

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



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Introduction



- The Health Protection Agency – who we are, what we do, how we work
- Role of the local Health protection unit
- How to find your local unit
- Process for reporting incidents and outbreaks
- How we can work with you

HPA structure



Functions of the HPA



Local and Regional Services - HPUs



**Works alongside
the NHS providing
specialist support in
communicable
diseases, infection
control and
emergency planning**

Our work in HPUs



Proactive and Reactive.

Proactive work - preventing health incidents from happening.

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

Our work in HPUs



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

- Advising on stopping spread of infection
- Carrying out risk assessments
- Making recommendations for prevention
- Contact tracing
- Compiling statistics

Core functions - Health Protection Units - Engagement



‘Eyes and ears’ of the Agency

- Representation at Trust / PCT infection prevention meetings
- Provide advice and support to the NHS e.g. Major outbreaks
- Advice and support to PCT infection prevention staff e.g. managing outbreaks
- Promote sharing of good and consistent infection control practice



Core functions - Health Protection Units - Surveillance

- Monitoring HCAI surveillance data
- Developing surveillance to improve understanding of epidemiology of HCAI
- Early warning of potential clusters or outbreaks
- Ensuring adequate response to deteriorating trends in HCAI
- Alerting management body if necessary



Core functions - Health Protection Units – Care Homes

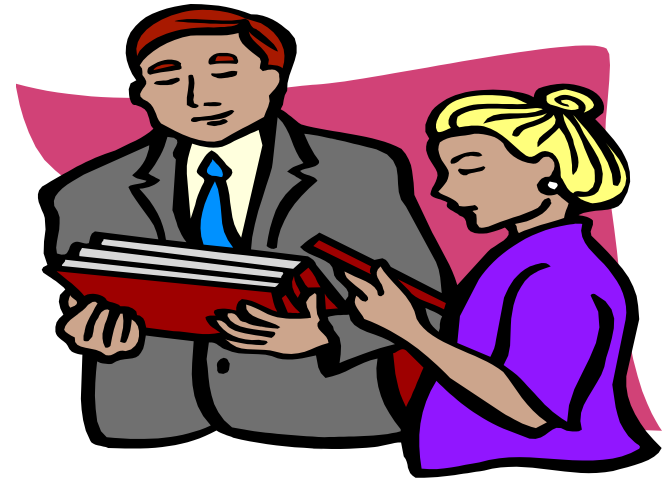


- Ensuring care homes are aware of sources of accredited infection control advice
- Supporting implementation of local infection control guidance
- Providing leadership and co-ordination during incidents and outbreaks
- Providing health protection and infection control advice e.g. verbal and/or written
- Responding to **complex** infection control queries



Core functions - Health Protection Units – Care Homes

- Conducting site visits if necessary e.g. during outbreaks
- Delivering or contributing to training events
- Working with partners to develop local plans for good quality training



HPA South West – an example



HPU Teams



- ✓ Specialist nurses / practitioners
- ✓ Consultants in communicable disease control (CCDCs)
- ✓ Consultants in health protection
- ✓ Administrative staff
- ✓ Support from regional health emergency planning advisors, environmental public health units and surveillance teams, regional microbiology network.



How the HPU can work with you



- **Outbreak management and co-ordination**
 - Especially if cases from an outbreak in a care home have been admitted to hospital or vice versa
- **Liaison with microbiologists over tests and results**
- **Representation on outbreak control meetings**

Managing incidents and outbreaks

– what you can expect

- Telephone advice and support depending on the nature of incident
- Visits as appropriate
- Giving information e.g. policies, cleaning etc
- Liaison with the hospital e.g. discharges

Information we require from care homes

- Layout of the home
 - Total number of residents and staff
 - Number of residents and staff affected
 - Start date of outbreak
 - Samples taken
 - GP attendance
 - If catering staff affected
 - How outbreak has been managed
 - Any special circumstances
 - If Agency staff have been informed
- Information is shared with infection prevention staff at local hospitals and with relevant Local authority**

General infection prevention – what you can expect

- Audits by request
- Training and education
- Advice and support
- Information sharing e.g. Local or national events
- Promoting evidence based practice
- Assisting in co-ordinating outbreak management

Challenges - Communication



There has to be

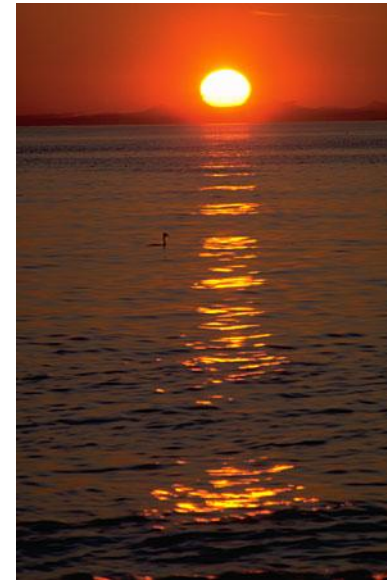
- Partnership.
- A clear line of communication between the care home and Health protection teams.
- Sharing of information



Process for reporting incidents and outbreaks – 24/7

- Contact your local HPU by telephone in the first instance

- Out of hours, please clarify with your local HPU**



Finding your Local HPU



Enter your postcode on
the HPA website home
page

<http://www.hpa.org.uk/>

