



Department
of Health &
Social Care



The
Queen's
Nursing
Institute

Infection Prevention and Control (IPC) Champion Network meeting

SUMMARY

Gastrointestinal Infections and Outbreak Management

Thursday 27 February 2025

2-4pm, via Zoom



1. Chair's Welcome

Charlotte Fry, RN, DN, QN, Expert Lead Nurse, IPC Champions Network; @cfry_

- Welcome to everyone, good to see you all.
- As you know the IPC Champions Network is for nurses and colleagues working in adult social care settings - we now have 2232 members of the IPC Network, if you would like to join, please go to: <https://qni.org.uk/nursing-in-the-community/infection-prevention-and-control-champions/>
- For IPC resources visit: <https://qni.org.uk/news-and-events/events/infection-prevention-and-control-ipc-champions-meeting/>
- We have an excellent agenda today, the theme is Gastrointestinal Infections and Outbreak Management - thank you to our speakers: Liz Grogan, Deputy Director IPC, Leeds Community Healthcare Trust and Kat Cotton & Gemma Grant, Senior Public Health Nurses, Lincolnshire County Council - for their time and expertise.
- If you have any ideas or requests for themes for future meetings, please don't hesitate to email me at charlotte.fry@qni.org.uk



1. Gastroenteritis Infections

Liz Grogan, QN, Deputy DIPC, Leeds Community Healthcare NHS Trust, RN (Adults) MSc
Public Health - Health Promotion

Background

- I've been an IPC nurse for 18 years
- My real passion is around public health and public health promotion

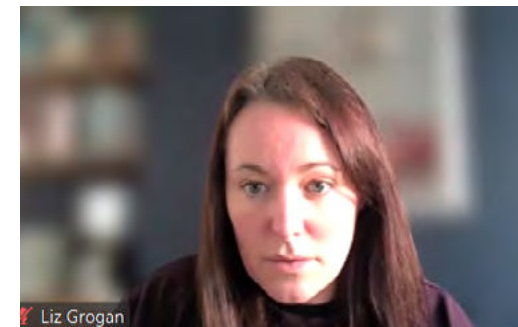
3 Main types of Infection:

1. **Bacterial:** food born infections and food poisoning: salmonella, e.coli, listeria, staph infection and Campylobacter
2. **Viral:** norovirus, astrovirus, rotavirus, very common over winter period – this winter have had very high level of norovirus
3. **Parasitic:** Giardiasis and Cryptosporidiosis parasites – contact with human faeces in soil can spread this or drinking infected water or swimming in contaminated water, much higher lately as bigger appetite for wild swimming

For all of these above, early detection is crucial

Norovirus

- Known as the winter vomiting bug
- We do get outbreaks in summer periods, doesn't completely go away in warmer weather.
- It's recognised that during winter, because of lack of UV that reduces vitamin D, there's an impairment of immune system, so we get more more infections. [Poster for Norovirus can be found here.](#)



1. Gastroenteritis Infections

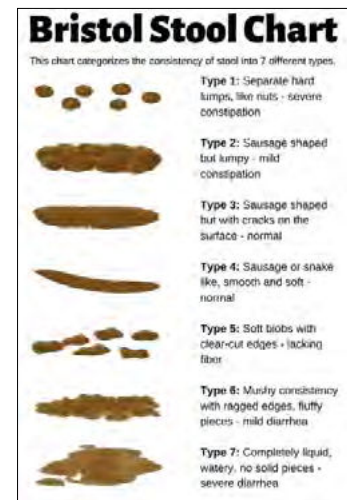
Liz Grogan, QN, Deputy DIPC, Leeds Community Healthcare NHS Trust, RN (Adults) MSc
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Gastro related infections

- Persistent and chronic diarrhoea is defined as more than 14 days but fewer than 30 days in duration with loss of appetite, bloating, nausea, vomiting, abdominal cramps, abdominal pain, bloody poo in some cases, pus in stools in some cases, generally feeling unwell, including lethargy and body aches
- All cases should be seen as infectious unless it's not an infectious nature - should be excluded from work and school for minimum of 48 hours
- There's a great poster, 'I spy...gastroenteritis' (see below), [click to download the poster here](#).
- Viruses can be a cause of persistent diarrhoea in patients who are immune compromised. Anybody that has diarrhoea we refer to the Bristol Stool Chart
- It's about what's normal for the person - they might have Type 6 as the norm, it's about whether it's changed.

Campylobacter

- Incubation period: Usually 2-5 days (range 1-10 days)
- Identified from a clinical specimen, typically a stool sample.
- Exclusion criteria: At least 48 hours symptom-free/no loose stools before returning to work/school.
- Found in the gastrointestinal tracts of birds (especially poultry) and mammals. Transmission: primarily through contaminated food or drink.



