

- Help us to keep the hospital clean by keeping your locker top and bed table clear of clutter so that the housekeeper can keep them free of dust.
- If you see any dirt or dust around your bed, or if the toilet or bathroom is dirty, please report this immediately to one of the nurses, ward sister or Matron.

#### Tell staff immediately if:

- A dressing becomes loose or wet
- A wound or intravenous drip site becomes sore or painful.

#### If a member of staff needs to examine you, do not be afraid to ask:

- if they have first cleaned their hands
- their gloves have been changed

If you do not feel able to do this, but think that a member of staff may not have cleaned their hands properly, please mention it to the ward sister or Matron.

Ask visitors to avoid coming in to see you if they are suffering from a cold, diarrhoea or vomiting, have a rash or any other infection.

#### How can visitors help?

- Wash your hands or use alcohol sanitising foam when entering the ward and again before you leave.
- Please do not visit if you have any signs of infection e.g. diarrhoea, vomiting, fever, a cold, rash or skin infection.
- Please do not use the patient's toilets; there are other toilets for public use.
- Please do not sit on the beds.

## Key reference sources and for further information

- [www.gov.uk/topic/health-protection/infectious-diseases](http://www.gov.uk/topic/health-protection/infectious-diseases)

## Contact details

### The Infection Prevention and Control Team

Royal Surrey County Hospital  
Egerton Road, Guildford GU2 7XX  
Telephone: 01483 571122

## PALS and Advocacy contact details

Contact details of independent advocacy services can be provided by our Patient Advice and Liaison Service (PALS) who are located right as you enter the main reception area. PALS are also your first point of contact for health related issues, questions or concerns surrounding RSCH patient services.

**Telephone:** 01483 402757

**Email:** [rsc-tr.pals@nhs.net](mailto:rsc-tr.pals@nhs.net)

**Opening hours:** 9.00am–4.00pm  
Monday to Friday

If you would like information documents in large print, on tape or in another language or form please contact PALS.

Past review date: April 2016  
Future review: March 2019  
Author: Gill Hickman  
**PIN160324–1026**



© The Royal Surrey County Hospital NHS Foundation Trust 2016

## Working together to reduce Health Care Associated Infection (HCAI)



## Infection Prevention and Control

## What is Health Care Associated Infection (HCAI)?

---

Health care associated infections (HCAIs) are caused by a wide range of micro-organisms (germs) and are associated with medical care or treatment. They can be acquired any place where treatment is given i.e. in hospital, GP surgery or even the patient's own home.

In many cases the type of micro-organisms which cause infection is the patient's own type. Only a minority of patients get an infection with micro-organisms from the hospital or clinic.

## How common is HCAI?

---

Large national studies of hospital patients have shown that approximately 6.5% of patients acquire an HCAI. This figure is similar to hospitals in the USA and the rest of Europe.

## Why do patients get HCAI?

---

The most important factor is how vulnerable the patient is. For example, people with diabetes, kidney failure or cancer have a lowered immunity as a result of their illness. They are at greater risk of infection. Elderly patients and the very young are also very vulnerable to certain infections.

To treat patients we often need to use devices such as drips and catheters. These can act as sites where organisms can enter the body.

All wounds including surgical wounds also provide a break in the skin's natural defence. These may become infected, usually with micro-organisms which were already present on the skin.

It is therefore not possible to completely eliminate the chances of HCAI, but it is possible to reduce it to a minimum.

Micro-organisms can also be spread on the hands of healthcare workers. Hands MUST be cleaned between each patient.

## What we are doing to prevent HCAI?

---

All staff in the hospital work very hard to make sure that your stay in hospital is safe, in particular reducing the risks of infection to an absolute minimum.

Many procedures in hospital, such as operating theatre routines, aseptic dressing techniques and sterilization of instruments are good examples of measures taken to reduce infection.

Good hand hygiene (washing hands with soap and water or the use of alcohol sanitising foam) by all staff also has a major part to play in reducing infection.

Environmental cleaning plays a relatively small part in the prevention of infection. However, the environment must be clean for general hygiene standards and professional image. Cleaning standards are monitored monthly.

There is a dedicated Infection Control Team who work closely with the Matrons and managers. This ensures that the Trust's high standards of Infection Control are delivered effectively.

There are regular infection control education sessions provided for all staff. Infection control audits are undertaken utilising the processes recommended by the Department of Health.

HCAI's are monitored closely and the more serious infections, including MRSA bacteraemias (MRSA in the blood) and Clostridium difficile

(Cdiff), are reviewed to try to prevent further infections occurring.

With the exception of children, pregnant women and day cases, all hospital admissions are screened for MRSA carriage.

When patients have serious infections, we normally care for them in a single room to help prevent the spread of infection to other patients.

You as a patient or a visitor also have a part to play in helping to minimise HCAI.

## How can patients help?

---

Keeping your hands and body clean is important when you are in hospital. Bring with you on admission, personal toiletries including soap.

### Do not borrow or share toiletries.

- Wash your hands especially before eating and after going to the toilet.
- Have a supply of wet wipes - this will ensure that you can always clean your hands when you need to. You can also use the alcohol sanitising foam, available in all patient areas and at the end of your bed. Ask the nursing staff to show you how to use it.
- Inform the nursing staff if there is no alcohol sanitising foam at the end of your bed.
- Wear slippers when walking around the wards – this keeps your feet clean so that micro-organisms are not transferred from your feet to the bed.
- Do not sit on other patients' beds – this provides an ideal opportunity for micro-organisms to spread.
- Keep all dressings dry.