Plenary

**Standard operating procedure**

**cover sheet**

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| SOP number | 100023 |
| SOP title | **Taking an oral temperature** |

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|  | Name | Signature | Date |
| Author | S. Johnson |  | 03.06.20 |
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| SOP effective date: | 03.06.20 |
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**Standard operating procedure for:**

**Taking an oral temperature**

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| **Purpose:** |
| To be used by healthcare professionals when the body temperature of a service user is to be accurately determined. |
| **Scope:** |
| To accurately take the oral temperature of a service user. |
| **Responsibilities:** |
| All aspects of this SOP are to be undertaken by the healthcare professional responsible for taking the service user’s temperature.  Other healthcare professionals may be responsible for interpreting a temperature reading. |
| **Safety notes**: |
| Appropriate PPE must be worn. |

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| **Equipment:** | |
| * Digital oral thermometer * Surgical gloves * Surgical mask * Paper towel | * Apron * Eye protection * Isopropyl (rubbing) alcohol * Cotton ball/pad |
| **Procedure:** | |
| **Preparing the equipment:**   1. Dampen a cotton ball or pad with isopropyl (rubbing) alcohol and wipe down the entire thermometer from handle to tip. 2. Rinse the thermometer under warm, running water to remove any traces of the disinfectant. Take extra precaution not to saturate the digital display area. 3. Place the thermometer on a clean paper towel to air-dry.   **Taking the service user’s temperature:**  Before carrying out this procedure, ensure that the service user has not eaten or drunk anything in the last minutes, and that they have provided their consent to having their temperature taken.   1. Turn on the thermometer. 2. Position the tip of the thermometer under the patient’s tongue, as far back as possible on either side of the frenulum linguae. (Note – placing the tip in this area promotes contact with superficial blood vessels and contributes to an accurate reading). 3. Remove the thermometer once it beeps. (The time taken depends on specific thermometer used). 4. Note the temperature measurement. 5. Check the temperature against the normal range for an oral thermometer.  |  |  |  |  |  | | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | | Age (in years) | 0-2 | 3-10 | 11-65 | Over 64 | | Normal temperature range | 95.9–99.5°F  (35.5–37.5°C) | 95.9–99.5°F  (35.5–37.5°C) | 97.6–99.6°F  (36.4–37.6°C) | 96.4–98.5°F  (35.8–36.9°C) |  1. Provide the service user with their temperature.   **After the procedure:**   1. Clean the thermometer after use by repeating steps 1–3. | |
| **Links to Other Policies:** | |
| * NHS handwashing procedure * Calibrating a digital thermometer (specific to brand of thermometer used) | |

**Change History**

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| **Name:** | **Change:** | **Date:** |
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