



## Infection Prevention & Control Policy

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## **1 Introduction**

- 1.1. This policy has been developed as part of South East Coast Ambulance Service NHS Foundation Trust's (The Trust) on-going commitment to promote high standards of infection prevention and control throughout the Trust.
- 1.2. It aims to support and reinforce each aspect of the Trust's infection prevention and control assurance framework, in order to help minimise the risks of healthcare associated infection (HCAI) to patients, members of the public and staff.
- 1.3. The policy is underpinned by the Trust's Infection Prevention and Control Manual Procedure and Infection Prevention Ready Procedure.
- 1.4. The policy applies to all staff employed by the Trust, which includes Bank Staff, volunteers, temporary agency staff and contractors.
- 1.5. The Trust is legally required to register such compliance with the regulatory board The Care Quality Commission (CQC).

## **2 Aims and Objectives**

- 2.1. The Trust seeks to constantly develop safer systems of work to maximise the wellbeing and safety of patients and staff in accordance with The Health and Social Care Act 2008, Code of Practice for the Prevention and Control of Healthcare Associated Infections.
- 2.2. This policy describes the process for managing the risks associated with infection prevention and control and outlines:
  - 2.2.1. Key roles and responsibilities;
    - management arrangements for infection prevention & control;
    - core clinical protocols;
    - information available to patients and the public; and
    - provision and monitoring of infection prevention and control training and education of staff.



**2.3. The key principles of this policy are as follows:**

- All staff must be aware of their roles and responsibilities with regard to infection prevention and control and should challenge inappropriate practice using the Trust's reporting systems.
- The arrangements for protecting patients from the risks of acquiring HCAI must be clear.
- All staff whose duties are directly or indirectly concerned with patient care must receive information and training appropriate to their role.
- To ensure compliance to the hand hygiene technique any clinically trained staff, regardless of their duties, who are wearing operational uniform must adhere to the national policy of bare below the elbows. This includes the removal of wrist watches, stoned rings, bracelets, long sleeves, long nails, nail extensions, gel polish and nail varnish (clear or coloured).
- A system must be maintained to ensure that key policies and practices are being generated and monitored effectively.
- Patients presenting with an infection or who acquire an infection during treatment must be managed appropriately to reduce the risk of transmission.

**3 Definitions**

- 3.1. Effective infection control prevents the possible spread of infections by organisms that have the potential to cause disease.

**4 Policy Statement**

- 4.1. The policy aims to support and reinforce each aspect of the Trust's infection prevention and control strategy, in order to help minimise the risks of healthcare associated infection. Infection Prevention and Control Policies are presented in accordance with The Health and Social Care Act 2008; Code of Practice for the NHS on the Prevention and Control of Healthcare Associated Infections and related guidance (DoH 2008).
- 4.2. The Trust has in place the appropriate procedures that adhere to the clinical care protocols in relation to preventing, reducing and



controlling the risks of Healthcare Associated Infections. The appropriate core protocols concerning the Trust are:

- Standard (universal) infection control precautions;
- Aseptic Non-Touch Technique;
- Safe handling and disposal of sharps;
- Prevention of occupational exposure to blood-borne viruses, including prevention of sharps injuries;
- Management of occupational exposure to blood-borne viruses and post-exposure prophylaxis; and
- Hand hygiene and care.

4.3. These care protocol procedures can be found in the Trust's 'Infection Prevention and Control Manual' and 'Infection Prevention Ready Procedure'..

## **5 Arrangements**

5.1. The Trust recognises that patients have a right to be protected from preventable infections and that staff have a duty to safeguard the wellbeing of patients and members of the public. Prevention is the primary strategy to reduce the risk of healthcare associated infections.

5.2. The Trust complies with The Health and Social Care Act 2008 and other professional health bodies and will manage infection prevention and control issues via the Director for Infection Prevention and Control (DIPC) who reports directly to the Chief Executive Officer. The Infection Control Team will lead on infection prevention and control issues in collaboration with other Trust working groups, committees and external healthcare providers. However, it is the responsibility of all employees of the Trust to assist in the effective management of infection prevention and control. Where appropriate assistance will be sought from other bodies such as the National Institute for Clinical Excellence and Public Health England.

