Airconditioning and Ventilation

501958 860 .1.00 The control of infection risk in general and special areas of a hospital is greatly influenced by the design and efficacy of the airconditioning system. Considerable care and effort is required to ensure the appropriate results are achieved. TS11 provides detailed technical specifications on the airconditioning requirements.

501959 860 .2.00 Ventilation equipment should maintain the temperature, humidity and purity of the air, plus the inflow of fresh air, all within prescribed limits. Airconditioners and cooling towers should not be a source of contamination, particularly with respect to Legionella. Refer to the NHMRC - NSW Legislation, Australian Guidelines for the Control of Legionella Infection and to the NSW Code of Practice for the control of Legionnaire Disease for further information. Airconditioners and cooling towers should also comply with and be maintained in accordance with Federal/State/Territory guidelines on cooling towers and hot and cold water services and with relevant Australian Standards.

501960 860 .3.00 Retro fitting of split system airconditioners is a common way of resolving local cooling problems. Care should be taken when using this approach in Patient Care Areas. Issues to be considered include:

+ Routing of condensate drains;

+ Air flow and turbulence effects;

+ Maintenance and adequacy of filters.

Environmentally Sustainable Design

501961 860 .4.00 Provision of natural ventilation to Patient Care Areas should be approached with caution.

The management of airflows and the creation of a stable environment is essential to the control of the spread of infection.

Non airconditioned spaces rely on natural airflows to achieve comfort conditions. In many cases, when natural breezes are not available, supplementary ventilation in the form of ceiling fans or portable fans are used to achieve comfort conditions.

Both the natural airflows required to achieve comfort conditions and the airflows generated by supplementary ventilation generate turbulence and unpredictable airflows. These have the potential to spread infection from patient to patient.

Patient Accommodation

501962 860 .5.00 In Acute Care situations it is essential that an adequate number of 1 Bed Rooms is available.

501963 860 .6.00 Patient Waiting Areas for non-inpatient units, including Ambulatory Care Services and Community Health, should have provision for separating patients who may be highly infectious, for example, patients diagnosed with or suspected to have communicable infectious disease.