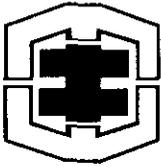


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EASTERN HEALTH BOARD
Bord Slainte an Oirthir

INFECTION CONTROL
COMMITTEE

INAUGURAL REPORT

1996 - 1998

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List of Eastern Health Board Infection Control Committee Members, 1999.

Name	Position	Telephone No.
Dr. E. McNamara	Consultant Microbiologist Cherry Orchard Hospital	6264702
Dr. L. G. McElearney	Occupational Health Consultant Dr. Steeven's Hospital	6342729
Dr. D. Igoe	Public Health Specialist Department of Public Health Dr. Steeven's Hospital	6352120
Dr. Hugh Gallagher	Consultant Anaesthetist St. Colmcille's Hospital Loughlinstown	2825800
Dr. N. Armstrong	Senior Clinical Dental Surgeon Dundrum Health Centre	2983116
Mrs. T.P. O'Mahoney	Director of Nursing Cherry Orchard Hospital	6264702
Ms. J. Murphy	Infection Control Sister Cherry Orchard Hospital	6264702
Ms. R. Cashman	Infection Control Sister James Connolly Memorial Hospital	8213844
Ms. M. Carroll-Browne	Occupational Health Sister Dr. Steeven's Hospital	6352786
Mr. G. Hanley	Senior Executive Officer Programme for Acute Hospitals and Services for the Elderly Dr. Steeven's Hospital	6352327

FIRST REPORT OF THE EASTERN HEALTH BOARD INFECTION CONTROL COMMITTEE SINCE ITS INAUGURATION IN 1996

INTRODUCTION

The inaugural meeting of the Infection Control Committee was held on 1st May 1996 in the Board Room, Cherry Orchard Hospital. Dr. Brian O'Herlihy, Director of Public Health Medicine welcomed the establishment of this Committee by the Chief Executive Officer. This new development had been stimulated by the excellent report from the Matrons Group.

This Committee was chaired by Dr. Darina O'Flanagan, Specialist in Public Health Medicine, from May 1996 to October 1998. Dr. O'Flanagan reported to the Director of Public Health. Its original members were:-

Dr. H. Gallagher, Consultant Anaesthetist, St. Colmcille's Hospital, Loughlinstown,

Mrs. T.P. O'Mahoney, Director of Nursing, Cherry Orchard Hospital,

Ms. R. Cashman, Infection Control Sister, James Connolly Memorial Hospital,
Blanchardstown,

Ms. J. Murphy, Infection Control Sister, Eastern Health Board,

Dr. L. McElearney, Occupational Health Department, Eastern Health Board,

Ms. M. Carroll Browne, Occupational Health Department, Eastern Health Board,

Mr. G. Hanley, Senior Executive Officer, Programme for Acute Hospitals and Services for
the Elderly,

Dr. C. Dulake & Dr. B. Dillon, Consultant Microbiologists have also been members (both
now retired).

Dr. Eleanor McNamara, Consultant Microbiologist joined the Committee in September 1998 and became Chairperson on the departure of Dr. D. O'Flanagan to the National Surveillance Unit in October 1998.

Dr. Derval Igoe, Specialist in Public Health Medicine replaced Dr. O'Flanagan in October 1998. Dr. Nicolas Armstrong, Dental Officer joined the Committee in February 1999.

Infection Control practices within the Health Board must conform with acceptable policies and procedures which are research based and in line with current guidelines and legislation.

A primary role of the Committee was to initiate the development, evaluation and revision of written policies and procedures primarily relating to hospital acquired infection in each Eastern Health Board hospital, but also to review infection control practices in Community Care facilities.

The Infection Control Committee has continued to hold successful meetings at two-monthly intervals. The level of interest and commitment to the area of Infection Control has been reflected positively by the attendance at these meetings.

Local Committees

It is estimated that 1 in 10 patients develops a hospital acquired infection during their hospital stay. The escalating cost of treating these hospital acquired infections include extra bed stay, treatment, staff time etc. It has been shown that local Infection Control programmes can reduce the number of hospital acquired infections significantly, thus improving quality of patient care. In order to achieve effective communication between the areas of remit, local Infection Control Committees have been set up in Naas General Hospital, James Connolly Memorial Hospital, and St. Colmcille's Hospital, Loughlinstown. There is cross representation with the Eastern Health Board Infection Control Committee as Infection Control Sisters are dual representatives of these Committees. These local Committees meet regularly. The work of the local Committee is of vital importance in the prevention of hospital acquired infection. The Infection Control Sisters together with other members of the local team are responsible for the prevention, surveillance, investigation and control of hospital acquired infection within the Eastern Health Board hospitals.

