**Infection Prevention and Control Article Summary**

* Our mission: is to protect the public’s right to quality nursing services by providing leadership to the nursing profession in self-regulation
* Our vision: is excellence in nursing practice everywhere in Ontario  
    
  **Introduction**
* Ensuring use of safe, effective and ethical infection prevention and control measures that are evidence based
* The College of Nurses of Ontario (CNO) sets the professional basis of nursing practice
* Provides a guide to the knowledge, skills, judgment and attitudes that are needed to practice safely
* Clinical infection control practices continue to grow and change however, the principles of infection control do not change they evolve
* Nurses are expected to use their knowledge, skill and judgment to practice safe infection control
* Hand hygiene is the most important infection prevention and control practice
* Nurses meet infection prevention and control standards by
  + Using infection control knowledge
  + Having immunizations
  + Knowing about their patient’s immunizations
  + Seeking advice
  + Assessing situations for disease transmission
  + Using proper personal protective equipment (PPE)
  + Modify personal practices appropriately to prevent transmission
  + Advocating for reduction of disease transmission through environment and PPE
  + Advocating change when standards are not met
  + Participating in education for safer use of relevant safety procedures and equipment
  + Using safe disposal methods for hazardous materials (ex. sharps, laundry)
  + Reporting breaches of infectious materials
  + Teaching health information to clients and maintaining good communication with peers

**Maintaining a Quality Practice Setting**

* Quality nursing care includes safe practices and effective infection and prevention control
* Strategies for the care delivery process include:
  + Ensuring there is a process in place to recognize the work load, knowledge of infectious diseases, and infection prevention and control practices
  + Providing current information
  + Client centered focus with infection prevention and control, nurses intervene when client safety is in danger

**Communication Systems**

* Implementing an environment where peers feel comfortable sharing about infection prevention and control
* Maintaining opportunities for incident debriefing

**Facilities and Equipment**

* Ensuring supplies and equipment are available to all staff members
* Involving the nurses in implementing changes for better infection prevention and control

**Leadership**

* Involving nurses in planning, implementing, and evaluating infection control practices
* Modeling correct infection prevention and control
* Providing educational resources for workers

**Organizational Supports**

* Ensuring infection control processes are in place
* Implementing health and safety programs

**Professional Development Systems**

* Providing education and using effective methods to inform staff members about new implementations and practices

**Response to External Demands**

* Establishing policies to show government directives
* Ensuring resources are available to follow emergency directives

**Transmission of Infection**

* Infectious agent – A pathogen that has the potential to cause infection
* Reservoir – Infectious agent can live, grow and reproduce here
* Susceptible host – Susceptibility to an infectious agent varies among individuals
* Mode of transmission – How to infectious agent is transmitted from the reservoir to the susceptible host

**Five Modes of Transmission**

1. Contact Transmission – Direct contact between infectious agent and susceptible host
2. Droplet Transmission – Contact of mucous membranes of the nose or mouth with large particle droplets that contain an infectious agent
3. Vehicle Transmission – Food, water, or medication infected with infectious agent can act as a vehicle for transmission
4. Airborne Transmission – Small particle residue of evaporated droplets may remain suspended in the air for long periods of time, or dust particles may contain an infectious agent.
5. Vectorborne – Vectors such as insects can harbour infectious agents and transfer it to humans through bites

**Preventing the Transmission of Infection**

* Prevention has four major elements:
  1. Hand washing – Single most important infection prevention practice
  2. Protective barriers – Appropriate PPE
  3. Care of equipment – Appropriate disposal of waste, contaminated laundry, sharps, sterilization and disinfection of equipment
  4. Health practices of the nurse – Assessing risk of infection transmission and seeking medical attention if contaminated

**Glossary of Clinical Terms**

* Alcohol-based hand rinse – Waterless antiseptic
* Antiseptic – Substance that destroys or stops the growth of micro-organisms on living tissue
* Blood-borne pathogens – Viruses found in blood that produces infection (ex. Hepatitis B)
* Carrier – An individual who has been colonized for a particular organism
* Disinfectant – Chemical agent with a drug identification number
* Disinfection – Process that destroys or kills some disease producing micro-organisms
* Exposed – Being in contact with an infected person or item that may allow the transfer of micro-organisms
* Germicide – Agent that destroys micro-organisms
* Hand hygiene – General term that applies to hand washing, antiseptic hand wash, and antiseptic hand rub
* Isolation – Physical separation of infected individuals from uninfected individuals
* Micro-organism – microscopic organisms (ex. Bacteria)
* Mucous membrane – thin sheets of tissue that line various openings of the body (ex. Mouth)
* Nosocomial infection – Infection acquired in a health care setting
* Personal protective equipment – Specialized clothing or equipment worn for protection against an infectious hazard
* Precautions – Interventions implemented to reduce the risk of transmitting micro-organisms from individual to individual

**References**

College of nurses of Ontario. (2009, June). *Infection Prevention and Control*[PDF]. Toronto: College of Nurses of Ontario.