

# Infection, Prevention and Control Standards

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A plain English booklet

June 2022

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[www.healthcareimprovementscotland.org](http://www.healthcareimprovementscotland.org)

# What is this booklet about?

This booklet is about our standards for **infection prevention and control**.



## Information

**Infection prevention and control** is a term used to describe how an organisation or service works to:

- prevent an infection or outbreak happening or
- responds to an infection or outbreak.



# What do the standards cover?

There are nine standards and each one covers a different part of how the NHS or social service should manage an infection or outbreak.

Some infections happen as a direct or indirect result of healthcare and treatment. These types of infections are called healthcare associated infections (HAIs).



## Information

HAIs include

- infection through medical or surgical treatment – for example catheter-associated urinary tract infections (UTIs)
- infection from exposure to a microorganism (bug) that could make someone unwell – for example spread of flu virus in people staying in a hospital ward or care home
- infection when antibiotics are used for longer than they need to be used, or used when they're not needed at all.

# Why are these standards important?

These standards set out what organisations and services across health and social care can do to keep everyone safe from infection when they receive care and support.

## Information

We can't stop all infections or healthcare associated infections from happening. What we can do is reduce the chance of someone having an infection and control an infection's spread and impact.

It is important that people who receive care from the NHS or in adult care homes know about these standards.

## Information

Standards are important because they help families, carers and visitors to understand what to expect when they receive care and support.

This includes what information you should receive and how you will be involved in decisions.

## Information

If you are no longer able to make these decisions for yourself, your healthcare or social care professional will try to speak with someone else close to you. You may have a Power of Attorney delegated to make decisions on your behalf but, if not, this may be your nearest relative, named person or guardian.

# What do the standards mean for you?

The standards set out what you can expect to experience when you receive care or support.



## Information

We have included a list of the nine standards below, along with some information on why they are important.

- 1 Leadership
- 2 Staff training
- 3 Communication
- 4 Working together
- 5 Managing infections
- 6 Good practice
- 7 Clean and safe equipment
- 8 Clean and safe premises
- 9 Making sure everyone receives equipment which is safe to use

# Standard 1 Leadership

The standards set out what you can expect to experience when you receive care or support.

## **What does the standard say?**

The organisation demonstrates effective leadership and governance in IPC.

## **Why is this important?**

This standard is to make sure that the service or organisation is run well.

## **What this means:**

- the organisation has proper leadership and is managed effectively
- staff work together
- the organisation is open about what it does and tells people what it's doing
- the right information is shared with the right people at the right time
- you will be asked how the service can be improved
- the organisation is always learning and improving.

## Standard 2 **Staff training**

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### **What does the standard say?**

Staff are supported to undertake IPC education and training, appropriate to role, responsibilities and workplace setting, to enable them to minimise infection risks in care settings.

### **Why is this important?**

This standard is to make sure that staff have the right training and skills to prevent and manage infections.

### **What this means:**

- staff have the right training and skills to deliver your care.

## Standard 3 **Communication**

### **What does the standard say?**

The organisation implements robust communication systems and processes to enable person-centred decision making, continuity of care and effective IPC throughout a person's care experience.

### **Why is this important?**

This standard is to make sure you receive the right information in the right way. It also means that you will be involved in decisions about your care. This standard also sets out that staff must work together and share information to prevent and manage infections.

### **What this means:**

- you have information that is right for you
- you feel listened to and are involved in decisions about your care
- staff work together in a way that helps reduce the risk of infections.

## Standard 4 **Working together**

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### **What does the standard say?**

The organisation uses robust assurance and monitoring systems to ensure there is a coordinated and rapid response to reduce the risk of infections and to drive continuous quality improvement in IPC.

### **Why is this important?**

This standard is to make sure each organisation does everything it can to reduce the risk of infections.

### **What this means:**

- you will be cared for in an environment where staff work together to minimise and manage infection risks
- staff use data and information to make sure your care is safe.

## Standard 5 **Managing infections**

### **What does the standard say?**

The organisation demonstrates reliable systems and processes for antimicrobial stewardship to support optimal antimicrobial use.



### **Information**

**Antimicrobial products** kill or slow the spread of microorganisms such as bacteria, viruses, and fungi including mould and mildew.

**Antimicrobial stewardship** is about avoiding unnecessary use of antimicrobials and reducing the risk of microorganisms (bugs) becoming resistant to treatment.

### **Why is this important?**

This standard is to make sure that the organisation takes the right approach for managing the spread of infections and microorganisms (including bacteria and viruses).

### **What this means:**

- if you need an antibiotic, it is the right one for you
- if you need treatment to manage your infection, this will be explained to you
- staff are trained and have the skills to know what treatment is right for you.

## Standard 6 **Good practice**

### **What does the standard say?**

The organisation uses evidence-based IPC policies, procedures and guidance.

### **Why is this important?**

This standard is to make sure your care and support is based on up to date evidence and good practice.

### **What this means:**

- your care is provided in a clean and well maintained environment
- the risk of infection is minimised
- staff are knowledgeable and trained.

## Standard 7 **Clean and safe equipment**

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### **What does the standard say?**

The organisation ensures that care equipment is cleaned, maintained and safe for use.

### **Why is this important?**

This standard is to make sure any equipment staff use to care for you is clean and safe to use.

### **What this means:**

- any device or equipment used in your care is safe and clean (for example, walking aids).

## Standard 8 **Clean and safe premises**

### **What does the standard say?**

The organisation ensures that infection risks associated with the health and care built environment are minimised.

### **Why is this important?**

This standard is to make sure the premises where you receive your care (for example hospital, care home) are clean, well maintained and safe.

### **What this means:**

- where you are cared for is clean
- the premises where you are cared for are looked after, maintained and kept safe.

## Standard 9 Making sure everyone receives equipment which is safe to use

### What does the standard say?

The organisation demonstrates the acquisition and provision of equipment that is safe for use in health and social care settings.

### Why is this important?

This standard is to make sure all equipment provided meets the right levels of safety, quality and performance.

### What this means:

- all equipment used in your care is fit for purpose and safe to use.

# What are standards?

Standards set out what people can expect to experience if they use a service. Everyone, no matter where they live, or their personal circumstances, should expect the same quality of care and support.

We have written these standards to help everyone understand what a good service looks like. Standards also help organisations, such as hospitals and care homes, to know what services they should provide and to identify things that they need to improve.



## Information

If you have any complaints or concerns that the standards are not being met, you should get in touch with that service directly.

You can find out more information from our website:

[www.healthcareimprovementscotland.org/our\\_work/standards\\_and\\_guidelines/stnds/ipc\\_standards](http://www.healthcareimprovementscotland.org/our_work/standards_and_guidelines/stnds/ipc_standards)

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