**Policy # FCSS-0147.14**

**FAMILY& COMMUNITY SUPPORT SERVICES (FCSS)**

**RIMBEY COMMUNITY HOME HELP SERVICES (RCHHS)**

**POLICY**

**NAME: SAFE BATH/SHOWER TEMPERATURES**

**DEPARTMENT: HEALTH CARE**

**EFFECTIVE DATE: OCTOBER 10, 2014**

**POLICY STATEMENT**

FCSS is committed to the provision of safe bath and shower water temperatures for all clients receiving assistance with bathing, in accordance with applicable legislation, codes, standards and evidence informed practices.

**PROCEDURE**

**1. Safety Precautions**

1.1 The acceptable water temperature range for staff assisted baths and showers is 38 – 43 degrees Celsius.

1.2 The care plan will direct the level of supervision the client requires with all bath or shower related activities.

**2. Therapeutic Tubs (Lodge tubs)**

2.1 Prior to the first bath of the day, the staff member of the facility will do their water temperature checks, if the temperature is outside the acceptable range (38 – 43 degrees Celsius) the tub shall be designated as out of service until problem is fixed.

**3. Bath Water Temperature Checks (Lodge)**

3.1 Confirm that the water temperature for that tub is within the acceptable limits by checking the bath log for that tub.

a) if the water temperature has not been recorded, an initial water temperature check must be completed by lodge staff.

b) if the water temperature falls outside of the acceptable range report problem to lodge staff and do not use until problem corrected.

3.2 **(All baths in home and Lodge)** Fill the tub with water.

a) Turn on the water, using a controlled mixture of hot and cold.

b) Check the water temperature while the water is running using either the integrated tub thermometer or hand help thermometer that has been held in water until the temperature reading is steady. (**Check 1)**

c) Fill the tub to an appropriate level for the type of tub used.

d) Turn off the water.

e) Swirl water around to ensure consistent water temperature throughout.

f) Check the water temperature (**Check 2**),with a hand held thermometer

3.3 Immediately prior to the patient entering the water, immerse forearm and hold the inside of forearm in the water for at least 5 seconds (**Check 3**).

a) Water temperature should feel comfortably warm but not hot.

3.4 Record the date, time and temperature check on the bath log.

3.5 If not contra –indicated by client’s health or other condition, invite client to check the water temperature using their forearm.

3.6 Observe and ask client, whenever possible, for any indication of discomfort related to the water temperature:

a) while getting into tub, and

b) during the bath.

3.7 If the client indicates that the temperature of the water is too hot:

a) the client shall be immediately removed from the tub;

b) steps shall be taken to provide for the client’s immediate comfort and safety;

c) the client shall be assessed for any reddening of the skin; and

d) the water temperature shall be measured and compared to the temperature at Checks 1, 2, and 3.

**Note:** If there is any indication that the client has been scalded or burned, the client shall be immediately treated for scalding/burning and the supervisor shall be called.

3.8 The tub water temperature shall be readjusted for the client’s comfort. To ensure the temperature is safe, while adding water to the tub run water submerge their forearm in the bath water and observing and asking the client, where possible, for any indication of discomfort related to the water temperature. Check the water temperature of the bath water once the additional water is added, using a hand-held thermometer and record the temperature check on the bath log.

3.9 Where the client identifies a preference for a water temperature lower than 38 degrees Celsius, this preference shall be noted on the client’s care plan and communicated to all care providers.

**Note:** Temperature exceeding 43 degrees Celsius is not allowable due to a risk of scalds.

**4. Shower Water Temperature Checks**

4.1 Staff assisting the client to shower:

a) turn on the water, using a controlled mixture of hot and cold

b) while the water is running, check the water temperature by using the staff forearm (**Check 1**)

c) immediately prior to the client entering the shower, staff places their forearm in the water stream for at least 5 seconds to check the water temperature, or if using the AHS Bath thermometer hold card under shower head for 10 seconds (**Check 2**)

d) if not contra-indicated by client’s health or other condition, invite client to check the water temperature using their forearm (**Check 3).**

**\*** If the water check is not performed by the client, then staff again place their own forearm in the water stream for at least 5 seconds to check the water temperature (**Check 3**)

e) observes and asks, where possible, the client for any indication of discomfort related to the water temperature of the water during the shower.

4.2 Record the date, time and temperature check on the bath/shower log.

4.3 Should the client indicate that the temperature of the water is too hot:

a) the client shall be immediately removed from the shower and steps shall be taken to provide for their immediate comfort and safety,

b) the client’s skin shall be assessed for any reddening and

c) the water temperature shall be measured and compared to the temperature at Checks 1, 2, and 3.

**5. Where more than one Health Care Aide is assisting client with bath or shower**

5.1 One employee shall be identified as being ultimately responsible for regulating the water temperature, performing and recording the water temperature checks and for on ongoing monitoring of the client’s level of comfort.

**6. Recording information**

6.1 A bath/shower log shall be used for documenting the required water temperature checks for each client bath/shower. These logs will be kept either in the tub room in the lodge or in the client’s tri folder if the client lives in their own home. Once the log sheet is full they will be taken to the office and retained for the current year plus 5 years in accordance with Alberta Health Services Records Management policy and procedures.

**REFERENCES**

Alberta Health Services Policy and Procedure: Safe Bath Temperatures

The Bethany Group Policies and Procedures: Safe Bath/Shower Temperatures

Revised/Reviewed: **May 30, 2019**

This policy shall be reviewed at the discretion of the Board but at least annually.