

# Infection Control and Decontamination: Identifying examples of practice from PCTs

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# Contents

<b>Summary</b>	<b>5</b>
<b>Policy and Guidance</b>	<b>6</b>
Department of Health (DH)	6
NHS Decontamination Programme	6
National Institute for Health and Clinical Excellence (NICE)	7
Royal College of Nursing (RCN)	7
National Resource for Infection Control (NRIC)	7
Other Useful Websites	7
<b>Annex 1: Examples of practice</b>	<b>8</b>
Somerset PCT	8
Shropshire County PCT	9
Surrey Sussex	9
Torbay Care Trust	10



## Summary

During June/July 2007, NHS Primary Care Contracting (NHS PCC) made requests to PCT Primary Care Leads for documentation in operational use relating to Infection Control and Decontamination in Primary and Community Care. This exercise was designed to gauge policies and procedures in place and to identify examples of practice which could in turn be shared via the NHS PCC website.

# Policy and Guidance

## Department of Health (DH)

### Healthcare associated infection

Healthcare associated infections - for instance, infections caught from other patients during a hospital stay - are a serious concern. Documents have been produced by the Communicable Diseases Branch, independent advisory committees and others, aimed primarily at health professionals.

- <http://www.dh.gov.uk/en/Policyandguidance/Healthandsocialcaretopics/Healthcareacquiredinfection/index.htm>

### Latest news – 17th September 2007

The possibility of transmitting infections via uniforms is an important issue for employers, staff and patients. When organisations review their policies on staff dress, they need access to the legal (including Health and Safety legal) framework, an evidence base and good practice examples. The Department of Health Working Group on Uniforms and Laundry has put together an evidence base on the wearing and laundering of uniforms. This document outlines the existing legal requirements and current findings, to support and advise employers when reviewing local policies in this area.

## NHS Decontamination Programme

### Primary care

There are risks of healthcare acquired infection in primary care as well as in hospitals, so General Medical and Dental Practitioners will need to have in place modern facilities that ensure that they decontaminate instruments used in their surgeries to a high standard.

Ensuring a good standard of decontamination services for general practice and hospitals must be a high priority for surgeons, GPs and dentists. The Department of Health and the Healthcare Commission are committed to achieving this.

- <http://deconprogramme.dh.gov.uk>

## National Institute for Health and Clinical Excellence (NICE)

### Infection control, prevention of healthcare-associated infection in primary and community care

The NICE clinical guideline on infection control provides a set of measures to avoid infection that should be followed by anyone giving or receiving care at home, at a health centre or clinic, or elsewhere in the community.

They cover:

- ways of avoiding infection, including hand washing, using gloves and aprons, using sharps safely, and educating patients and their carers about infection
- ways of avoiding and controlling infection for people who need a urinary catheter, enteral feeding or a central venous catheter
- <http://guidance.nice.org.uk/CG2>

## Royal College of Nursing (RCN)

*Good practice in infection prevention and control – Guidance for nursing staff*

- [http://www.rcn.org.uk/resources/mrsa/downloads/Wipe\\_it\\_out-Good\\_practice\\_in\\_infection\\_prevention\\_and\\_control.pdf](http://www.rcn.org.uk/resources/mrsa/downloads/Wipe_it_out-Good_practice_in_infection_prevention_and_control.pdf)

## National Resource for Infection Control (NRIC)

NRIC is a project developed by healthcare professionals, aimed at being a single-access point to existing resources within infection control for both Infection Control and all other healthcare staff.

- [http://www.nric.org.uk/IntegratedCRD.nsf/NRIC\\_Home1?OpenForm](http://www.nric.org.uk/IntegratedCRD.nsf/NRIC_Home1?OpenForm)

## Other Useful Websites

Environmental based Practice in infection control

- [www.epic.tvu.ac.uk](http://www.epic.tvu.ac.uk)

Health Protection Agency

- [www.hpa.org.uk](http://www.hpa.org.uk)

National Electronic Library of Infection

- [www.neli.org.uk](http://www.neli.org.uk)

All of these sites have a large amount of data, reports, guidance notes and references to Infection Control.