1. Gastroenteritis Infections

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Campylobacter

- Washing raw chicken can spread bacteria via splashing.

Clostridium difficile

- C. difficile produces spores resistant to air, drying, and heat.
- Symptoms: Strong-smelling watery diarrhoea (may contain blood/mucus), abdominal pain, dehydration. Many carry C. difficile, but antibiotics can trigger infection by disrupting gut flora.
- Can cause colitis, spreads easily, and leads to recurrent infections.
It can kill people. A child over last 6 months, with underlying conditions, and had CDiff and passed away and was 11. It was devastating. It must be taken seriously as an infection.
- [Download a poster on CDifficile here.](#)

Lab diagnosis

- Primary testing: is the initial set of routine testing/investigation performed to rule out the suspected common pathogens responsible for a clinical presentation.

Stool samples

- Stool samples are usually collected and referred for investigation in the following situations:
- When the clinician requires a microbiological diagnosis
- When there is persistent diarrhoea/malabsorption
- Where there is blood, mucus or pus in the stool
- When there is a history of recent hospitalisation

1. Gastroenteritis Infections

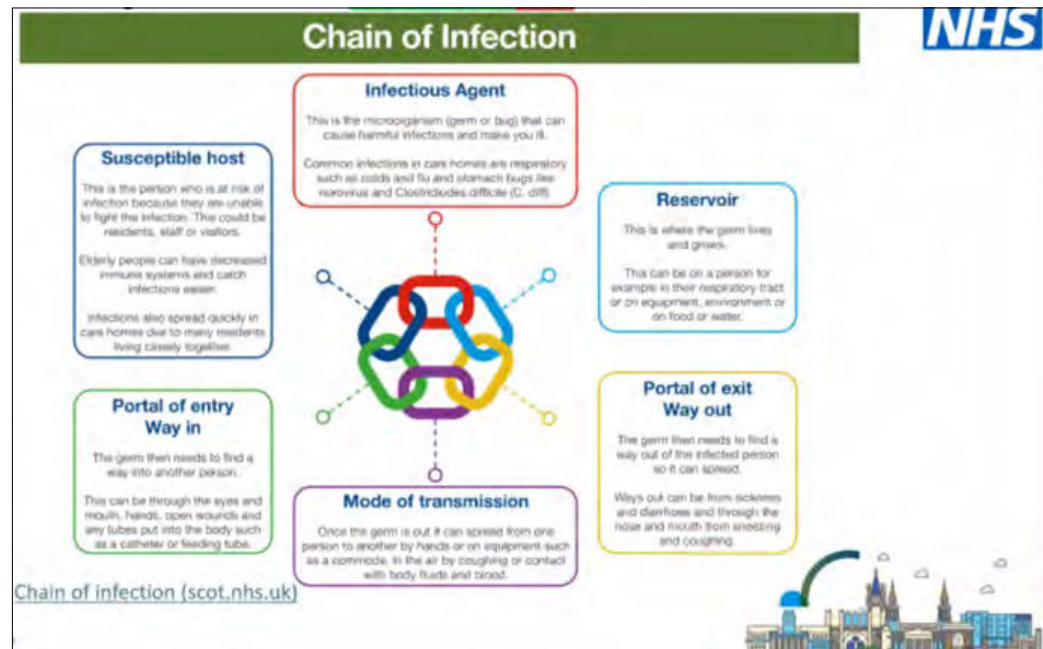
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Stool samples

- When investigating outbreaks of diarrhoea and or vomiting in contacts of patients infected with organisms such as STEC
- When there is a suspected public health hazard
- Where a patient requires microbiological clearance for their occupation following an infection
- When an outbreak is suspected
- When the patient is immunocompromised
- When the patient has travelled within 14 days of symptoms onset.

Resources

- Vomiting Larry - a simulated, humanoid vomiting system for assessing environmental contamination from projectile vomiting relating to norovirus infection. It shows the spread over square metrage. View demonstration and explanation from his creator, Catherine Makison-Booth of the Health and Safety Laboratory, [here](#). (2 mins 56)



1. Gastroenteritis Infections

Liz Grogan, QN, Deputy DIPC, Leeds Community Healthcare NHS Trust, RN (Adults) MSc
Public Health - Health Promotion

Advice for all outbreaks

- Many infectious diseases can be managed by reinforcing the measures recommended in preventing and controlling infections and by:
- Encourage unwell individuals to stay home or isolate.
- Support eligible groups in accessing immunisation.
- Ensure good ventilation.
- Reinforce hygiene practices.
- Ask parents, carers, or students to report infectious disease cases.
- Consider cohorting versus full closure of settings.

