

News



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BUGWATCH PILOT SURVEY

The results of a specially designed survey on hospital ward hygiene and healthcare associated infections was launched recently when the Health and Social Services Councils (HSSCs) presented the DHSSPS with the results of their 'Bugwatch' pilot survey. The results of the survey indicated that good levels of ward hygiene were in place at the eight acute hospitals surveyed.

Speaking after the launch, Mrs Stella Cunningham, Chief Officer with the Southern Health & Social Services Council said, "The survey showed a very positive approach to ward hygiene standards across acute hospitals in Northern Ireland. The survey is based on an English model and covers hospital performance in eight categories related to ward hygiene. The results of the survey showed that NI hospitals compared well when compared to the UK average. Our Council members are lay people and the survey is designed to promote a partnership approach to infection control between the public, patients and health professionals."

Bugwatch is a simple checklist used by lay members of the HSSCs to assess hygiene measures in relation to hand washing, ward environment, waste disposal, care of equipment, etc. The Bugwatch surveys were conducted as part of the HSSCs' visiting programme and coincided with the consultation on the new Infection Control Strategy. The HSSCs hope that the findings of the survey will help to inform the final strategy.

Dr Lorraine Doherty, Communicable Disease Control, DHSSPS, said, "It is reassuring to see that, in most cases, high standards of infection prevention and control were being adhered to. However, there is always scope for improvement, in particular in the area of hand hygiene for health professionals and for visitors to hospitals. We will be undertaking further work with Trusts to address this".

Copies of the Bugwatch Report can be found on the HSSC website.

Ends

Editors Notes:

- **Health and Social Services Councils were set up in 1991 to represent the views of patients and users of the health and social services. Council members are made up of 40% of whom are nominated by District Councils in each Area. The remainder are appointed by the Department of Health, Social Services and Public Safety – 30% voluntary/community representatives and 30% are nominees with an interest in health and social care.**

- **Health and Social Services Councils have a right to be consulted by Health and Social Services Boards about and plans for development of services, or where significant changes are being considered. Councils play an important part in representing the views of consumers of services to the decision makers, and provide advice and support to patients and service users in relation to complaints procedures.**

If you require any further information please contact :

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HSS Councils' website is: www.hsscouncils.org