing a mask, and germs can spread from someone who doesn't look sick; germs could be spread from the patient's wound to surfaces in the waiting room; germs from surfaces in the waiting room could reach the patient through their wound.



Sample Script

"Those are great ideas, thank you! Let's look at another photo. What risks do you see here?"

(Pause for responses.)

"That's true! Even though they don't look sick, they should be wearing a mask to keep germs from their respiratory droplets from spreading. What else do you see?"

(Pause for additional responses.)



Slide 16: Scene #3



Facilitator Notes

- Allow participants a few moments to look at the scene, and then open the floor to responses.
- If no responses are offered, you may prompt discussion by naming a risk. Possible risks include: a sharp in a regular trashcan instead of a sharps container; an overflowing trashcan, which is an infection risk if it contains items like used tissues or other items carrying germs; the supplies placed near the sink, which could get splashed with water that contains germs.



Sample Script

“There’s no patient in this scene, but is there an infection risk?”

(Pause for responses.)

“Exactly, the uncapped needle sitting on top of the trash is a risk – someone could get stuck with it, and germs on the needle could get into their body. What other risks do you see?”

5. Bringing It Together



2 minutes



Slide 17: Bringing It Together

(Transition slide)



Slide 18: Reflection



Facilitator Notes

- Transition from the activity to give participants an opportunity to reflect and identify ways to recognize infection risks in their daily work. Encourage participants to note their ideas in their participant booklets.
- You may choose to ask one or two volunteers to share their thoughts. Depending upon your audience and time frame, you could also ask how participants might take action to stop germs from spreading, based on the risk(s) they identified.



Sample Script

“You did a great job recognizing risks! Now, as you reflect on the infection risks that we’ve talked about or identified, think about your next workday. Can you recognize one risk for germs to spread that’s part of your daily work?”

(Pause for responses.)

“Let’s go one step further. When you recognize one of these risks, what’s one thing you can do – one infection control action – to help stop germs from spreading? Please jot down your thoughts in your participant booklet. Would anyone like to unmute and share their ideas?”



Slide 19: Questions



Facilitator Notes

- Invite additional remaining questions.
- If the answers are information that is already included in this session, please respond.
- If the questions address content that is not covered in this session, please do not attempt to answer. Instead, take note of the questions and consult with CDC resources to follow up with answers after the session.



Sample Script

“We covered a lot today. Does anyone have any questions still remaining, or items I can clarify about recognizing risk for germs to spread in healthcare?”

6. Conclusion



2 minutes



Slide 20: Conclusion

(Transition slide)



Slide 21: Key Takeaways



Facilitator Notes

Thank participants for their time and review the Key Takeaways from the session.



Sample Script

“Thank you for your time and attention today. I hope that you can take these ideas and apply them at work.”



Slide 22: How to Get Involved and Feedback



Facilitator Notes

- Share additional resources from Project Firstline and CDC.
- Explain how participants can reach you, by the means of your choosing, and how they can reach Project Firstline.
- If this session is part of a series, you may choose to describe the themes of upcoming sessions.
- Direct participants to the feedback form.



Sample Script

“Even though we covered a lot today, there is still much more to learn. You can keep exploring these topics on your own using the resources on this slide.

“Project Firstline has a suite of products to help you learn more about how to recognize infection risks at work, where germs live in healthcare, and how germs spread. You can also follow Project Firstline on social media!

“I will stay online for a few minutes after our session ends and will be happy to discuss any other questions!”

(If this session is part of a series) “Next time, we will cover [insert next training topic]. Finally, please let us know how you enjoyed today’s session by completing the feedback form. Thanks again for joining us today.”

Appendix

Content Outline

- Risk recognition is seeing the potential for a problem to happen.
- You see risk every day, and you take steps to minimize it, like:
 - ▶ Intervening when a toddler tries to climb up on a table
 - ▶ Slowing your car when you see a dog on the side of the street
 - ▶ Turning the handles of pots on the stove away from the edge so the pots won't be knocked off
 - ▶ Wiping up a spill so others don't fall
- You do the same at work in healthcare, no matter your role:
 - ▶ Mopping up a spill on the floor
 - ▶ Checking medication dosages
 - ▶ Stepping in to help a patient avoid a fall when they are unsteady on their feet
- Infection control is the same – recognizing the risk for germs to spread and cause infection, and not letting it happen, by:
 - ▶ Cleaning your hands before giving a patient an injection
 - ▶ Putting on personal protective equipment (PPE) before doing tasks where there are risks for germs to spread
 - ▶ Cleaning and disinfecting high-touch surfaces, like door handles and light switches
- Healthcare is a unique setting. We consider germs differently in healthcare than we do in other places, like at home or in the community.
 - ▶ Healthcare settings are places people come for care, so there is a higher chance that people in a hospital or clinic will have an infection than elsewhere, like at the grocery store.
 - ▶ Patients in healthcare settings are likely to be more vulnerable to infection because they are weak or ill and need care and the risks from germs spreading to them are higher.
 - ▶ Healthcare workers and patients usually have closer interactions during care than people do in community settings.
 - ▶ Sometimes, the things we do as part of giving care can actually put people at risk of infection, for example:
 - Inserting an IV into a patient creates a risk for infection if germs on their skin are pushed into their body by the needle, or if germs on the needle or another piece of equipment get into their body.
 - Treating a patient for cancer (e.g., with chemotherapy) weakens their body's natural defenses against germs, putting them at higher risk of infection.
 - Because they work in places where there are more, and different, germs, healthcare workers are at risk for picking germs up and spreading them to other people and to the environment.
- Germs have to be moved – from person to person, place to place, or between places and people –

for the risk that they *might* get to someone and make them sick to become reality.

- The work that we do in healthcare presents many opportunities for germs to be spread.
 - ▶ We interact with a lot of people – patients, coworkers, visitors, and others.
 - ▶ We touch many things and use a lot of equipment throughout the day.
- All these factors are why infection control actions in healthcare are so important for keeping opportunities for germ spread from becoming reality.
- As a healthcare worker, you can recognize common situations and risks and know what to do about them, which means you can protect your patients, your colleagues, and yourself.



For more information, please contact

Centers for Disease Control and Prevention
1600 Clifton Road NE, Atlanta, GA 33029-4027
Telephone: 1-800-CDC-INFO (232-4636)/TTY: 1-888-232-6348
E-mail: cdcinfo@cdc.gov
Web: www.cdc.gov/projectfirstline