## **6 Responsibilities**

6.1. **All Employees**



- 6.1.1. All staff have a responsibility to protect themselves, as well as making all reasonable efforts to safeguard the welfare of their patients and all other persons encountered in their daily duties. Adherence to the guidance and procedures within the Infection Prevention and Control Manual Procedure and Infection Prevention Ready Procedure will significantly assist staff in achieving this goal.
- 6.1.2. All accidents, incidents or risks must be reported immediately and fully documented using the Trust's incident reporting system (Datix).
- 6.2. **Chief Executive Officer**
  - 6.2.1. The Chief Executive Officer has overall accountability for ensuring that the Trust maintains adequate and appropriate controls and procedures to minimise the risks of infection to patients, members of the public and staff in accordance with the Health and Social Care Act 2008.
  - 6.2.2. The Chief Executive Officer will designate the prevention and control of HCAI as a core part of the Trust's governance and patient safety programmes.
- 6.3. **Trust Executive Directors and Heads of Departments**
  - 6.3.1. Trust Directors are responsible for the provision, application and monitoring of infection prevention and control measures that fall within their area of responsibilities.
  - 6.3.2. Responsible for including specific infection prevention and control in appraisals of all managers under their control.
- 6.4. **Executive Director of Nursing and Quality**
  - 6.4.1. In accordance with Department of Health Guidance 'Winning Ways' (December 2003) and the Health and Social Care Act 2008 the Executive Director of Nursing and Quality has been designated as the Trust's Director of Infection Prevention and Control (DIPC).
- 6.5. **Executive Director of Finance and Corporate Services**
  - 6.5.1. Responsible for infection prevention and control affecting premises and facilities, including vehicles, stores and procurement, waste management and cleaning services.



- 6.5.2. Responsible for ensuring that infection prevention and control is considered at all stages of planning, building and refurbishment work.
- 6.6. **Executive Director of Human Resources**
  - 6.6.1. Responsible for ensuring relevant occupational health services and policies are available for the prevention and management of communicable infections in staff.
  - 6.6.2. Ensuring that infection prevention and control requirements are reflected in job descriptions and forms part of the annual personal development plan/ appraisals.
  - 6.6.3. Responsible for incorporating the principles and practice of infection prevention and control in corporate induction, basic training for new staff and key skills training programmes.
- 6.7. **Head of Infection Prevention and Control**
  - 6.8. Responsible for defining the IPC strategy of the Trust and developing appropriate measures to manage them that meet the needs of the Trust and ensure patient safety and quality of care.
    - 6.8.1. To identify priorities for the delivery of clean, safe, evidence-based infection control practice based on current legislation and guidance.
    - 6.8.2. They will act as an ambassador and expert for all aspects of IPC as appropriate, with the Department of Health, National Reporting and Learning System, Public Health England, NHS England, Environmental Health Services, Clinical Commissioning Groups, Acute Sector Partners, Social Services and other interested parties encouraging collaborative working to improve service performance.
    - 6.8.3. Reporting to the Trust Board that the Infection Prevention and Control Manual has been implemented to reduce HCAI via the Risk Management and Clinical Governance Committee.
- 6.9. **Infection Prevention and Control Team**
  - 6.10. The IPC Team in the Trust are tasked with, supporting and deputising (where appropriate) for the Head of Infection Prevention and Control (HIPC) in the delivery of clean, safe, evidence-based practice based on current legislation and guidance. They will act as an ambassador for all aspects of IPC.



- 6.11. The Infection Prevention and Control (IPC) Team is made up of the following staff.

Executive Director of Nursing and  
Quality / Director for Infection  
Prevention and Control (DIPC)

Head of Infection Prevention and  
Control / Deputy DIPC

Infection Prevention and  
Control Lead

Infection prevention and Control  
Lead

Infection Prevention and Control  
Practitioner

Infection Prevention and Control  
Administrator



**6.12. Senior Managers**

6.12.1. Senior Managers are responsible for implementing and monitoring Trust policies and to provide leadership and supervision to ensure compliance.

