

Infection prevention and control

Patient and visitor information leaflet



Cumbria, Northumberland, Tyne and Wear NHS Foundation Trust see infection control as an important part of the care we provide.

Infections

The prevention of infections is important. Infections are caused mainly by bugs or germs called bacteria, or by viruses.

Most will do you no harm and some are even essential to maintaining our health and wellbeing. However, when we are unwell, weak or in poor health our bodies can struggle to cope. When this happens we can develop an infection.

If you have an infection you may be asked to stay in your room. This is to treat you effectively and protect other patient. Your nurse will explain to you and your relatives what will happen.

Prevention

To ensure the possibility of infection is as low as possible there are a number of things as a Trust we have in place:

- A dedicated infection prevention and control team.
- Clean, well maintained environments.
- Education, training and information to staff, service users and visitors.
- Regular monitoring of infections and incidents.
- Monitor standards.

Hand hygiene

The Trust acknowledges that the single most effective method of reducing infections is by good hand hygiene.

How should hands be cleaned?

There are two main ways to clean hands:



Liquid soap and water: this removes germs and is best when hands feel or are visibly dirty, or during an outbreak of diarrhoea and vomiting.

Hand sanitiser: our staff have access to these as an alternative to using soap and water for use at the point of care. They are also available at most entrances and exits to our wards and departments.



What do we expect from you?

- You can help us by telling us of any issues relating to cleanliness or infection control in your care environment.
- Follow any instructions or guidance relating to infection prevention and control precautions.
- Wash your hands each time you use the toilet or commode and before meals.
- You can remind staff about hand hygiene if they forget. Some may have already used the hand sanitiser.
- Let us know if you feel unwell or experience any symptoms of diarrhoea and vomiting.
- Try to keep your room clutter free to help us in cleaning it more easily. You can tell a nurse if you see any areas that do not appear clean.
- Please try to bring in and use your own personal toiletries.
- Wear appropriate footwear when moving around the ward.
- Look after your own personal hygiene by washing/showering and keeping your clothes clean. If you need help please ask.
- Do not share personal equipment or items with other service users. Don't leave your personal toiletries in the shared bathrooms as other people may use them.



What visitors can do:

- Follow any infection prevention and control guidance when visiting.
- Do not bring in **any** food without informing the person in charge.
- Do not visit if you are unwell. If you are not sure please phone and check before arriving.
- Ensure you wash your hands on arrival, or use the hand rub available, and when you leave.

What can you expect from us?

- Staff will follow infection prevention and control precautions whenever they work with you.
- Staff will ensure that your clinical needs are monitored and managed in line with evidence based best practice.
- We will ensure so far as practical that you have a clean, well maintained environment.
- We will involve you in your care and any decisions relating to it.



Questions

If you have any questions, or would like more detailed information, please ask a member of the ward team, who will be happy to help.

If they cannot provide the information you need they will contact the Infection Prevention and Control Team.

Further information about the content, reference sources or production of this leaflet can be obtained from the Patient Information Centre. If you would like to tell us what you think about this leaflet please get in touch.

This information can be made available in a range of formats on request (Braille, audio, larger print, easy read, BSL or other languages). Please contact the Patient Information Centre telephone: 0191 246 7288

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