

Preventing Healthcare Associated Infections

Reducing the incidence and severity of Healthcare Associated Infections (HAI) is a high priority for ACC. HAIs are the most frequent form of patient harm and the most common ACC treatment injury claim.

Facts

- HAIs are a significant problem as it is the most common complication affecting patients in hospital. It is the most frequent adverse event in health care with a high global burden.
- Each accepted treatment injury claim represents a person inadvertently harmed. Many HAIs are potentially preventable adverse events rather than an unpredictable complication.
- Infections can have significant impact on patients' lives causing unnecessary pain and suffering for them and their families. Infections prolong hospital stays, create long term disability, increase resistance to antimicrobials and even lead to unnecessary deaths.
- ACC claims for HAIs are increasing, with more than 2,500 accepted in 2017/18.
- HAIs come with a significant cost, which is an indicator of the impact on the person and their family. They cost ACC \$21.7 million in 2017/18, and a total of about \$75 million dollars over the last five years from hospital settings.

Research tells us there is potential to significantly reduce the incidence and severity of HAIs. We're working with the health sector to achieve this via a programme of best practice prevention approaches.

Objectives

ACC has a multi-faceted programme of work underway to reduce the incidence and severity of HAIs. The objectives are:

- Improve patient safety by enabling healthcare workers and caregivers with best practice
- Increase patient and family awareness and participation in preventing infection
- Support surveillance and data collection
- Develop continuous improvement processes with audit tools.

Areas of work

HAI Guiding Principles

The development of a set of guiding principles will provide a core modular framework that provides infection prevention practices, education modules, audit tools and templates that could be incorporated in all health care settings. This will include training, education and communications to support the principles.

Peripheral Intravenous Catheter (PIVC)

ACC has worked with Hutt Valley DHB to develop and test the Know Your IV Lines programme. This is designed to reduce complications from

peripheral intravenous cannula (PIVC). The programme provides a care bundle which targets the three stages of PIVC use:

- **Ready** (insertion using aseptic technique and appropriate antiseptic).
- **Review** (phlebitis monitoring); and
- **Remove** (removal as soon as no longer indicated).

The programme includes audit tools, training material, staff and patient collateral and so on.

ACC is offering DHBs and Private Surgical Hospitals a one-year funding agreement to implement the *Know Your IV Lines* programme.

NZ Aseptic Technique

We are working with the sector to develop and implement a New Zealand focused aseptic technique education package that can be used by all health professionals, including:

- An audit tool to determine current practice and knowledge of principles as well as assessing ongoing competency.
- Standardised education package for healthcare professionals.

The project is being piloted at a range of facilities over 12 months before being rolled out nationally.

National Antibiotic Guidelines

Work is commencing with the health sector to develop a nationally consistent and sustainable Antibiotic Guideline for New Zealand. We have reached out to the sector to identify interested parties, and are currently completing a project plan for this work.

Sepsis

ACC is working with Sepsis Trust to fully understand the incidence and cost of sepsis in New Zealand. This includes:

- A full report on the incidence and cost of sepsis in New Zealand, including direct and indirect costs
- An awareness and education campaign to raise awareness on sepsis
- Development of the New Zealand Sepsis Action Plan.

ICNet

ACC is working with Canterbury DHB to roll out the ICNet infection detection and surveillance platform. We plan to establish one national agreement with Baxter Healthcare Ltd that all DHBs will be able to join.

A National ICNet Service Hub has been established to support users, and eight DHBs are progressing business cases. ACC has approached the Health Information Standards Organisation to develop an infection surveillance data standard that will support national consistency.

Contact:

Get in touch to find out more or to get involved with this work:

- infection_prevention@acc.co.nz
- www.acc.co.nz/treatmentsafety

Disclaimer

All information in this publication was correct at the time of printing. This information is intended to serve only as a general guide to arrangements under the Accident Compensation Act 2001 and regulations. For any legal or financial purposes this Act takes precedence over the contents of this guide.