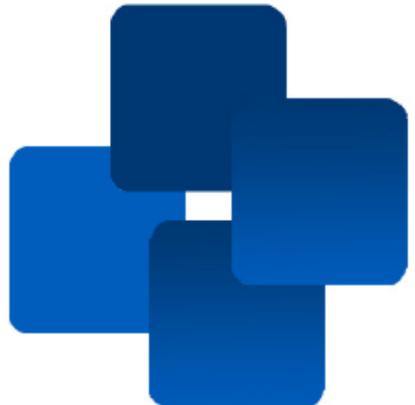


# Infection Prevention and Control

A guide for patients and visitors



## **A guide for patients and visitors**

This leaflet explains what we are doing to prevent and control the spread of infection and also suggests how you and your visitors can help prevent both yourself and other patients from getting an infection.

### **What causes healthcare associated infections?**

A healthcare associated infection (HAI) is any infection which a patient gets while they are in hospital. Any of these infections occur when bacteria that normally live harmlessly on the skin or in other parts of the body (like the gut) are transferred to another part of the body. For example, you can get an infection if bacteria in the gut gets into the urinary tract (e.g., bladder) or if bacteria that normally live on the skin get into a wound.

Three of the most common hospital acquired infections are urinary tract (bladder) infection, wound infection and chest infection. An infection can also happen when staff do not clean their hands at the right time and place when they are giving care or treatment to patients.

### **How common is HAI?**

Large national studies of hospital patients are shown that approximately 6.4% of hospitalised patients acquire an infection during their stay.

### **What are we doing to prevent infection?**

The prevention of healthcare associated infections is one of the top clinical priorities for the Trust. Staff in the hospital are working very hard to make sure that your stay here is as safe as it possibly can be - ensuring staff routinely wash their hands with soap and water before and after touching every patient, their equipment or environment; training and educating all staff in the correct way to perform procedures; monitoring and improving cleanliness in all wards and departments.

### **Hand hygiene**

Hand hygiene is one of the best ways to prevent the spread of many infections. Staff can use soap and water or hand rub to clean their hands. They should clean their hands in front of you before they touch you or any of your drips or tubes. Hand rub should be in the bed space of every adult patient, in the children's area nurses will have portable ones.

## **Keeping the environment and equipment clean**

The floor and surfaces in your bed space will be cleaned daily and regular checks will be made to ensure that this is of a high standard.

## **Controlling antibiotic use**

Antibiotics are drugs that kill germs (bacteria) and they save many patients' lives. Sometimes bacteria can become resistant to certain antibiotics which mean the drugs no longer help to fight infection.

The use of antibiotics is monitored in the hospital and doctors receive advice and teaching about antibiotic prescribing

## **Testing patients for certain bacteria on admission**

If you are admitted to hospital you may have swabs taken from your nose and groin areas and may be requested to provide a stool specimen. These are examined to see if you have any MRSA (Meticillin-Resistant Staphylococcus Aureus) bacteria or CRE (Carbapenem-Resistant Enterobacteriaceae) on your body and/or in your stools. Staff will tell you the results of these tests. If you would like to find out more about MRSA or CRE, please ask a member of staff for an information leaflet.

## **Isolation of patients**

Patients carrying or infected with certain bugs are isolated in single rooms to reduce the spread of these bugs to other patients.

Staff will wear gloves and aprons when they are in the isolation room.

## **How can patients help?**

- Clean your hands with soap and water or a hand wipe before meals and after going to the toilet.
- Avoid touching your wounds, drips, urinary catheters or any medical devices that are attached to you.
- Limit personal items on your bedside table and locker top to make it easy for staff to clean these surfaces regularly. Keep personal items off the floor.
- If you notice an area that needs cleaning, such as the toilet or the bathroom, please tell a member of staff.
- Wear slippers when walking around the ward around the ward to keep your feet clean and remove these when you get back into bed.

