

Point of Use (POU) Water Filter Guide and Associated Resources

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Version history

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1.0	07/05/2026	New Document

Approvals

Version	Date Approved	Group/Individual
1.0	06/05/2026	ICBED Working Group

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1 Introduction

A point of use (POU) water filter is an external filter that is fitted to a water outlet (taps and showers) to filter out most microorganisms and debris.

POU water filters may be installed:

- where a water quality issue has been identified or is suspected
- or
- in areas where there are vulnerable patients who require enhanced environmental protection from possible water-borne organisms

Within the water safety plan, the health boards Water Safety Group should have identified (see also [SHTM 04-01](#)):

- which point of use filters may be used across the estate
- when they can be used
- who is authorised to install them
- how they are managed (including technical instalment, frequency of replacement, cleaning methods and appropriate cleaning products)

POU water filter resources are available at the end of this document and separately within the resources section of [Chapter 4](#). These should be used, as appropriate, in response to a water-related incident. Additional [water resources](#) can be found in [Chapter 4.1 \(water\)](#) of the National Infection Prevention and Control Manual (NIPCM).

This POU water filter resource includes:

- Risk record
- POU water filter Implementation checklist
- Daily Checklist
- Staff Information Leaflet
- Patient Information Leaflet

All of these resources are aligned to, and should be used in conjunction with, the NIPCM and Scottish Health Technical Memorandum 04-01 (Water Safety).

2 POU water filter implementation and installation

In response to an incident, outbreak, or as instructed by an IMT (Incident Management Team), POU water filters may be fitted where patients at higher risk of waterborne infection are being cared for. If agreed, teams may use the implementation checklist, followed by the daily checklist for ongoing management. All other water safety aspects, as laid out in the NIPCM and SHTM 04-01 should continue to be followed.

The [Water Safety checklist](#) should be used to support the management of the overall incident. The [POU water filter implementation checklist](#) and [POU water filter daily checklist](#) are an adjunct to this.

A plan and parameters for removing the POU water filters should be agreed as a key part of their implementation. This may be done as part of a multidisciplinary meeting or as part of an IMT agreement as per [Chapter 3](#) or [Chapter 4](#) of the NICPM.

2.1 POU water filter implementation risk record

An initial risk assessment should be completed in response to a suspected or identified risk to ensure that the decision to deploy POU water filters has been made in line with the Water Safety Plan.

Implementation plans should be communicated to senior managers for the affected area and/or the Infection Control Doctor or microbiologist. The ongoing use of POU water filters should then come under the oversight of the IMT, Water Safety Group, as outlined in the Water Safety Plan or as per SHTM 04-01.

See [Implementation Risk Record](#) template.

2.2 Implementation Checklist

The implementation checklist should be used to ensure all required measures have been taken by the team during installation. This includes identifying those responsible for daily monitoring, how issues are to be reported and to whom and that

processes are in place to track the use, monitoring, replacement and removal of the POU water filters.

See [Implementation Checklist](#) template.

2.3 Daily Checklist

The daily checklist should be used to provide assurance at local level, IMT level and organisational level that all POU water filters are correctly fitted, functional, all problems, issues or malfunctions are reported in a timely manner and replacements are undertaken in line with manufacturer's guidance. This list can be amended for local use.

The daily checklist should be completed by an agreed person at local level (for example, nurse in charge of a shift, domestic manager, estates technician) with clear contact details for who to call if issues are identified.

See [Daily Checklist](#) template.

2.4 Information Leaflets

Information leaflets should provide assurance to patients, visitors and staff that the water is safe to be used, that the outlets will perform as required and who to report any issues to. Examples are included within the resources and may be replicated using your own board assets.

See [Information leaflets](#) for templates.

