

Infection Prevention and Control

Inpatient and Visitor Information



Caring, Learning
& Growing Together



We take infection prevention and control seriously

Here, we explain what causes infections and what you should do to prevent them spreading.

This leaflet is for your information; it does not replace the discussion between you and your healthcare worker.

What is Infection Prevention and Control (IPC)?

IPC uses systems to avoid and reduce illnesses in health settings. Good standards are for everyone's health and safety.

What causes infections?

Germs are everywhere; they get on our hands when we touch people, food, animals, bodily fluids, and surfaces. Infections are caused by germs entering the body, for example:

- Through a wound or cut.
- When we breathe, for example when we catch a cold.
- When we eat, for example if bacteria is on our fingers.
- Through devices put into the body, a tube into a vein or the bladder, for example.

What is a Healthcare Associated Infection (HCAI)?

An infection that has occurred in hospital is called a Healthcare Associated Infection (HCAI). Two of the most common HCAIs are MRSA and C.difficile.

If you need more information, please ask a member of staff.

Infections can happen anywhere, but patients can be more vulnerable for many reasons:

- Mental or physical health problems.
- Recent substance or alcohol misuse.
- Medical treatments, including operations.
- Being a younger or older person.
- Weakened immune system.

What is the NHS doing to prevent infections?

We work hard to provide a clean environment for patients, visitors, and staff.

- Staff are trained on IPC.
- We promote and monitor the use of hand sanitiser and hand washing.
- We work closely with the Matrons and cleaning staff to maintain high standards of cleanliness.

How can you help?

Please let staff know if:

- You have received treatment in any hospital in the last six months.
- You've had MRSA.
- You've had C.difficile.
- You had diarrhoea or vomited before you got to the ward.

Whilst using our services, please:

- Wash your hands before meals and after going to the toilet.
- Maintain personal hygiene, such as daily washing, changing clothes, frequent showers or baths.
- Tell a member of staff if the bathrooms or toilets are dirty.
- Don't be afraid to ask staff if they have washed their hands before any procedure, such as taking a blood sample.
- Tell a member of staff if you've had diarrhoea or vomited.
- Tell a member of staff if you have breathing problems.
- Keep personal belongings to a minimum. This makes areas easier to clean, and storage is limited on the ward.

As a visitor, you can help by:

- Not visiting if (a) you have flu or a heavy cold or (b) you've had diarrhoea or vomited.
- Speaking to staff to discuss concerns about visiting the ward.
- Using hand sanitiser when entering the building.

Complaints and Feedback Team
Humber Teaching NHS Foundation Trust
1st Headquarters
Willerby Hill

Willerby
HU10 6ED



01482 303930



HNF-TR.complaints@nhs.net



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