

## Infection Prevention and Control

# What are we doing to prevent infection?

### You are in safe hands

Our hospitals have an excellent track record of keeping levels of infection down. We are proud to have some of the lowest rates of MRSA for hospitals of our size. However, we are not complacent and constantly strive to eradicate infection from our hospitals.

### Reducing your risk of infection

The risk of acquiring an infection whilst receiving care at University Hospital Coventry and Warwickshire or the Hospital of St Cross, Rugby is very low. Stories about MRSA and Clostridium Difficile 'superbugs' are often reported in newspapers and can be in the public interest. However, these stories can also cause unnecessary anxiety for those coming in to hospital.

In fact, both of these germs can live in the community without causing harm but may cause illness and spread easily in situations where many people are in close contact with each other. Our aim is to eradicate avoidable infections.

### What are we doing to reduce the risk of infection?

- We employ a dedicated team of skilled doctors and nurses who specialise in Infection Prevention and Control.
- We have robust policies and guidelines in place to reduce the risks of patients contracting infections, including MRSA, while they are in one of our hospitals.
- We provide hand gel machines at the entrance to every ward and department for patients, visitors and staff to use. We also have 8,000 wash hand basins throughout the hospitals.
- We provide aprons and gloves and encourage staff to wear them when



## Patient Information

carrying out specific clinical care duties.

- We test hundreds of patients for MRSA every day.
- We have introduced a comprehensive assessment scheme where wards are checked against rigorous infection prevention and control standards.
- We closely monitor our infection rates on a daily basis.
- We have a ward cleaning programme in place, where periodically, wards are emptied completely and cleaned from top to bottom to make sure they are scrupulously clean.
- When a patient is discharged, the bed space is cleaned before a new patient is admitted.
- Overuse of antibiotics can suppress the immune system and leave it more susceptible to some organisms, which is why we have a pharmacist, whose role is to advise doctors on the use of antibiotics and to monitor their usage.

## How you can help us to help you

- Always wash your hands after using the toilet. Do not be afraid to ask the staff to help you clean your hands if you can't do it yourself.
- It is important to keep yourself as clean as possible. Take personal toiletries and a towel into hospital with you. It is best to use a pump-dispensed soap. Whatever you use, always remember to bring it back from the wash/bathroom, so that no one else uses it.
- If you are bed-bound for a while, it is useful to have some moist hand wipes close by, so that you can clean your hands whenever you need to. This is especially important after using the commode or before meals.
- Gentlemen should bring in their own shaving equipment.
- Staff can help keep you free from infection by washing their hands or by using the alcohol hand rub. If a member of staff needs to undertake a procedure or close care with you, do not be afraid to ask them if they have cleaned their hands.
- Encourage your visitors to wash their hands before and after visiting. Alternatively they can also use the alcohol hand rubs. These are sited at the entrance to the wards and in bays and corridors across the hospital. If you or your visitors notice one is empty please alert a member of staff so we can refill it.
- Try to keep the top of your locker and bed-table reasonably free from clutter. Too much clutter makes cleaning of these areas difficult.

## Patient Information

- The area around your bed will be cleaned regularly. If you or your visitors see something that has been missed during routine cleaning, please make the nursing or domestic staff aware, and it will be dealt with as soon as possible.
- If you visit the toilet or bathroom, and find that it is not clean, do not use it, but report it to a member of staff immediately and use an alternative.
- Always wear something on your feet around the ward or hospital. Outdoor shoes are best as it will be safer when walking.
- Ask your visitors to stay away if they are feeling unwell.
- Keep visiting to the visiting times whenever possible. This gives the nursing and domestic staff time to clean properly and ensures privacy and dignity for other patients.
- Ask your visitors to refrain from sitting on beds.
- It is better that very young children do not visit, but if they do, please do not let them crawl on the floor or the beds. Always ask the nurse in charge before bringing children onto the ward.
- Use tissues to blow your nose or to cough into. Use them only once, and then dispose of them into the waste bag or bin. Then wash your hands.

## The Infection Prevention and Control Team

This team of health care professionals consist of microbiologists, virologists and specialist nurses.

Their role is to assist our staff in the prevention and management of all infections across the Trust. Each of the specialist nurses in the team has a specific clinical area to support and visits on a regular basis.

All clinical staff within UHCW will have to complete education on infection prevention and control on a yearly basis. Best practice is underpinned by evidence based guidelines and compliance is assessed by audit programs.

If you have any concerns regarding infection risks or you require any advice relating to a specific infection and would like to speak to one of the infection prevention and control nurses do not hesitate to ask the ward staff to contact the Infection Prevention Control Team and they will visit you.

## Patient Information

The Infection Prevention and Control Team can be contacted on **024 7696 4791**.

The Trust has access to interpreting and translation services. If you need this information in another language or format please contact 024 7696 4791 and we will do our best to meet your needs.

The Trust operates a smoke free policy

To give feedback on this leaflet please email [feedback@uhcw.nhs.uk](mailto:feedback@uhcw.nhs.uk)

### Document History

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