Sepsis

- Sepsis is caused when the body's immune system becomes overactive in the response to an infection causing inflammation which can affect how well other tissues and organs work. Sepsis is responsible for 42,000 - 52,000 deaths a year and relates to 100,000 hospital admissions per year in the UK
- Gastro-intestinal infections can result in sepsis
- Restore 2 is an escalation tool - deteriorating patients are a significant risk factor
- Early detection diagnosis and treatment is crucial - [visit training hub here](#).
- Contact your local IPC team or [local UKHSA Health Protection Team here](#).



2. Outbreak Management

Kat Cotton and Gemma Grant, Senior Health Protection Nurses, Lincolnshire County Council and Lincolnshire Adult Social Care Providers.

Facts

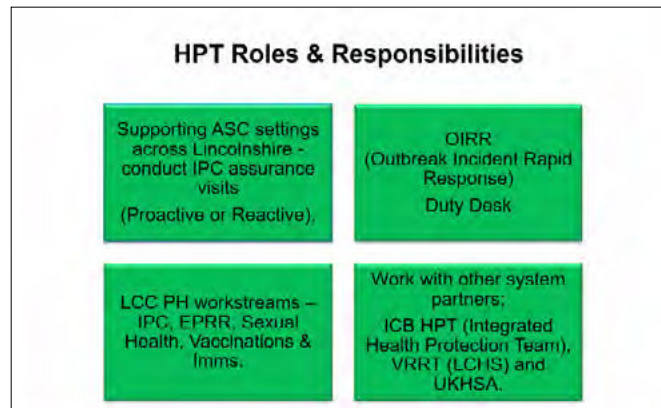
- 31,600 individuals died from gastrointestinal disease in the UK in 2021- It's quite a staggering number, it's increased over time which is worrying as it's preventable as well as treatable.
- There have been 30 outbreaks already this year. From educational settings and nurseries as well.
- Outbreak definition: an incident where 2 or more people experiencing a similar illness are linked in time or place.

LCC Health Protection Team (HPT)

- Comprised of: Clinical Lead, 4 Senior HPT Nurses, EPRR Officer
- Each ASC setting that has a current contract with LCC will have an outbreak management pack in place. All our care homes have the outbreak management pack.

Outbreak Management Pack

- Consists of: actions cards for more common infection outbreaks; templates for recording information and a transfer form.



2. Outbreak Management

Kat Cotton and Gemma Grant, Senior Health Protection Nurses, Lincolnshire County Council and Lincolnshire Adult Social Care Providers.

Resources - Action Card

- Outbreak management tools: Action card, Bristol stool chart, symptom recording template.
- Key actions: Monitor staff and residents, ensure leadership, and maintain communication.
- Support: The action card helps staff manage and escalate outbreaks.

IPC control measures - routes of transmission

- Having a clean environment reduces the risk of transmission of infection posed by micro-organisms. When considering GI infections routes of transmissions can be: contact (indirect & environment); faecal oral; foodborne, waterborne.
- It's important to be aware that some micro-organisms can survive for long periods on surfaces, therefore enhanced (deep) cleaning may require specific cleaning products to disinfect.

IPC control measures – environmental cleaning cont...

National Patient Safety Agency

RED
Bathrooms, showers, toilets, basins and bathroom floors.

BLUE
General/communal; lounges, offices, corridors and staff room.

GREEN
Kitchen areas, including satellite kitchen areas and food storage.

YELLOW
Bedrooms individual has an infection and is cared for in their own room.

National colour coding scheme for hospital cleaning materials and equipment
All NHS organisations should adopt the colour code below for cleaning materials. All cleaning items, for example, cloths or sponges and mopheads, brushes, sprays and gloves, should be colour coded. This also includes those items used for other cleaning departments.

Red <small>Bathrooms, washrooms, showers, toilets, basins and bathroom floors.</small>	Blue <small>General areas including wards, departments, offices and basins in public areas.</small>
Green <small>Catering departments, ward kitchen areas and patient food service at ward level.</small>	Yellow <small>Isolation areas.</small>

Your local service for hospital cleaning is:

Lincolnshire
COUNCIL
Marking for a better future

NHS England » National standards of healthcare cleanliness 2025

Resources – Action Card

DIARRHOEA AND / OR VOMITING ACTION CARD Tick

Please consider all the actions below (mark as not applicable [NA] as necessary)

Definition of D&V outbreak is:
Two or more cases of diarrhoea and/or vomiting – with evidence of bowel movements which indicate Bristol Stool Chart grading 6 or 7, which are unusual to the resident(s) and/or staff members normal bowel action.

