

Involving and engaging patients

How patient involvement can help you to reduce the risks from MRSA and other infections

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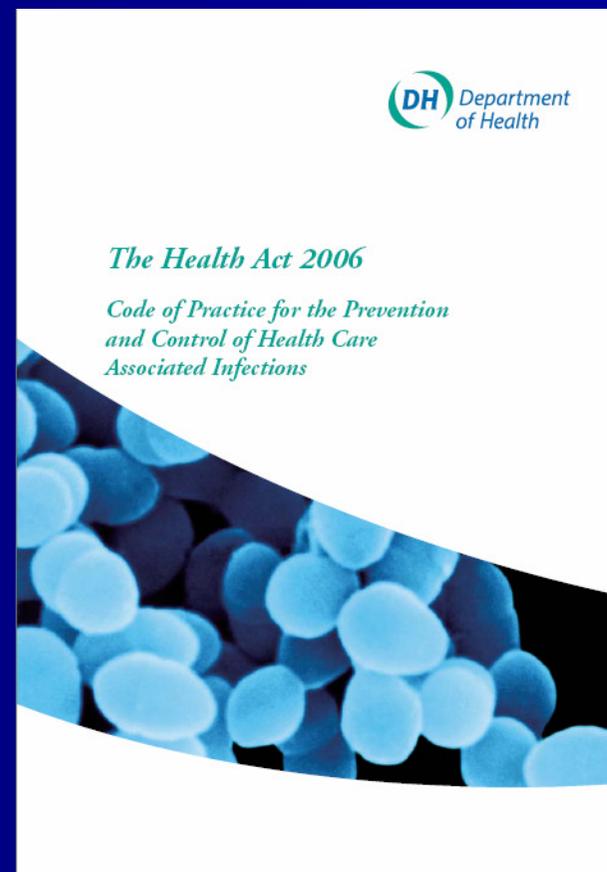
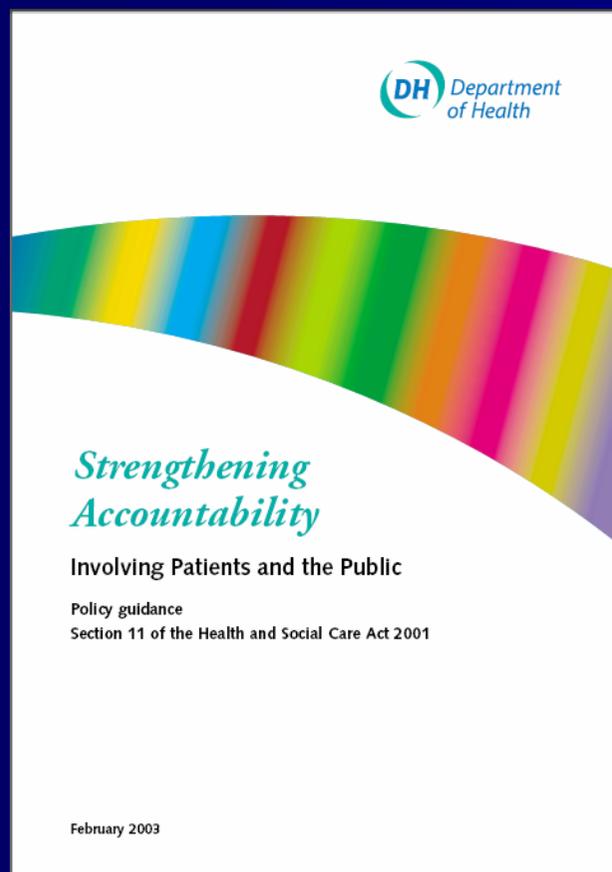


<http://mrsaactionuk.net>

Two challenges.....

- How can you make the patient feel involved and feel safer in the current climate of fear and anxiety around healthcare infections ?
- How can we make everyone understand that hand-hygiene applies to them, and that infection prevention is everyone's business?

Involving the patient is augmented by legislation



.....you have a statutory duty to involve the patient

- The Code of Practice for the Prevention and Control of Health Care Associated Infections – DoH 2006
- Duty Five:
The duty to provide information on healthcare associated infections to patients and the public

....**your duty**

- You must ensure that you make suitable and sufficient information available:
- to patients and the public about the organisation's general systems and arrangements for preventing and controlling healthcare infections....

.....your duty cont'd

..... and to each patient concerning:

- any particular considerations regarding the risks and nature of any healthcare infection that are relevant to their care, and
- any preventative measures relating to healthcare infections that a patient ought to take after discharge

Fact: Patients with C diff can re-infect themselves

- Do your patient information leaflets tell them this?
- Hand hygiene is important for everyone, patient and carer alike
- Advise the patient to keep their finger nails short, and yes tell them to wash their hands when using the lavatory and before eating

Substances hazardous to health:

- *Clostridium difficile* and MRSA
- Control of – which piece of legislation?
- COSHH – The Health and Safety At Work Act

Patient Choice

- In the healthcare setting we tend to think about the patient choosing where or when they have surgery, and in end of life decisions when we talk about engaging the patient
- To help patients make choices they need information

Patients can vote with their feet

- One of the most common questions we are asked is “which hospital is the safest?”
- High infection rates influences patients' choice over which hospital they will use. This is an obvious driver for hospitals to reduce infection rates because now the system allows the patient to choose which hospital they wish to be treated in

How can you make the difference that will make patients want to be treated by your Trust?

- Frustration and anxiety caused by not being given sufficient information is the common denominator in the vast majority of people we have helped and spoken to regarding the acquisition and treatment of healthcare infections
- Remove the fear by giving better information

How can you make that difference?

- By being honest
- Information is key in helping the patient understand how they themselves can influence decisions about their care and their safety, and how they can participate

The patient and carer is constantly being put at risk

- I prepared my profusely infected stepfather with the nursing staff after he died
- My partner helped with a procedure to aspirate fluid from her mum's lungs with MRSA pneumonia
- We both helped other patients who were unable to feed themselves or get a drink

... did we worry

- Not then, no-one told us
- Did we wear PPE?
- We did wash our hands, however...
- More than some doctors we saw
- The question I will ask you is, why isn't there 100% compliance with hand hygiene from the medical profession?

Prevention and Control of avoidable infections is everyone's business

- Ultimately patient safety is your responsibility, however
- You need to involve the patient in the design of their care, particularly in relation to the risks involved in acquiring infections, and if they do get an infection what they need to do, carers need to know too

Should we be telling you to wash your hands.....?

- You may be expected to be reminded by the patient, however
- You need to take into account those who feel awkward in asking, and those unable to ask
- "We are what we repeatedly do, excellence, then, is not an act, but a habit" *Aristotle*

Best Practice

- The best practice we have seen for documenting the history of the patient journey in the UK was developed by the Lincolnshire Integrated Care Pathway Partnership
- The Integrated Care Pathway for the treatment for MRSA is an excellent tool for helping design safe patient care
- and to communicate with everyone involved in the patient's journey, not least the patient

In conclusion

- Make sure your staff are confident to talk to the patient if they have questions about healthcare infections
- Document their care and make sure everyone knows if the patient has an infection
- Be proactive and open about providing information about infections and what the patient and carer's need to do
- It's not only a statutory duty to do this, but your duty of care

....the greatest challenge – saving lives

*Westminster Abbey – a tribute to all those lost and all those
affected by healthcare infections 19th July 2007*