## Annex 1: Examples of practice

The following examples have been submitted to NHS PCC via our Primary Care Contracting Advisors (PCCAs). The documentation has not been quality assured or endorsed by NHS PCC; rather our aim is to highlight work in progress as starting points for other organisations to work from. NHS PCC is grateful to the individuals and organisations who have submitted the following documentation. It is hoped that in time additional resources will be shared via the NHS PCC website. The supporting documents referred to in the following examples can be downloaded at

- [www.pcc.nhs.uk/premises](http://www.pcc.nhs.uk/premises) >Infection Control

### Comments and Feedback

Should you have any comments or feedback in relation to this document or any of the examples please email Carla Miller at [carla.miller@pcc.nhs.uk](mailto:carla.miller@pcc.nhs.uk).

## Somerset PCT

A huge piece of work undertaken with GP's across Somerset has been the implementation of the National Decontamination Strategy. The Infection Control and Clinical Risk Nurse Specialist (Commissioned Services) for Somerset PCT and Infection Control Lead from the Provider Services ran a workshop for all practices to attend. This enabled staff to meet with single instrument providers, PASA reps and the Infection Control Teams. This was a very well attended session, and has resulted in the majority of Somerset moving to, or planning to move to, single use instruments, thus ensuring a compliant service. Recently launched a Community MRSA Policy which has included GP Practice staff and the PCT has again organised workshops for all healthcare staff to attend.

The PCT operates an Infection Control Link Practitioner Programme in Somerset. The rationale for Link Practitioners is to enable any staff (across all disciplines) who may have an interest in infection control to undertake a lead in their area, this enables the PCT to meet with them/provide updated information thus ensuring dissemination to all areas. There are approximately 66 link staff across Somerset, including Nurses/Ward Assistants/Porters and also General Practice staff. The PCT has submitted a copy of a training event they ran last year (prior to the PCT merger) and they are planning additional training sessions and quarterly meeting with Link staff to take place shortly.

The PCT are planning to instigate infection control audits for all GP Practices in Somerset, utilising the ICNA audit tool, and will hopefully implement this from November 07. These will be undertaken by the link practitioner, in each practice. The lead within the PCT provides training sessions for GP Practices on an ad hoc basis. This includes hand wash training utilising the Glow box equipment. They can also be consulted for all new builds being planned – thus ensuring that infection control issues are acknowledged and addressed at the planning stage.

- MRSA in the Community policy
- Training Resources
  - *Come and hear about your new MRSA policy!*
  - Mendip and South Somerset Primary Care Trusts – Link Practitioner Study Day
  - Somerset Infection Control Forum, *SEEK, SEARCH AND DESTROY*
  - Single use drop in day 2007

## Shropshire County PCT

In 2004/05 all General Medical and General Dental Practices were audited to establish levels of Infection Control within these services and develop a base line for further audits to be measured against. All practices audited were given an Infection Control Information pack, a detailed report of their audit highlighting areas where improvements were needed and were supported in developing action plans. The audit also highlighted the need to increase the capacity of the Infection Control Team as they did not have the resources to further support commissioned services. Funding was secured in 2006 to increase the team, which included the appointment of a dental nurse to continue to audit the dental practices and develop training programmes for general dental practices.

The Infection Control Team are involved with patient safety visits supporting the PCT Clinical Governance agenda and monitoring improvements following the 2004 baseline audits within general medical practices. In 2006/7 a decontamination audit was carried out in general medical practices to establish compliance with the NHS Decontamination Programme. Support and advice was given to practices to enable compliance and improve Infection Control standards. All Infection Control policies are available via the PCT website.<sup>1</sup>

Two link nurse groups are established, one for community based staff and one for staff working within the community hospitals. These groups meet quarterly to share and disseminate information related to infection prevention and control.

A training and development nurse for the Independent sector is also employed by the PCT to deliver Infection Control Training to Care Organisations outside the NHS, thereby promoting a common approach to infection control throughout the health economy.

