TASMANIAN INFECTION PREVENTION AND CONTROL UNIT

A strategy for the prevention and control of healthcare associated infections in Tasmania

2013 to 2015.

Department of Health and Human Services

Tasmania
Explore the possibilities

A strategy for the prevention and control of healthcare associated infection Tasmania 2013 to 2015.

Tasmanian Infection Prevention and Control Unit (TIPCU)

Department of Health and Human Services, Tasmania

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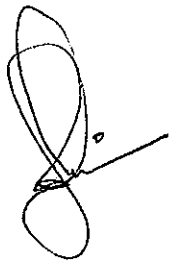
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Foreword

Healthcare associated infections (HAIs) are infections that occur while a patient is receiving healthcare. Healthcare associated infections will always be a potential risk for our patients/clients; however, there is good evidence to show that many of these infections can be prevented through careful attention to infection control procedures and processes. Patients/clients must be protected while they are in our care, and to ensure this, it is important that all healthcare staff working in the Tasmanian Health Organisations (THOs), the Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS), volunteers, contractors and visitors be aware of their personal responsibilities in this area.

This strategy builds on the previous strategy "Sharing the Responsibility" produced in 2009. Like the previous strategy, it has been developed by the Tasmanian Infection Prevention & Control Unit (TIPCU) in collaboration with the THOs and other key healthcare staff and organisations. The strategy aims to promote a coherent approach to the prevention and control of HAIs. By implementing this strategy, we aim to reduce the risk of healthcare associated infections and, therefore, to improve the safety and quality of the care we provide to Tasmanian patients/clients.







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Introduction

Healthcare associated infections continue to cause substantial patient morbidity and costs to health services. This document aims to reduce the incidence of these infections in Tasmania by developing a high quality, consistent infection prevention and control strategy across the state. In the past few years, Tasmania has been actively engaged in prevention activities on a number of fronts. Nationally, there is a strong focus on HAI prevention through the work of the Australian Commission on Safety and Quality in Healthcare (ACSQHC). This strategy complements and supports the work of the ACSQHC, as well as National Safety and Quality Standards for Healthcare Services. The strategy outlines the overarching objectives for HAI prevention in the coming years. Specific aims for the TIPCU and the THOs are subsequently detailed.

Process for strategy development



Our vision

To minimise the occurrence of preventable healthcare associated infections in persons receiving healthcare in the Tasmanian public hospital system.

Our mission

Our mission is to work collaboratively to implement and evaluate cost-effective interventions that reduce preventable HAIs by:

- ensuring effective governance
- providing necessary education and training
- conducting and supporting surveillance activities.

Overarching objectives 2013–2015

Key overarching objectives for this strategy are detailed below.

Governance

- Promote clinical and managerial leadership in the area of HAI prevention.
- Ensure processes are in place to identify and manage HAI risks.
- Continue development of state-wide infection-prevention and control policy to respond to emergent or identified needs.
- Work collaboratively to minimise the risk of HAIs.

Education and Training

- Educate healthcare workers and consumers regarding ways to minimise the risk of HAIs.
- Provide information to the public on issues related to HAIs and on ways to minimise the occurrence of infections.

Surveillance

- Continue to improve the sensitivity and scope of HAI surveillance and respective indicators
- Have effective and consistent systems in place for recording, analysing, sharing and learning from infection control data.
- Explore research opportunities relating to infection prevention and control.

Roles – Tasmanian Infection Prevention and Control Unit

Governance

- To provide peak advice to the Department of Health and Human Services on issues pertaining to HAIs.
- Lead a peak HAI advisory committee that will plan and evaluate HAI interventions in Tasmania.
- Develop state-wide guidance, procedures and/or policies in areas of need as identified by the advisory committee, by infection control teams or through TIPCU activities.
- Provide the THOs and the DHHS System Purchasing and Performance, through the Service Quality and Improvement Unit, infection surveillance data and advice as determined by relevant agreements.

Education and Training

- Work in collaboration with THOs to provide education and training in rural hospitals, community settings and mental health services.
- Provide educational opportunities for Tasmanian government healthcare workers who are not part of a THO and the private sector where possible.
- Lead and facilitate professional development for Tasmanian infection control professionals and those with an interest in infection control.

Surveillance

- Develop a range of audits and surveillance programs suitable for both acute and non-acute healthcare settings that facilitate accreditation and that minimise HAI risks.
- Explore methods to evaluate environmental cleanliness in healthcare facilities.
- Develop an improved understanding of antimicrobial resistance in Tasmania, and support related initiatives.
- Work with the THOs and the DHHS to examine information-technology solutions to improve the coordination and integration of infection control surveillance data within Tasmania.
- Produce publicly available HAI surveillance reports on a regular basis which informs and educates healthcare workers and the public.
- Undertake and collaborate in research endeavours that relate to agreed HAI priorities.

Roles – Tasmanian Health Organisations

Governance

- Establish and maintain an effective infection control committee within the THOs
- Provide Executive representation on the Tasmanian HAI advisory committee
- Ensure a consistent approach to HAI prevention and control policy
- Ensure that policies, procedures and guidance comply with current recommendations of the National Health and Medical Research Council (NHMRC), Australian Guidelines for the Prevention and Control of Infection in Healthcare, Australian Standards and relevant legislation. Compliance with the NHMRC guidelines should be until such a time that these guidelines are superseded by more recent, equally robust research or as recommended by the TIPCU
- Develop an infection control program that plans and evaluates infection prevention and control interventions and/or other activities
- Participate actively in local initiatives to reduce the risk of HAIs
- Ensure that building redesign or renovation is undertaken in a manner that manages the risk of infection
- Provide a healthcare environment that minimises the risk of infection and infection transmission
- Ensure the infection control unit is adequately resourced to meet the needs of the organisation's infection control program
- Ensure infection control professionals have the necessary expertise and skills to manage and prevent HAIs

Education and Training

- Provide educational opportunities for healthcare workers in order to build on current skills and knowledge in relation to HAIs

Surveillance

- Undertake HAI surveillance and feedback data using an appropriate methodology
- Implement and evaluate methods and systems to maintain high levels of environmental cleanliness
- Promote and support antibiotic stewardship programs and other activities that reduce antimicrobial resistance
- Work with the TIPCU and other healthcare organisations to examine information technology solutions that improve the coordination and integration of infection control surveillance data
- Undertake and collaborate in research endeavours that relate to agreed HAI priorities.

Evaluation

The Tasmanian HAI Advisory Committee will assess the level of success in implementing this strategy. In 2014 and 2016, the Tasmanian HAI Advisory Committee, through the TIPCU, will provide reports regarding progress towards the objectives in this strategy.



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