- In Hours - Inform the LCC, Health Protection Team – Tel: 01522 552983 Email: healthprotectionteam@lincolnshire.gov.uk**
The Health Protection Team will be your first point of contact during an outbreak. Upon notification of the outbreak, the IPC team will cascade this information to the Whole Health Economy IPC group and will notify UK Health Security Agency (UKHSA) on your behalf.
The IPC team will provide daily support and advice – the information they will require is as follows:
 - Total number of staff affected
 - Total number of residents affected
 - Number of newly affected residents (per 24 hours)
 - Number of newly affected staff (per 24 hours)
 - Number of residents who continue to be symptomatic
 - To maintain robust record keeping and reduce the risk of confusion it is recommended that resident/staff initials are used to report those affected.
- Out of Hours - Inform UK Health Security Agency (UKHSA) Tel: 0344 225 4524 (option 1) or Email: emhpt@ukhsa.gov.uk**
They will require the following information:

2. Outbreak Management

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Contact details

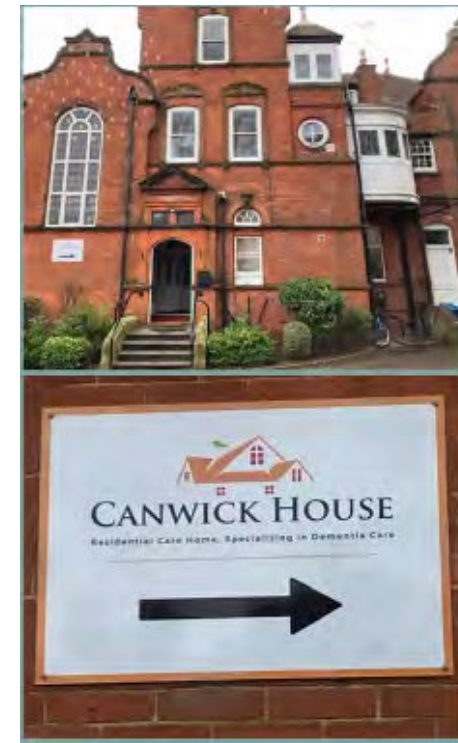
- healthprotectionteam@lincolnshire.gov.uk; 01522 552 993

Case study

- Canwick House sits in small village on the outskirts of Lincoln City. It's a listed building which was built in 1889 as a private house. An extension was added in 1998.
- A lot of our care homes look like this - not purpose built.

Challenges in Outbreak

- Majority of residents have a dementia diagnosis and walk around the setting
- There is a limited number of ensuite rooms
- There is no dedicated sluice facilities available.



2. Outbreak Management

Kat Cotton and Gemma Grant, Senior Health Protection Nurses, Lincolnshire County Council and Lincolnshire Adult Social Care Providers.

Why this home stands out in terms of IPC

- IPC is seen as a priority
- Link Champion is enthusiastic and takes ownership of role
- Innovative ideas including translated materials
- Residents are barrier nursed upon leaving hospital
- IPC Champion has done train the trainer and trains all staff
- Excellent attendance at Link Sessions
- All this prevents outbreaks!

Use of Outbreak Management Pack

- Champion likes the pack and the action cards are easy to follow
- All staff can easily implement IPC measures
- It's available online and hard copy for ease of access

Sarah's take home advice for D&V outbreak.



Remove hand sanitiser ASAP!



Enhanced cleaning is the key especially in settings where isolation isn't possible.



Any room cleaning of residents with an infection should be the last one of the day.



Ensure staff understand cleaning colours.



Timed visiting to allow staff to support visitors with handwashing/PPE.

Next meeting

Next Care home Nursing Network meeting: 27th March

Theme: Public Health Impact of the Health and Social Care Workforce

Speakers:

Michele Lawrence, Head of Safeguarding, Public Health England

Steph Lawrence MBE, Director of Nursing and Deputy Chief Executive Officer, The QNI

[Click here to book your free place.](#)

Next IPC meeting: Thursday 17 April, 2-4pm:

Speakers: Vivaldi Project Team, update on Reducing Infections and Improving Lives Project and Helen Cheney, Public Health Lead, East Sussex, talking about IPC Networks in Practice.

[Click here to book your free place.](#)



**Thank you to the delegates who attended today's meeting.
Here are some comments:**

Thank you - amazing as
always

Thank you QNI
Team!

thank you,
great session
as always :)

Thank you to all
great session

Thank you, another
great session

As always, a
brilliant presentation
Liz. Thank you

Thanks that was great!

