

2 August 2010

**Re: The HALT (Healthcare Associated Infections and Antibiotic use in Long Term Care Facilities) Survey in Northern Ireland**

Dear Colleague

**Action required by you**

If you want your facility to have the opportunity to participate in the 1<sup>st</sup> HALT survey in Northern Ireland, register your interest by telephoning or emailing Mr Gerry McIlvenny (NI study co-ordinator) at: 028 90321313 ext. 2489  
[gerry.mcilvenny@hscni.net](mailto:gerry.mcilvenny@hscni.net)

**Background**

The Public Health Agency (PHA) invites nursing/residential homes in Northern Ireland to participate in the European Centre for Disease Prevention and Control (ECDC) survey on healthcare-associated infections (HCAIs) and antibiotic use in long term care facilities (LTCFs). The HALT survey will be conducted in NI between 6<sup>th</sup> and 24<sup>th</sup> September 2010. This survey is the first of its kind in Northern Ireland and will provide much-needed information on HCAIs and antibiotic use here.

***Why should your facility participate?***

If your facility takes part in the survey you will:

- Be able to further demonstrate the action you are taking to prevent and control HCAIs;
- Receive a confidential report for your facility and the overall NI results;



- Be able to re-use the survey materials as part of your ongoing work to prevent and control HCAs;
- Receive a range of support from the Public Health Agency;
- Be part of a Europe-wide survey and the 1<sup>st</sup> survey in Northern Ireland.

### ***Confidentiality***

All HALT data/survey responses will be confidential. Participating homes will be assigned a study number and will not be identified by name. Aggregate data will be forwarded to ECDC for inclusion in the overall HALT survey report. This will not identify any participating institution.

### ***What support will you receive from the PHA?***

If your facility participates in the survey, PHA will provide:

- Training/Information sessions;
- Technical support – support with interpretation of survey definitions, organisation and materials;
- Survey materials – protocols, forms, training materials, patient information leaflets and a software user guide;
- Software – PHA will supply each participant with a copy of the user-friendly software to enter data for the study;
- Validation – a validation study will be conducted by PHA nursing staff while the HALT study is ongoing;
- Data analysis and results.

### ***What is required of participating facilities?***

If you are interested in participating you will need to:

- Register now through Mr Gerry McIlvenny (NI study co-ordinator) at 028 9063 4119 or [gerry.mcilvenny@belfasttrust.hscni.net](mailto:gerry.mcilvenny@belfasttrust.hscni.net)
- Attend one information session;
- Identify a staff member to be in charge of the study and act as a contact/liaison person;
- Complete data collection (see enclosed) using survey questionnaires between 6<sup>th</sup> and 24<sup>th</sup> September 2010;
- Enter data into the software application and forward to NI survey co-ordinator.

The enclosed paper provides further information on the HALT study.

This study will be beneficial to your residents, your organisation, and to residents of LTCFs throughout Northern Ireland. Interest is likely to be high and I would therefore recommend that you register your interest as soon as possible with our HALT survey co-ordinator.

Yours sincerely



Dr Carolyn Harper  
Executive Medical Director/Director of Public Health

*Enclosures:*

*Outline of HALT in Northern Ireland*  
*Details of information/training days*

