



Community Infection Prevention and Control

Patient and carer
information



Infection Prevention and Control is as important in the community as it is in a hospital.

A community patient is a person receiving Trust care services, whilst remaining at home or in a residential setting.

This leaflet provides information on how patients and carers can help prevent infection in their environment.

What is Infection Prevention and Control (IPC)?

IPC is the safe use of systems and ways of working that help to prevent or reduce infections within healthcare. Good standards of IPC are essential to safeguard the health and safety of everyone.

- When we eat – for example if bacteria is on our fingers
- Through a medical device that is inserted into the body – like a drip into a vein or a catheter into the bladder

What causes infections?

Germs are everywhere; they are transferred on our hands when we touch other people, animals, bodily fluids, contaminated surfaces and food. They can then be passed into our bodies, to other people and onto other surfaces.

Infections are caused by germs entering the body, for example:

- Through a wound or cut
- When we breathe – for example when we catch a cold

Certain groups of people can be more vulnerable to infection for a number of reasons, including:

- Mental or physical health problems
- Recent substance and or alcohol misuse
- Medical treatments, including operations
- Being a younger or older person
- Compromised immune system

What is healthcare associated infection?

Healthcare associated infections (HAIs) can develop either as a direct result of healthcare interventions or from being in contact with a healthcare setting. Two of the most common HAIs are Methicillin-resistant Staphylococcus Aureus (MRSA) and Clostridioides (Clostridium) difficile (C. difficile).

If you would like more information, please ask the healthcare worker looking after you.

What do we do to prevent healthcare associated infections?

We work hard to make sure we provide a safe and clean environment for patients, visitors and staff.

All staff undertake regular training and updates on IPC related topics.

We promote and monitor the use of hand sanitiser and hand washing, and make it easy for staff and patients to do this.

How can you help to prevent infection?

- Tell the healthcare worker looking after you if you or anyone you have been in close contact with has experienced respiratory symptoms, diarrhoea and or vomiting recently.
- Show your C. difficile card to your healthcare worker if you have one.
- Wash your hands with soap and water after using toilet facilities and before eating.
- Avoid touching your dressings or wounds. If a dressing is loose or soiled tell a healthcare worker looking after you.
- Discuss any concerns you have about infections with your carer or healthcare worker.



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