All members of the Infection Control Committee are, to varying degrees involved with other committees throughout the Eastern Health Board. Their expertise can be drawn on to improve the quality of knowledge, procedures and practices with respect to infection

control. It also gives the Infection Control members a direct involvement in the choice of appropriate equipment and materials with respect to Infection Control implications.

At the inaugural meeting the Committee agreed to prioritise the following issues:

1. The preparation of an Infection Control Manual for use throughout the Eastern Health Board Establishments.
2. Control of M.R.S.A. (*Methicillin Resistant Staphylococcus aureus*)
3. Environmental Cleaning and Disinfection within Healthcare facilities.
4. Health Care Risk Waste (Clinical Waste) Management.
5. Safe disposal of Sharps.
6. On-going education of Healthcare personnel on Infection Control and related issues.
7. Infection Control Audit.

The following is a report on the activities and achievements to date of the Eastern Health Board Infection Control Committee in relation to the above topics.

SECTION ONE
ACTIVITIES AND ACHIEVEMENTS TO DATE

1. The Preparation of the Infection Control Manual for use throughout the Eastern Health Board Establishments.

This manual has been prepared by Ms. Rosaleen Cashman at James Connolly Memorial Hospital, Blanchardstown and endorsed by the Eastern Health Board Infection Control Committee. The Infection Control Manual is a research based reference manual incorporating Department of Health Guidelines. It is a valuable and informative work. It encompasses the broad concepts of Infection Control and is an important document for all involved in Health Care. Currently it is being distributed throughout the Eastern Health Board. In line with new developments in Infection Control the manual will be updated on a on-going basis. All Eastern Health Board Hospital Infection Control Committees have adopted these Guidelines as the reference tool for infection control practices.

2. The Control of M.R.S.A. (Methicillin Resistant *Staphylococcus aureus*)

Following the issue of the Department of Health Guidelines (1995) the Eastern Health Board Policy on M.R.S.A. has been updated and circulated.

It is widely acknowledged that the spread of M.R.S.A. is an area of concern to healthcare workers and patients. Staff should now be informed in relation to the procedures required to control the spread of M.R.S.A., particularly strict hand washing. Problems have arisen with inadequate notification from the transferring hospital of patients colonised with M.R.S.A. It is now Eastern Health Board policy to routinely inform receiving hospitals and other institutions of the M.R.S.A. status of patients. However, isolation facilities are limited and often inadequate in some of the Eastern Health Board acute hospitals. Efforts are being made to improve this situation e.g. the planning brief for Naas General Hospital includes the development of isolation facilities and a request for isolation facilities at St. Colmcille's Hospital has been submitted to the Department of Health.

There is an urgent need to provide these facilities in order to fully implement the recommendations according to current guidelines.

3. Environmental Cleaning and Disinfection Procedures within Healthcare Facilities

During the course of their work the Infection Control Sisters have identified that a wide and indiscriminate use of cleaning and disinfection materials occurred within the Eastern Health Board Healthcare facilities. The level of knowledge of staff on the specific recommended use of these products was variable. As a result initiatives have been undertaken to institute a standard approach to environmental cleaning.

These include;

- A Household Services Officer and two Supervisors have been appointed to James Connolly Memorial Hospital who have specific terms of reference for this area. Following this appointment St. Colmcille's Hospital is presently awaiting the appointment of a Household Services Officer.
- On-going standardisation on cleaning products for use in all healthcare areas.
- On-going education of staff of appropriate cleaning practices.

An alternative method of cleaning and hygiene management has been placed on trial in three locations, James Connolly Memorial Hospital, Blanchardstown, Cherry Orchard Hospital and Clonskeagh Hospital. This project involves the use of dilution control centres in each area. The aim of this method is to achieve a higher product performance with less waste of materials used. This would have direct financial benefits and environmental benefits by the use of correctly diluted materials, less packaging and further standardisation of products. The clear labelling and design together with safety data will be significant in the area of Health & Safety.

Staff have welcomed the implementation of the new and improved methods of hospital cleaning and disinfection and it is hoped that through our joint efforts we will achieve the high standards we desire. Results to date would suggest the cost effectiveness of the

