



DE~BUGGED

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

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

THANK YOU EVERYONE FOR YOUR COMMITMENT AND SUPPORT—TOGETHER WE CAN DO THIS



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 Herefordshire and Worcestershire Health and Care NHS Trust

So much change in the space of a year, no one could ever have anticipated the changes to services and the impact on our IPC practices. Focus as we continue on our roadmap out of lockdown will be communicated out and continue to be based on national guidance for the NHS which is very different based on our healthcare settings to guidance that is in place in the wider community. There has been much to focus on screening patients, identifying COVID-19 risk factors promptly, use of PPE, hand hygiene practices, cleaning of surfaces and equipment, ventilation and social distancing as well as promoting use of Lateral Flow Tests for all patient facing staff. It is really important that all of these practices remain in place until we are informed of the time when IPC guidance has been reviewed and we can look at some changes. Most importantly we need to continue to work together, stay safe together, look after each other and learn and share from our experiences together so we can continue to provide clean safe care. SARS-CoV-2 has evolved at a dizzying pace and guidance has changed regularly to reflect this new and evolving knowledge and has provided many challenges for all of us. Thank you to colleagues for bearing with us during this time when our service just like yours has changed totally, we are planning our return to normal in a measured manner and would urge everyone to reflect on IPC BE SMART guidance to ensure that we continue to enhance our consistent provision of clean safe care.

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



SAVE LIVES—CLEAN YOUR HANDS GLOBAL HAND HYGIENE DAY 5TH MAY 2021

Each year on 5 May, the “SAVE LIVES: Clean Your Hands” campaign takes place as part of a major global effort led by the World Health Organization (WHO) to improve hand hygiene in healthcare settings. The campaign mobilises people around the world to increase compliance with hand hygiene in all healthcare settings, thus protecting healthcare workers and patients from COVID-19 and other infections. In the context of the COVID-19 pandemic, hand hygiene is one of the most effective actions to reduce the spread of the virus, and nurses and other healthcare workers are in the front line of saving lives from COVID-19 and preventing transmission of the virus in hospitals and other healthcare settings. Nothing has changed, the five moments when hand hygiene should occur, the way we cleanse hands are just the same BUT this year hand hygiene has gone global as people start to realise the exact moments that they should cleanse their hands. What we need to continue to promote is that wearing gloves does not stop the need to cleanse hands... and ensuring that hand hygiene is consistently promoted and facilities are available at the moments when hand hygiene is indicated. Have a look at our twitter feed for some facts on hand hygiene.



Look out for flyers linked to Webex sessions that will be provided by IPC Team over the next few months. These are for link staff and those with an interest in IPC. Sessions are planned for inpatient settings in the Trust wider Trust services, nursing homes and general practices... interested please contact Louise Hough for further information on 01386 502552.

Look out for our every action counts poster set to promote practices to continue to reduce COVID-19 as we exit lockdown.

& FRESH AIR

Over the course of the last year, we have all learnt about the importance of social distancing, use of personal protective equipment, hand hygiene and cleaning of surfaces. The other key practice that must be considered linked to minimising COVID-19 is ventilation. Whilst not working in specialist settings with ventilation systems, there is still some great evidence that improving natural ventilation through, for example, opening windows, can have a large effect on improving ventilation and reducing transmission risk of COVID-19. Actions we can all take include increasing the use of natural ventilation (e.g. opening windows and doors). This relies on human behaviours and prompts to complete as well as ensuring no safety or security risks are posed by leaving these areas open there is also the concern of temperature issues but hopefully as we head for sunnier and warmer weather the natural desire to open windows when in the workplace will help us ventilate areas. Throughout the winter months the IPC Team have every day they have been at work ensured the windows have been open and this has resulted in some strange attire in the office, obviously not when on Webex sessions so with summer on the way please consider the importance of ventilation as one way of enhancing a COVID-19 secure environment.



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.



Happy International Nurses Day to our nursing colleagues. Your resilience, commitment to IPC and clean safe care has been phenomenal. A year to prove that together we can and reflect on key nursing and IPC skills. Thank you.