6.12.2. Responsible for including specific infection prevention and control in appraisals of all managers under their control.

**6.13. First Line Managers (team leaders and supervisors)**

6.13.1. Have responsibility to provide leadership and to promote responsible attitudes towards infection prevention and control.

6.13.2. Through work based assessment and supervision they will be responsible for ensuring that all employees are competent in applying infection prevention and control procedures relevant to their job role.

6.13.3. Responsible for including specific infection prevention and control in appraisals of all staff under their control.

**6.14. All Staff**

6.14.1. All staff will ensure they carry out their duties in a manner that maintains and promotes the principles and practice of infection prevention and control in compliance with national standards, Trust policies, guidelines and procedures.

**7 Competence**

7.1. The Trust, through the Learning and Development Department, will ensure that all staff and contractors receive education, information and training in infection prevention and control in line with The Health and Social Care Act 2008.

7.2. All details and requirements of training are recorded on the Trust's training needs analysis programme, including Trust procedures and actions which apply in the event of any non-attendance by staff.

**8 Monitoring**

8.1. Incidents relating to infection prevention and control will be recorded on the incident reporting system by the Trust's Risk Co-ordinator.



- 8.2. These will be investigated by the relevant Line Manager and will be monitored for completion by the Risk Co-ordinator. This alert will be sent to the Infection Prevention and Control Lead who will provide advice and guidance for various groups and committees.
- 8.3. Information relating to infection prevention and control will be reported by the Head of Infection Prevention and Control to the Central Health and Safety Working Group every three months. This will identify incidents which may impact across the whole Trust. As the group includes a member of Learning and Development all learning points will be integrated into the training needs analysis programme. Minutes of these groups will reflect recommendations, training records and improvements.
- 8.4. All incidents will be reviewed three monthly by the Infection Prevention and Control Sub Group. It will be the responsibility of the Infection Prevention and Control Leads to table the report for this group. Minutes of these groups will reflect recommended actions and is the method for raising issues at the Central Health and Safety Working Group.

## **9 Audit and Review**

- 9.1. This policy will be reviewed every three years by the Director for Infection Prevention and Control and amended accordingly if required. The Head of Infection Prevention and Control will lead the review in consultation with the members of the Infection Prevention and Control Sub Group and in accordance with the Trust's Policy and Procedure on the Development and Management of Policies and Procedures.
- 9.2. This timescale will be reviewed in light of any adverse incidents or risks identified (or in light of any new legislation or organisational change), to the Trust and/ or its staff or patients. This timescale will be reviewed three yearly or in light of any significant changes to clinical practice or guidelines as identified.

## **10 Equality Analysis**

- 10.1. The Trust believes in fairness and equality, and values diversity in its role as both a provider of services and as an employer. The Trust aims to provide accessible services that respect the needs of each individual and exclude no-one. It is committed to comply with the Human Rights Act and to meeting the Equality Act 2010, which



identifies the following nine protected characteristics: Age, Disability, Race, Religion and Belief, Gender Reassignment, Sexual Orientation, Sex, Marriage and Civil Partnership and Pregnancy and Maternity.

10.2. Compliance with the Public Sector Equality Duty: If a contractor carries out functions of a public nature then for the duration of the contract, the contractor or supplier would itself be considered a public authority and have the duty to comply with the equalities duties when carrying out those functions.

10.3. The policy has undergone an Equality Analysis by the Infection Prevention and Control Team and they have identified no potential **DISCRIMINATORY IMPACT WHEN ADHERING TO THIS POLICY.**

## 11 References

- The Health and Social Care Act (2008) - Code of Practice of the prevention and control of infections and related guidance
- Department of Health 2010) - Uniforms and workwear: Guidance on uniform and workwear policies for NHS employers
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- Health & Safety Commission (1974) Health and Safety at Work etc. Act.
- Health & Safety Commission (1999) Control of Substances Hazardous to Health (COSHH) Regulations.
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