

NOT PROTECTIVELY MARKED

Public Board Meeting

**25 May 2022
Item 09**

THIS PAPER IS FOR DISCUSSION

PATIENT AND STAFF SAFETY – HEALTHCARE-ASSOCIATED INFECTION (HAI) UPDATE REPORT

Lead Director Author	Frances Dodd, Director of Care Quality and Professional Development Sarah Freeman, Head of Infection Prevention and Control
Action required	The Board is asked to discuss this report.
Key points	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Service Infection Prevention and Control (IPC) Programme for 2022/2023 has been developed on behalf of the SAS Infection Control Committee (Page 3). • The National Cleaning Services Specifications is mandatory and a priority. The Service continue to maintain its targets of 90% (Page 3). • Monitoring of the Standard Infection Control Precautions (SICPs) was initiated at 27 emergency departments. The Service’s overall compliance was 96%, which has been consistently above the target of 90% (Page 3). • Healthcare Improvement Scotland: Infection prevention and control standards 2022 were launched on 16 May 2022 (Pages 4-5). • Overall compliance with the use of the PVC insertion care bundle is being consistently sustained above the quality indicator aim of 95% (Page 5).
Timing	This paper is presented to the Board bi-monthly in the Scottish Government’s prescribed template.
Link to Corporate Objectives	2.1 A patient safety work programme must include ongoing work to prevent and reduce the risk of HAI for patients, staff and the public.
Benefit to Patients	Safe clinical practices, a clean environment and patient care equipment protect patients from the risk of healthcare-associated infection (HAI).

Equality and Diversity	Healthcare-associated infection (HAI) policies apply to all staff and patient groups. These are based on NHS Scotland HAI policy and guidance. Health Protection Scotland (HPS) and Healthcare Improvement Scotland (HIS) conduct equality impact assessments on all HAI national guidance, policy and standards. The hand hygiene, Standard Infection Control Precautions (SICPs) and cleanliness audit results reported are a mandatory HAI requirement related to national policy and guidance.
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Healthcare Associated Infection Report

Annual Infection Prevention and Control Programme of Work 2022/2023

The Scottish Ambulance Service Infection Prevention and Control (IPC) Programme for 2022/2023 has been developed on behalf of the Service's Infection Control Committee. The IPC work programme addresses the national and local priorities for infection prevention and control and extends throughout healthcare, health protection and health promotion. The IPC Programme exists to co-ordinate and monitor the work of the Infection Control Committee and IPC team in preventing and controlling infection through effective communication, education, audit, surveillance, risk assessment, quality improvement and development of policies and procedures. It addresses the current national and local priorities for infection prevention and control as well as those that may be on the horizon, includes lesson learned from the pandemic and anticipated IPC publications and reports.

While it is the IPC team's responsibility to develop and facilitate the implementation of the programme, infection prevention and control clearly does not rest solely within the domains of our Infection Control Committee and Team. Everyone has infection prevention and control responsibilities. Service users who depend on the Scottish Ambulance Service require all of us to follow best practices as described in the National Infection Prevention and Control Manual.

The IPC Programme of Work was approved by the Infection Control Committee subject to minor changes at the meeting on 23 March 2022. It will be submitted to the Clinical Governance Committee for approval on 16 May 2022.

Programme of Audit

The National Cleaning Services Specifications are mandatory, and IPC audits of stations and vehicles remain a priority; this is reflected in the Programme of Work 2022/2023. The Service is committed to achieving and maintaining consistently high standards of infection prevention and control. Monitoring these standards is a fundamental aspect of the IPC work programme just as monitoring the National Cleaning Services Specifications (NCSS) is mandatory and a priority, and we continue to maintain our targets of 90%. The comprehensive IPC audit programme of ambulance vehicles and stations (known as the RIVO audits) are carried out every six months.

An Infection Prevention and Control auditor was successful in gaining a post in the health and safety team, and we are now recruiting for this post. This NCCS and RIVO audit programme continues to progress along normal timelines even with the vacant post, as mitigations have been put in place to ensure we keep pace with the biannual audit programme.

Monitoring of the Standard Infection Control Precautions (SICPs) was initiated at 27 emergency departments, including remote and rural areas, the Western Isles and Shetland and Orkney Islands. These are the basic infection prevention and control practices that should be carried out at all times with all patients. This monitoring was also an excellent opportunity to meet staff at the point of delivery of care, discuss any IPC challenges and support their continued efforts to deliver safe care to their patients. The Service's overall compliance was 96%, which has been consistently above the target of 90%.

