



DE~BUGGED

Focusing on the Provision of Clean, Safe Care...

Infection Prevention & Control Newsletter provided by Worcestershire Health & Care NHS Trust

ARE YOU A FAN OF FANS...

There was an alert issued January 2019 (EFA/2019/001) which identified that portable fans could act as a mode of transmission for infection due to their ability to harbour micro-organisms. This was identified as a concern following an article in the Journal of Hospital Infection (100 (2018) 476-477): A bladeless fan had been retrieved from a ward area following its use in an infected area thereby requiring decontamination. The bladeless fan was superficially clean but internal components were coated in a thick layer of dust including some particles of dust inside the circular cowl. Once disassembled internal components were swabbed and isolated various organisms including vancomycin resistant enterococci. It remains important that all staff are mindful of these findings but to ensure a common sense approach is adopted, that balances the risk of infection against that of patient safety and comfort. Within the updated Section E of our Infection Prevention and Control guidelines which will be available soon.



Portable fans should NOT be used in the following situations:

- ☞ In high-risk areas eg operating rooms or where immunocompromised patients are receiving care.
- ☞ During outbreaks of infection if it is deemed they may increase transmission and in rooms where a patient is being managed for a communicable infection unless the direction of the fan can be set up to ensure dispersal of microbes remains in the room and does not disturb air around wounds or infectious sites.
- ☞ In rooms with specific airflow e.g. positive or negative pressure procedure rooms and in areas where sterile supplies are stored or where decontamination of medical devices occurs.

Prior to using a portable fan, consider:

- ☞ Have alternative cooling methods been considered and is the use of a fan appropriate?
- ☞ Is the patient in a non-restricted use location (see above)?
- ☞ The use of a fan is of benefit to the patient's clinical condition or comfort.

If using a portable fan, consider:

- ☞ Position the fan so it is on a clean surface at the patient's bed level or higher with airflow directed upwards toward the ceiling, avoiding smoke detectors. Air flow should not be directed towards the door of the room or across surfaces.
- ☞ Ensure airflow is not blowing directly on wound dressings, open wounds or directly into the patient's face. The fan must be turned off before any sterile or aseptic procedure e.g. intravenous cannulation, catheterisation, dressing changes or if a procedure may result in sprays or splashes of body fluids.
- ☞ In non-patient areas, such as staff bases, ensure airflow is directed within the staff area.

Decontamination

- ☞ Ensure fans are cleaned using multi surface detergent wipes or equivalent product when indicated and maintained in a good state of repair with annual checks in place. Manufacturer's guidance to clean, disinfect and maintain the fan on a scheduled basis and whenever it becomes visibly soiled must be followed. Fans must be decontaminated between use with each patient and also prior to use in a different area as well on a set schedule when in use. Without exception, fans must appear visibly clean all of the time they are in use and when stored.
- ☞ Perform hand hygiene before and after handling fan.



Many hands make light work... prevention and control of infection is a responsibility for all. Team work is essential to ensure consistent provision for clean safe care. Thank you all for your continued support with this.



INFECTION PREVENTION & CONTROL CONFERENCE AND PRODUCT EXHIBITION CELEBRATE OUR IPC JOURNEY

Plans are in place to make the conference and product exhibition on 9th May 2019 at Charles Hastings Education Centre a true party to celebrate our successes on our IPC journey and how we can further build on these into the future. Places are now all taken but if you are interested and would like to be put on a reserve list please contact Louise Hough on 01386 502597 (32597).

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If you require further information about any item in this newsletter please contact the Infection Prevention & Control Nurses on 01386 502552/32552



Yes we are now on Twitter, you can follow us at https://twitter.com/WHCT_infection we will be using our account to highlight key messages, forthcoming events and promote clean safe care. Help us get to 100 followers and spread our IPC messages and information!



Have you an interest and passion for infection prevention and control (IPC) or want to know more?

Why don't you become one of our link staff?

You would act as a link between the IPC team and your clinical area; assisting in raising awareness and promoting best practice as a means of minimising the risk of infection and promoting clean safe care.

Don't just think you would be expected to fully understand this role as this comes with time and support from the IPC team. You would also be invited to regular training sessions with an aim of increasing your knowledge and understanding of IPC guiding you on ways to enhance the role and your impact. It would be good to have you as part of our link team – If you are interested contact us on 01386 502552 (32552).

Please be alert in your workplace and check that all aspects of infection prevention and control are in place ensuring consistent provision of clean, safe care and minimising infection 100% of the time.

