

**NHS**

Wirral Community  
NHS Foundation Trust

# IPC NEWS

September 2018

Edition 5 Spotlight on IPC



**Infection prevention and control (IPC) continues to pose significant challenges to health and social care providers. Healthcare associated infections (HCAI) can affect people of all ages. Healthcare workers, family members and carers are also at risk of acquiring infections when caring for patients/residents.**

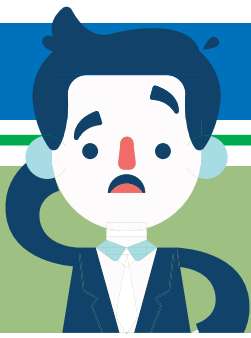
The term HCAI covers a wide range of infections that can pose a serious risk to patients/residents, staff and visitors, incurring significant costs and cause significant illness to those affected. IPC remains a key priority for all health and social care providers.

Antimicrobial Resistance (AMR) is an increasingly serious threat to global public health. Patients/residents with infections caused by drug-resistant bacteria are at increased risk of worse clinical outcomes and death. The harsh reality is that infections are increasingly developing that cannot be treated. The rapid spread of multi-drug resistant bacteria means that we could be close to reaching a

point where we may not be able to prevent or treat everyday infections or diseases.

Improving IPC practices is a key area for action, alongside improving antimicrobial prescribing. To prevent and control the spread of antibiotic resistance, we all can:

- use IPC standard precautions
- not request antibiotic therapy unless there are clinical signs of infection
- talk to residents/patients about how to take antibiotics correctly, antibiotic resistance and the dangers of misuse
- not use antibiotics to treat viral infections, such as influenza, the common cold, a runny nose or a sore throat
- complete the full course even if feeling better
- never share antibiotics with others or use leftover prescriptions



# Did you know?

## Seasonal flu

From January – April 2018, Wirral experienced an unusual flu season with 10 care homes being affected by Flu/Influenza like illness. In total, homes were closed for 73 days.

In up to a third of cases, flu is spread by people who have no symptoms.



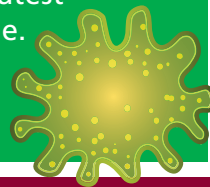
## Clostridium difficile

In 2017/18, 62 community Clostridium difficile toxin positive cases were reported to the IPC Service.

This compares to 49 reported cases in 2016/17.

38 people out of every 100,000 will acquire a C. difficile infection (CDI).

The risk is greatest in older people.



## Diarrhoea and Vomiting Outbreaks

In 2017/18, there were 49 outbreaks of diarrhoea and/or vomiting within Wirral care homes. In total, homes were closed for 344 days.



## Gram-negative bloodstream infections (GNBSI) are believed to have contributed to approximately 5,500 patient deaths in 2015 in England.

- Escherichia coli (E. coli) BSI represent 55% of all GNBSI and the most common source of infection is the urogenital tract at 51.2%
- 76% of E. coli blood stream infection cases in Wirral in 2017/18 developed within the community
- 91 people out of every 100,000 will acquire an E. coli bacteraemia

## What can you do?

- use IPC standard precautions for every patient/resident every time, this includes effective hand hygiene
- adhere to bare below the elbow
- are you flu ready? Be prepared for this year's flu season by promoting the flu vaccination to staff, patients/residents and if you work in a care home, ensuring your PHE flu resource pack is up to date
- use up to date Wirral Antimicrobial Guidelines and Management of Common Infections in Primary Care to assist with antibiotic prescribing
- recognise and report potential outbreaks to the IPC Service ASAP on **0151 604 7750**, Public Health England provide out of hours IPC advice/support on **0151 434 4819**
- hydration plays a vital role in keeping people healthy, encourage your patients/residents to drink plenty (unless on a fluid restriction for medical reasons)

## What would you like to see in our next newsletter?

Let us know by email to [IPC.wirralct@nhs.net](mailto:IPC.wirralct@nhs.net) or call **0151 604 7750**.

**Infection Prevention & Control Service:** St Catherine's Health Centre, Derby Road, Birkenhead, CH42 0LQ