

Information for people visiting, or receiving treatment in, NHS hospitals on the prevention and control of healthcare-associated infections

The NICE quality improvement guide on healthcare-associated infections (HCAIs) sets out what type of organisational and managerial actions are needed to minimise preventable HCAIs.

The quality improvement guide is made up of 11 statements which are summarised below.

1. All hospital trust staff – from board to ward level – take responsibility for (and are accountable for) continuous quality improvement in relation to infection prevention and control.
2. Hospital trusts learn from their own and other healthcare providers' experience, and use this learning to improve the quality of care and practice in infection prevention and control.
3. Hospital trusts monitor infection levels across all service areas and use this information to adjust practice, where necessary. For example, they will close beds, or a ward to visitors, in response to an infection outbreak.
4. Hospital trust staff have the necessary skills and knowledge to undertake infection prevention and control procedures in their area of work.
5. Hospitals and other secondary healthcare settings meet high standards of cleanliness, with each hospital trust monitoring the condition of its premises to ensure levels exceed the minimum required standard.



6. Hospital trusts work collaboratively with other local health and social care services to prevent and reduce harm from infection.
7. All patients are provided with information on how to reduce the risks of an HCAI and are given the opportunity to discuss HCAs with staff. Patients who have an HCAI can expect to be:
 - notified of their infection
 - told about the impact it will have on their care
 - given relevant information about minimising the risk to others.
8. Patients with an infection can expect relevant information about it to be shared between different services when they are admitted, transferred to, or discharged from a hospital to ensure seamless care.
9. Hospital trusts provide opportunities for patients and the public to be involved with planning and decision-making on how to prevent and control infections.
10. Hospitals and all the buildings and grounds that fall under the management and control of the hospital trust are built and maintained in such a way as to minimise the risk of infection.
11. Hospital trusts assess relevant new technologies and innovation to help improve the quality of care and practice to prevent, and reduce the harm from, infection.

Your care

In the NHS, patients and healthcare professionals have rights and responsibilities as set out in the NHS Constitution (www.dh.gov.uk/en/Healthcare/NHSConstitution/index.htm). This NICE quality improvement guide is written to reflect these. You have the right to be

involved in discussions and make informed decisions about your treatment and care with your healthcare team. Your choices are important and healthcare professionals should support these wherever possible. You should be treated with dignity and respect.

Information from NICE about healthcare-associated infections

The full [quality improvement guide](#) on healthcare-associated infections, written for healthcare professionals, is available from the NICE website.

NICE also produces guidance (advice) for the NHS in England and Wales about preventing, diagnosing and treating medical conditions, based on the best available evidence.

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