

Mpox (monkeypox) – Information for sex-on-premises venues

Who is this information is for?

This guidance is for owners, managers and staff of sex-on-premises venues and gives advice on cleaning their venues considering the recent increase in mpox infections in New Zealand.

What is mpox?

Mpox is a viral infection, that is mainly spread through skin-to-skin contact with someone who has mpox. Most people recover within a few weeks.

There is currently a global outbreak of mpox and recently there have been several cases confirmed in Aotearoa, New Zealand.

More information on mpox can be found on the Ministry of Health website at <http://www.health.govt.nz/mpox>.

Advice for general cleaning and waste management in sex-on-premises venues

Regular cleaning and disinfecting reduces the risk of environmental spread of mpox in sex on premises settings. It can be effectively achieved without using specialist services or equipment.

The risk of spread from surfaces can be substantially reduced by regular cleaning using standard cleaning and disinfection methods and materials, (e.g., diluted household bleach) and by washing clothes, towels, linens, or equipment with standard laundry detergents. (Laundry Items should be washed at the highest temperature they can withstand where possible and a full wash cycle is recommended)

Staff undertaking cleaning and waste disposal should wear:

- a single use medical mask
- single use non-sterile disposable gloves,
- plastic disposable apron
- any other personal protective equipment (PPE) as recommended by the cleaning product information.

Hands should be cleaned after removal of gloves and any other PPE using soap and water. Alcohol-based hand sanitiser can be used as an alternative to soap and water.

Venues where sexual activities occurs; (especially group sex), such as saunas, dark rooms, and sex clubs usually have standardised protocols for frequent cleaning of these spaces, and items or objects.

Existing protocols for venue cleaning should be strengthened with the following additional measures:

- In addition to routine cleaning, areas should be frequently cleaned if soiled with bodily fluids, including semen, faeces, blood, urine, or lubricant.
- Areas that should be targeted for cleaning include any surfaces that might be in contact with people's skin, such as benches, chairs, walls, beds, and sofas.
- Spot cleaning should be undertaken at least hourly (or more frequently if warranted during busy periods).
- If showers are used, these should be cleaned between use, as should toilets.
- Pay particular attention to door handles, light switches, and other frequently touched items.

Waste such as tissues, condoms and paper towels should be placed in lined waste bins and placed in a second bag as an additional precaution. Dispose through your regular waste management processes.