INTERNATIONAL NURSES DAY 12TH MAY

International Nurses' Day is celebrated each year on the 12th May to mark the anniversary of Florence Nightingale's birth and to celebrate the achievements of the nursing profession. How apt that her expertise was and is so important. During the Crimean War (1853-1856) Florence Nightingale had implemented hand washing and other hygiene practices in British army hospitals. This was relatively new advice, first publicised by Hungarian doctor Ignaz Semmelweis in the 1840s, who identified the benefits of hand hygiene. Like many public health experts, Florence Nightingale considered the home to be where infection prevention and control should start as this is where the majority of infections spread and if we consider the start of the Coronavirus pandemic, between 75-80% of transmissions were initially in family clusters in Wuhan. Guidance from the Notes on Nursing in 1860 was linked more to public health instruction and advised ordinary people how to maintain healthy homes with practices including hand hygiene, cleaning of surfaces and ensuring fresh air and ventilation, all aspects of practice that remain key today.

Keep hydrated don't wait until you're thirsty to drink. Drink cool water before you start your shift and as regularly as you can to reduce the possibility of dehydration, wearing a mask does not make it easy to drink but it is important you find a safe place to remove your mask and top up on fluids regularly.



Wearing a mask...over the nose is where it goes, under the chin is where it should begin. Did you know your nose is both a spreader of and magnet for COVID-19. Out and about more people have the 'nose exposer' look when wearing a mask. Please follow the rules to protect yourself and others.



MODELLING CONTAGIOUSNESS



R0 is a mathematical term that indicates how contagious an infectious disease is. It's also referred to as the reproduction number. As an infection is transmitted to new people, it reproduces itself. R0 tells you the average number of people who will contract a contagious disease from one person with that disease. It specifically applies to a population of people who were previously free of infection and haven't been vaccinated. For example, if a disease has an R0 of 18, a person who has the disease will transmit it to an average of 18 other people. That replication will continue if no one has been vaccinated against the disease or is already immune to it in their community.

Three possibilities exist for the potential transmission or decline of a disease, depending on its R0 value:

If less than 1, each existing infection causes less than one new infection. In this case, the disease will decline and eventually die out.

If it stays equals to 1, each existing infection causes one new infection. The disease will stay alive and stable, but there won't be an outbreak or an epidemic.

If it is more than 1, each existing infection causes more than one new infection. The disease will be transmitted between people, and there may be an outbreak or epidemic.

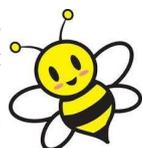
WHY THE CONCERN ABOUT A VARIANT OF CONCERN?

All viruses naturally mutate over time, and SARS-CoV-2, the virus that causes COVID-19 disease, is no exception. Over time, changes can build up in the genetic code of the virus, and these new viral variants can be passed from person to person. Most of the time the changes are so small that they have little impact on the virus but every so often a virus mutates in a way that benefits it, for example allowing it to spread more quickly, and causes us to be concerned about changes in the way the virus might behave. In this case the variant may be considered a 'Variant of Concern' by the UK government. Most mutations are not a cause for concern. Scientists around the world have been monitoring these throughout the pandemic. In the UK, we have a comprehensive genomics system which allows us to detect these different mutations with the UK contributing to around half of the sequences in the global SARS-COV-2 genome repository. More samples are sent for sequencing than ever before now and new rapid testing speeds up the detection of variants under close monitoring, which allows for public health interventions to be quickly put in place and variants categorised as those of interest for further review and those of concern where it is acknowledged that transmission, herd immunity or nature of illness may be adversely affected.



LOÖK

The IPC Team are promoting their BE SMART resource to ensure we all remain on track with IPC practices, precautions and management, it can be used as a checklist to review standards and promotes a fresh eyes concept, Copies of this resource are available for inpatient and community teams... interested please contact us and request a copy.



AGPs—AEROSOL GENERATING PROCEDURES

have been much discussed, if you are interested in seeing what procedures are included in this list visit:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/wuhan-novel-coronavirus-infection-prevention-and-control/covid-19-infection-prevention-and-control-guidance-aerosol-generating-procedures>



Don't forget to visit www.worcestershirehealth.nhs.uk for all resources linked to infection prevention and control!