3 Resources

POU water filter implementation risk record

Clinical Area	Speciality	Reason for POU water filter use	Date	Assessed By	Approval by

POU water filter implementation checklist

Step	Staff Leads	Action	Yes/No
1. Implementation	IPC Team/Clinical Leads	Reason for use of POU water filter identified (e.g. outbreak, water quality concerns)	
1. Implementation	IPC Team/Clinical Leads	Risk assessment completed and documented	
1. Implementation	IPC Team/Clinical Leads	Area(s) requiring POU water filters identified and mapped	
2. Filter Selection	Estates	Correct type of POU water filter selected (tap/shower)	
2. Filter Selection	Estates	Stock available	
2. Filter Selection	Estates	Compatibility with existing infrastructure confirmed	
3. Installation	Estates	Filters installed according to manufacturer's instructions	
3. Installation	Estates	Each filter labelled with: Installation date, Replacement due date, Installer initials	
3. Installation	Estates	Commissioning test performed (flow test, leak check)	
3. Installation	Estates	Installation and replacement log in place	

Step	Staff Leads	Action	Yes/No
4. Communication	IPC/Ward Managers	Staff in affected areas informed	
4. Communication	IPC/Ward Managers	Information provided: Purpose of filters, daily visual checks, how to report issues	
4. Communication	IPC/Ward Managers	Instructional poster displayed	
4. Communication	IPC/Ward Managers	Patient/visitor information leaflet available	
5. Maintenance	Ward Team/IPC/Estates	Daily checklist in place	
5. Maintenance	Ward Team/IPC/Estates	Outlet flushing log maintained	
5. Maintenance	Ward Team/IPC/Estates	Scheduled replacement date logged and monitored	
5. Maintenance	Ward Team/IPC/Estates	Contact for reporting issues identified	

POU water filters daily checklist

Ward:

Contact for issues:

Estates:

IPCT:

Date	POU Location	Date POU water filter fitted	POU water filter in place Y/N	POU water filter visibly damaged Y/N	POU water filter leaking Y/N	Water flowing Y/N	Replacement due Y/N	Action taken	Signed

POU water filters information leaflets

Point of use (POU) Water Filters

Information for Patients and Visitors

Why are these filters being used?

Occasionally, microorganisms can develop in water systems, including those in hospitals. POU Water filters can provide an extra layer of protection for vulnerable patients. POU water filters stop potentially harmful microorganisms from coming out of hot or cold taps and shower water.

What are the filters for?

They are fitted to taps and showers to reduce the risk of infection from waterborne bacteria.

They are commonly used in areas with patients who are more vulnerable to infections (for example, ICU, oncology, neonatal).

Is it safe to use filtered water?

Yes. The filters are rigorously tested and safe for:

- drinking
- brushing teeth
- washing
- bathing

Do I need to do anything?

Do not tamper with the POU water filter and avoid touching it when washing your hands.

No action is needed from patients or visitors. If you notice a filter is loose or leaking, please inform a member of staff.

Point of use (POU) Water Filters

Information for Staff

Purpose of POU water filters:

To protect patients by filtering out bacteria that may be present in the water supply at the point of use.

What you should do:

Do not remove or tamper with the filters.

Check daily that the filters are:

- securely attached
- not visibly damaged
- within the labelled date of use
- not passed replacement date

Report any issues immediately to Estates or IPC.

See Daily Checklist

Cleaning:

Filter should be cleaned in line with manufacturer's instructions or local SOPs.

External cleaning of taps/showers may be done as normal, avoiding contact with the filter outlet.

For any concerns or questions:

Infection Prevention and Control Team: [Phone/Email]

Estates Helpdesk: [Phone/Email]

References

1. National Services Scotland (2025). [National Infection Prevention and Control Manual: Chapter 4 – Infection Control in the Built Environment and Decontamination](#). (Accessed: 21 January 2026)
2. National Services Scotland (2015). [Scottish Health Technical Memorandum \(SHTM\) 04-01: Water safety for healthcare premises. Parts A–G. NHSScotland Assure](#). (Accessed: 21 January 2026)