

## **Healthcare Associated Infections (HCAs): Principles of Care and Core Information for Patients: Feedback from HCAI-related stakeholders to inform the local approach.**

### **Introduction:**

The following principles reflect feedback from the Department's engagement with representatives from key patient and public stakeholder groups.

The principles are set out in two groups (care and information) and form part of the Department's HCAI 'communication toolkit'. There are two over-arching objectives:

- (i) to increase public and patient confidence, that hospitals provide clean and safe care
- (ii) to ensure patients and the public have access to the HCAI-related information they require

The Department of Health and the NHS are committed to the provision of consistently high standards of care and service to patients at every hospital, as well as in primary care. **Stakeholders have told us that the following points should underpin HCAI-related care at all times:**

- Patients should always be provided with full and sufficient information so they can make informed choices about their healthcare.
- The care and safety of patients should never be compromised.
- Patients have a legitimate role to speak up and should not be afraid to do so.

The following principles are derived from the views of stakeholders and combine to form an on-line resource, which Trusts, including PCTs, can use if they wish, to inform their own approach, (for example in developing an information strategy for HCAs).

### **Principles relating to Care:**

- 1 We will treat patients in a clean and safe environment with minimal risk of exposure to healthcare associated infections.
- 2 We will treat patients in a dignified manner, which avoids stigmatisation, observes the right to privacy and confidentiality, and which recognises best practice and safety of all patients, visitors and staff.
- 3 Patients will be able to participate in discussing care pathways for MRSA, *C.difficile*, or any other healthcare associated infection, should the need arise.

- 4 Every patient will be encouraged to raise hand-hygiene compliance with staff. In particular, patients should regard it as 'legitimate', to ask a clinician to wash their hands prior to treatment/contact.
- 5 Safety is a priority. In the unlikely event that an infection does occur, Root Cause Analysis should be used to ensure learning and prevent future infections.
- 6 We will provide a safe environment that meets patients' physical and emotional needs. We will ensure that patients....
  - are treated in a comfortable environment, with care delivered in a calm and reassuring way
  - have information to make choices, to feel confident and in control
  - are talked to and listened to as an 'equal'
  - are treated with honesty, respect and dignity

**Principles relating to Information:**

- 7 Patients will be provided, prior to admission, (when listed for an operation/procedure, or admitted for one via Accident and Emergency), with a clear statement of the Trust's policy regarding admission, transfer and movement of patients between departments and the discharge of patients in their care.
- 8 Patients will be provided, prior to admission, with clear information on any measures which they might reasonably take before admission, to assist in the prevention and control of healthcare associated infections.
- 9 Patients will be provided with clear and precise information relating to the potential risk of contracting a healthcare associated infection. This will include 'signposting' to information sources, such that patients and the public can always access up to date local data.
- 10 Patients will receive confirmation of the Trust's compliance with the NHS "Saving Lives" programme, 'Certificate of Commitment' to consistent and reliable healthcare and patient safety, by implementing best practice.
- 11 Patients will be informed of potential risk factors (including 'side effects'), that relate to the medication/antibiotics prescribed during their stay in hospital and/or at the time of discharge.
- 12 Trusts will make available information about how the NHS Complaints Procedure can be accessed, for any patient wishing to use it.