

Why is it important to collect this information on nursing homes?

- The number of residents cared for in these settings is increasing.
- The number of residents of nursing homes that require complex care is also increasing.
- The frequency of infections is comparable to that in acute care.
- Accurate information on infections, antimicrobial resistance and antibiotic use is crucial to increase awareness and to put strategies in place to reduce preventable healthcare associated infection and inappropriate antibiotic use.

Where can I get further information?

Further information can be sourced from:

- Nursing home manager
- Training aids, information leaflets, questionnaires and protocol can be assessed via the Public Health Agency (PHA) website at:

www.publichealth.hscni.net



***Survey of healthcare associated
infection in long term care
facilities***

Staff Information

What is the HALT project?

The HALT project is a point prevalence survey of nursing homes in 33 European countries including Northern Ireland which is taking place in 2010.

The survey is looking at 4 areas:

1. Healthcare associated infection
2. Antibiotic use
3. Infection prevention and control resources and practices
4. Antibiotic resistance

What is a point prevalence survey?

The point prevalence of an infection is the number of individuals with an infection at a fixed point in time (i.e. a snap shot of the rate of infection).

The fixed point in time for the HALT survey is one day for each nursing home evaluated. In some large nursing homes that data can be collected over two days but individual wards must be completed on the same day.

Who is carrying out the survey in Northern Ireland?

The Public Health Agency (PHA) is the national agency responsible for monitoring infectious disease in Northern Ireland and is coordinating the survey along with staff from each participating nursing home and, if available, infection prevention and control teams. The PHA will send the Northern Ireland results to the European Centre of Disease Control which is coordinating the study throughout the EU.

What is a healthcare associated infection?

A healthcare associated infection is any infection picked up by a resident 24 hours or more after admission to a nursing home. These include urinary tract, respiratory and wound infections.

How does the survey work?

It is very important that all nursing homes taking part in the study are using the same definitions so that results are accurate and comparable.

The PHA is providing training to staff nominated by each nursing home in September 2010 and is available for on-going support.

Patient's medical/nursing notes and drug medication charts will be checked by trained staff from each nursing home in September 2010. Information will be collected from these notes to check whether a resident has an infection or is on antibiotics. In addition each nursing home will collect information on infection prevention and control practices, resources and training.

How are the results calculated?

Three questionnaires are used to collect the information. Data from the questionnaires is entered into a computer software package provided to each nursing home which will provide immediate results.

Will residents benefit from this survey?

Information collected during this survey will allow each nursing home to develop strategies to reduce preventable healthcare associated infection and inappropriate antibiotic use. In addition, as this survey is being conducted in 33 EU countries, each nursing home will be able to compare their results with other nursing homes with a similar patient mix.

Can residents be identified by the information collected?

No. The information is collected anonymously. The only information required is sex, age, test results and risk factors for infection (e.g. the number with a urinary catheter). Only a limited number of staff in the PHA, ECDC and in your nursing home will have access to the data.