

It is really important to dry your hands properly using the disposable paper towels provided. Paper towels should be disposed of in the foot operated pedal bins provided.

Hand sanitisers/hand-rubs should also be used after hand washing with soap and water. After applying the hand sanitiser/hand-rub, hands should be rubbed together, covering all areas, until the hands are dry. The application of a hand sanitiser/hand-rub will ensure that any trace of Pseudomonas in the water used for hand washing is eradicated. Nursing staff will show you how to use hand sanitisers/hand-rubs properly.

If you have any concerns, please speak to a member of staff.

If you require further advice/information, please contact your local infection prevention and control team.

**Contact details:**

**“Infection prevention and control is everyone’s business”**



## **Parent/carer information leaflet**

# **Preventing infections caused by Pseudomonas**



### **What is Pseudomonas?**

Pseudomonas is the name given to a bacterium (sometimes called a bug or germ), that is commonly found in soil and water.

Pseudomonas rarely causes infection in people who are healthy. It sometimes causes infection in people who are already unwell or who do not have a strong or fully developed immune system.

### **What kind of infections does Pseudomonas cause?**

Pseudomonas may cause

- ❖ Respiratory/chest infections
- ❖ Urinary tract/urine infections
- ❖ Wound infections
- ❖ Infections of the blood

The Pseudomonas bacterium is a relatively common cause of healthcare associated infections (HCAIs). In recent years it has accounted for approximately 3% of blood infections in Northern Ireland.

### **What can be done to treat these infections/stop patients from getting them?**

When a patient in hospital has signs of infection (or gets an infection), a sample is usually collected and sent for testing. The sample may be of urine, blood, lung or other secretions. The test results help hospital staff to decide how to treat the infection. Infections caused by Pseudomonas are treated using an appropriate antibiotic.

Pseudomonas may also be found on the skin of some individuals and not necessarily cause infection. This is known as colonisation. Colonisation of Pseudomonas on the skin may not necessarily require treatment.

If more than one patient gets an infection caused by Pseudomonas bacteria in a hospital ward or unit, a risk assessment is generally completed. Samples of commonly used water/sinks and medical equipment may be collected and tested. The reason that samples may be collected in these areas is

because Pseudomonas likes to grow in moist environments.

It may be necessary to keep patients who have Pseudomonas on their skin or who have developed a Pseudomonas infection in an area where their contact with other patients is limited. This is to ensure that the infection is not spread between patients.

### **The importance of hand hygiene**

Hand hygiene is an important way of preventing and controlling Pseudomonas infection. Hand washing should be carried out before and after contact with the patient and their environment.

Hands should be wet before applying liquid soap. The soap should be rubbed vigorously into all areas to produce suds/lather. The hands should be rinsed under running water and dried thoroughly.