

# **ICRA for Dummies: How to Prepare Your Construction Team to be Infection Prevention and Control Compliant**

Healthcare construction is a specialized field. In addition to ensuring the safety of your construction crew, you are also responsible for protecting the health and well-being of patients, staff, and visitors. An Infection Control Risk Assessment (ICRA) is a vital tool used to identify potential hazards and implement appropriate control measures to minimize the risk of infectious disease transmission. This systematic evaluation of construction risks helps create a safer environment for everyone in a healthcare facility.

Below is a checklist of essential topics to review with your construction team to ensure they are prepared to follow the ICRA guidelines and maintain a safe construction environment:

☐ **TAKE TIME TO EXPLAIN THE "WHY".**

Help your team understand the importance of infection prevention and control. When staff recognize the impact construction activities can have on patient health and safety, they are more likely to comply with protocols. Emphasize that healthcare construction is different from standard construction projects.

☐ **CLARIFY THE CONSTRUCTION ACTIVITY TYPE.**

Large-scale projects, such as major demolition or renovations, often generate significant amounts of dust and debris, which can pose serious risks to patients, staff, and visitors. Clearly explain the nature and scope of the work to your team, highlighting the associated risks.

☐ **SPECIFY THE AT-RISK PATIENT POPULATION.**

Healthcare facilities house a wide range of departments, each serving unique patient populations with varying levels of vulnerability. Clearly identify which

patient groups are at greater risk during your project. As a general rule, the more critically ill the patients, the more stringent the protective measures must be.

### ☐ **EMPHASIZE THE ROLE OF THE FACILITY'S INFECTION PREVENTIONIST.**

Inform your team that healthcare facilities have designated infection prevention staff who have the authority to halt construction activities if ICRA protocols are not followed. The Infection Preventionist will regularly inspect the construction site to ensure compliance. It is essential to collaborate with the Infection Preventionist before beginning the project to obtain approval and again before project completion for a final inspection.

### ☐ **MAINTAIN A CLEAN WORK AREA.**

A clean construction site is critical, regardless of the project's scale or the patient population nearby. Reinforce the following practices with your team:

- Prompt removal of dust from outside the construction zone.
- Proper covering of all trash and debris during transport.
- Regular monitoring and maintenance of tacky mats at construction area exits to ensure they effectively trap dust from footwear.

Need further assistance? Contact APIC Consulting to see how we can help and request your free consultation. Email: [info@apicconsulting.com](mailto:info@apicconsulting.com).