SHINY HAPPY TAPS AND SINKS... SO IMPORTANT

Much research has been recently published that highlights the need for appropriate use of sinks. Did you know that a number of infections have been shown to have been spread from contaminated sinks. This reiterates the importance of ensuring that hand wash sinks are designated for this purpose only and not contaminated with food products, beverages or waste products. It is the waste water drain outlet that is usually contaminated and the highest risk part of the sink. Bacteria may be of patient origin and could include antibiotic resistant organisms which can seed the outlet, become resident in biofilm and have the potential to spread infection. Actions we can all take to minimise contamination include:

- ✎ Ensuring that the cleaning of all sinks and taps is undertaken in a way that does not allow cross-contamination from a bacterial source to the tap. During cleaning of sinks and taps, there is a risk of contaminating tap outlets with microorganisms if the same cloth is used to clean the bowl of the basin or surrounding area before the tap. Clean tap first and basin second finishing at waste outlet.
- ✎ Ensuring that hand wash sinks are solely used for hand washing;
 - ✎ Do not dispose of body fluids at a hand wash sink – use a dirty utility area.
 - ✎ Do not wash any patient equipment in a hand wash sink.
 - ✎ Do not dispose of used environmental cleaning agents at a hand wash sink.
 - ✎ Do not use hand wash sinks for storing equipment awaiting decontamination or for storage of items such as dry wash bowls.
 - ✎ Do not touch the tap/spout outlet when washing hands.
- ✎ Wash patients at designated wash sinks, ensure if washing by their bed that water is taken from an appropriate outlet and disposed of in sluice area into a decontamination sink and never into a hand wash sink.

Finally, ensure that sinks and water outlets are all used regularly, if there is concern linked to infrequent use, a programme of flushing outlets should be introduced, advice can be sought from Infection Prevention and Control if required.



Staying hydrated

helps prevent infections and keeps antibiotics working. Preventing infections such as Urinary Tract Infections (UTI) by keeping hydrated avoids the need to prescribe antibiotics and reduces the risk of developing resistant infections. Did you know that adults should drink at least 1.5litres of fluid every day. For people who are over the age of 65 it is known that they are at a greater risk of dehydration which can have harmful effects including increasing the risk of developing an infection. Consider ways in which you can promote hydration to your patients but also don't forget about yourself and your family and friends.

ANTIBIOTICS ARE WONDERFUL PILLS BUT...

When antibiotics were first used in the 1940s they were a revolution in medicine. Before that, diseases like pneumonia and tuberculosis were often fatal and even a minor wound with an infection could kill. Since then, antibiotics have saved hundreds of millions of lives, the huge question is, will this be able to continue? There are clearly actions we can all take to try and ensure that antibiotics remain effective for as long as possible. Scientists believe that some of our issues with resistant bacteria are of our own making as antibiotics have been so widely used. Some bacteria have mutated and developed resistance to the drugs designed to kill them. A study commissioned by the British government estimates that by 2050, 10 million people worldwide could die each year from bacteria that have become resistant to antibiotics. This reduced effectiveness will possibly have a huge impact on healthcare as there are many procedures undertaken where we rely on antibiotics; cancer chemotherapy, transplants, hip replacements, knee replacements, colorectal surgery or simply the use of antibiotics to treat a urinary tract infection, chest infection or cellulitis. Regardless of indication, treatment relies on effective antibiotics. The issue of antibiotic resistance is a global issue and actions that we can all take contribute to safeguarding antibiotics. Within healthcare we promote the concept of NICHE, consider need, indications for treatment, choice of agent (prescribing to be informed by our agreed prescribing guidance), how long treatment needs to be and evaluating its effectiveness.

Apart from this, there are still a number of actions that can be taken by healthcare staff and these include:

- ✎ promoting actions to prevent infection (consider vaccination, hydration, appropriate management of invasive devices, consistent application of infection prevention and control practices).
- ✎ obtaining cultures where relevant prior to commencing therapy where this is possible (but not delaying commencement).
- ✎ avoiding inappropriate use of broad-spectrum antibiotics.
- ✎ discussions with patients to ensure they are aware that:
 - ✎ antibiotics are for bacterial infections
 - ✎ actions they can take to reduce the need for antibiotics, consider hydration, vaccination etc.
 - ✎ they should fully complete courses of antibiotics, not share antibiotics with others or take antibiotics that are not prescribed for them.

Please play an active role in antimicrobial stewardship encouraging the appropriate use of antimicrobials (including antibiotics) to minimise overuse, improve patient outcomes, reduce microbial resistance and decrease the spread of infections.

ALL CHANGE IN NAMES...

Reclassification of some of our well known micro-organisms as we know them is pending. Just when we have all got our heads round the names of our regular pathogens they are going to change. In support of this the microbiology lab will be reporting with new name and old name for a period of time... name changes to look out for include:

- ✎ *Clostridium difficile* will become *Clostridioides difficile*
- ✎ *Klebsiella pneumoniae* ATCC 700603 will become *Klebsiella quasipneumoniae*
- ✎ *Enterobacter aerogenes* will become *Klebsiella aerogenes* (AmpC+)
- ✎ The family of Enterobacteriaceae will become Enterobacterales which will include seven different groups one of which will be Enterobacteriaceae along with others.

Please don't worry about this as explanations will be included on reports, if you have any questions please contact the Infection Prevention and Control Nurses, these are not new infections just the old infections with new names.

SING ALONG

HAND HYGIENE

The World Health Organisation has just released a song written and performed to celebrate and promote World Hand Hygiene Day on 5th May 2019. It is actually a really catchy tune, you can view on our twitter feed @whct_infection or https://twitter.com/WHCT_Infection.

There is a really strong concise message in the chorus to reflect on: **'Hands are such a simple thing, but our hands can change most everything. Keep care safe and take a stand, clean care for all – it's in your hands.'**

Please have a listen and give it a ❤️ like and follow us on twitter at https://twitter.com/WHCT_Infection

