

The Role of the Local Health Protection Unit in respect of Healthcare Associated Infection & Infection Prevention & Control



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The Health Protection Units



The network of local health protection units (HPUs) operating in England are the ‘eyes and ears’ of the Agency.

The HPUs continually monitor health issues in local areas and give advice and support to the social care sector, local NHS, civil and emergency authorities if a medical or environmental incident or outbreak occurs.

The HPU Teams



- **Each unit has specialist nurses, doctors and consultants in communicable disease control, ready to respond to incidents around the clock.**
- **Other members of the team gather and interpret local information to create a picture of diseases and other hazards which is used in planning and coordinating our work.**
- **We are supported by regional health emergency planning advisors, environmental public health units and surveillance teams.**
- **We also use the regional microbiology network for laboratory analysis.**

Our work in HPUs



We have two types of work - proactive and reactive.

Proactive work is about preventing health incidents from happening.

This includes:

- working with health and social care partners to provide effective immunisation programmes
- helping prevent healthcare associated infections e.g. MRSA and *C. difficile*

***Reactive work* is about minimising the risk to the general public once an incident happens.**

Our priorities include:

- advising how to stop infectious diseases from spreading.
- carrying out risk assessments to find out how outbreaks occurred, and recommending ways to prevent them happening again.
- tracing people who may have come into contact with, or be carrying an infectious disease.
- compiling statistics on notifiable diseases e.g. mumps and measles.

Reporting an incident or an outbreak



Who to advise?

HPU

PCT IPC Team

EHO

CQC

Early intervention

What information will they need?



Date & time of onset

Case details

Symptoms

Numbers affected (staff/residents/day cases)

Capacity for residents/day cases

GPs of residents

Use of antibiotics

Any further relevant info about others who may be affected
e.g. visitors/relatives



When it happens

HPU, PCT and EHD will work to support you

Prevent further cases

Identify the cause

Implement control measures

Return to normal

Lessons learned

How your local HPU can work to help you



HPU and PCT work in collaboration

General telephone advice and support

Specialist advice and support

Leadership and coordination to investigate and control incidents

Newsletter

Conference



Work with service and academic partners to ensure good quality training is available

Education and training

Educational materials

web site www.hpu.org.uk

DVD

Root cause analysis – contribute to the process in complex cases

Surveillance – provide real time information. Understand the cause of increase and advise on measure to address it



If in doubt.....

.....ask.