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Policies and Guidance

On 31 March 2022, NHS boards were informed of the de-escalation of 'COVID-19 Infection Prevention and Control Measures in Health and Social Care Settings to Alleviate System Pressures'. This de-escalation has been agreed upon through consultation with the NHS boards and approved by the COVID-19 Nosocomial Review Group. The harms associated with reduced elective services within NHS Scotland are now outweighing the COVID-19 harms. In the next phase of the COVID-19 pandemic, it is proposed that the risk no longer be considered in the context of COVID-19 case numbers but rather by the severity of illness caused by the COVID-19 virus.

As a result, Antimicrobial Resistance and Healthcare Associated Infections (ARHAI) Scotland have made a number of IPC recommendations aimed at reducing pressures on NHS boards, highlighting lessons learned during the pandemic and recognising COVID-19 as a pathogen that will require management within health and care settings. One of the major changes for NHS boards was reducing the physical distancing measures.

Furthermore, on 14 April 2022, guidance was received from the Scottish Government on the extended use of face masks and face coverings. This provides guidance for staff in acute hospitals, community hospitals, primary care and wider community healthcare together with advice for visitors, including those attending for an appointment. However, it once again emphasises that staff should continue to wear appropriate personal protective equipment and ensure that other IPC measures, such as hand hygiene and respiratory etiquette, are observed and that ventilation is safely optimised wherever possible.

As a result of the ceasing of physical distancing, the IPC team have worked closely with the Head of Service of Schedule Care and staff to put in place a new process for the triage and placement of patients in transport vehicles. The fundamentals are essential for preventing the spread of COVID-19 and remain in place, including compliance with hand hygiene, respiratory etiquette, safely optimising ventilation, cleaning, the appropriate use of personal protective equipment by staff and the use of face masks by patients and escorts.

COVID-19

Over the past few months, as in other NHS boards, cases of COVID-19 have increased among the staff with the emergence of the Omicron sub-variant and the lifting of control measures in the public arena. The IPC team continue to monitor trends in staff illness due to COVID-19 to identify clusters of cases by the GRS. We continue to provide support to staff and local managers as well as advice on the necessary controls and the use of the IPC checklist to ensure that the correct procedures are in place as well as additional cleaning, if necessary. The regions and ambulance call centre have been exemplary in supporting this response, in ensuring that all forms are completed and required actions are taken and in initiating environmental cleaning on the advice of the IPC team.

Healthcare Improvement Scotland: Infection prevention and control standards 2022

These standards were launched on 16 May 2022 and underpin Healthcare Improvement Scotland's programme of inspection of the safety and cleanliness in acute-care and community hospitals. The IPC standards have been developed to complement the *National Infection Prevention and Control Manual* (NIPCM) and the corresponding *Manual for Older People and Adult Care Homes*.

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The draft IPC standards for health and social care settings have been updated from the standards published in 2015 to ensure that organisations share a common, up-to-date benchmark of quality. Ongoing internal quality assurance on the basis of these standards is a mandatory requirement of NHS Scotland.

The standards cover the following areas

- leadership and governance
- education and training
- communication
- assurance, monitoring and response
- optimisation of antimicrobial use
- infection prevention and control policies, procedures and guidance
- decontamination of reusable medical devices and equipment
- the built environment and
- equipment

AirWing/ScotSTAR

The IPC team, including the Service Infection Control Doctor, are members of the Air Ambulance Re-procurement project and attend both the meetings and the workshops, ensuring that IPC requirements remain prominent on this agenda. We have been working with the ScotSTAR teams to progress a review of the IPC guidance with regard to the aircraft, and all interested parties will sign off on these changes.

Peripheral Venous Catheter (PVC) Insertion Bundle

Compliance with the PVC bundle remains above the target of 95% with compliance in February 97%, March 97% and April 96.6%.

External Partner Engagement

It remains a priority for the IPC team to support communication internally and externally, for example, by contributing to incident-support meetings with infection control managers, which are coordinated by Health Protection Scotland weekly, and by attending meetings of the (UK-wide) National Infection Prevention and Control Ambulance Group. This is especially important when the guidance is changing rapidly.

Conclusion

This report highlights the challenges to delivering the annual IPC Programme of Work as we proceed to a new phase of the pandemic where COVID-19 is not managed in the context of COVID-19 case numbers but by the severity of illness. The main components of the IPC programme, the new IPC standards and other projects continue to support the service in preventing and reducing the risk of infection to our patients and staff.

CONSULTATION

This updated report was approved by the HAI executive lead prior to submission.

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