A workshop to deliver training on *Essential steps to safe, clean care*<sup>2</sup> was run in March 2007 by the Infection Control Team for managers and senior nursing staff to enable them to roll the programme out to all healthcare staff within community services.

- Good Practice in Relation to Infection Control within General Medical and General Dental Practices in Shropshire County & Telford & Wrekin Primary Care Trusts

## Surrey Sussex

### Martin Alpin, Surrey Sussex Decontamination Project Manager

Fully compliant instruments can be either single use instruments or reusable instruments that have been reprocessed in a fully accredited sterile services unit (Central Sterile Supply Department, Hospital Sterilisation and Disinfection Unit, etc) whether it is NHS or private sector. Decontamination in dentistry has different standards to meet and it is possible to achieve these in a local (clinic/practice based) setting; though of course it is preferable to use an accredited CSSD and some hospital based dental clinics do this.

<sup>1</sup> [www.shropshirepct.nhs.uk](http://www.shropshirepct.nhs.uk) >Policies/Procedures/Strategies >PCT Wide >Risk Management >Infection Control

<sup>2</sup> *Essential steps to safe, clean care; reducing healthcare-associated infections*, Department of Health, 15<sup>th</sup> June 2006  
([www.dh.gov.uk/en/Publicationsandstatistics/Publications/Publications/PolicyAndGuidance/DH\\_4136212](http://www.dh.gov.uk/en/Publicationsandstatistics/Publications/Publications/PolicyAndGuidance/DH_4136212))

We have initiated surveys of decontamination provision and standards across Surrey & Sussex to establish the levels of compliance and to highlight areas where change needs to take place. Different survey forms were used for dentistry and the rest of primary care. The approach to GPs was backed up with an information sheet that was distributed via the PCTs as well as the Surrey & Sussex LMC web site and the practice managers' web site. All of the PCT's podiatry services were already compliant, have become compliant or are finalising business cases to support compliance. Compliance in podiatry is usually achieved via reusable instruments reprocessed in a compliant CSSD. Virtually all of the Family Planning/Sexual Health/GUM clinics and community nursing services are fully compliant.

In East Sussex, West Sussex and Brighton & Hove PCTs, all GP practices are fully compliant via single use instruments and/or CSSD providers. This status is a great achievement of the small number of hard pressed PCT Infection Control Nurses in the region who have engaged with GPs, Practices Nurses and Practice Managers to effect the changes.

A survey has gone out to all general dental practices and a response rate of approximately 50% has been achieved, summary results attached. This has highlighted a need to improve/modernise the decontamination equipment to ensure that the practices can achieve the required standards. Also, it very clearly highlights a major need for further awareness and learning in the application of the various standards to ensure the most effective and repeatable decontamination of instruments.

- Decontamination notes for GPs
- Decontamination questionnaire – Dentists
- Results of Dental Practice Decontamination Survey

## Torbay Care Trust

### David Farnsworth, Quality & Safety Lead

The Decontamination Audit Tool is a form used to assess areas where we undertake local decontamination. We are currently reviewing all our arrangements across the Trust, and in the absence of HTM01-01<sup>3</sup> will continue to work towards best practice guidance, with Dentistry working towards A12<sup>4</sup>. This will require us to consider centralised arrangements/single use for podiatry and our commissioning team are looking at this at the moment. Dentistry will look at bolstering their existing standards, including the introduction of washer/disinfectors, along with improved training, audit and storage.

- Decontamination Audit Tool

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<sup>3</sup> HTM 01-01 *Decontamination of Reusable Medical Devices Part A – Management and Environment* is now available from the Department of Health Estates and Facilities Division Knowledge & Information Portal

([http://195.92.246.148/nhsestates/knowledge/knowledge\\_content/home/home.asp](http://195.92.246.148/nhsestates/knowledge/knowledge_content/home/home.asp))

<sup>4</sup> *Advice Sheet A12 Infection control in dentistry*, British Dental Association, February 2003 ([www.bda.org/advice/docs/A12.pdf](http://www.bda.org/advice/docs/A12.pdf))