

Welcome to your relaunched Primary Care newsletter!

WELCOME to our relaunched Infection Prevention and Control Team Newsletter for GP practices.

The Infection Prevention and Control Team, (IP&C) would like to introduce themselves and highlight the practitioners who will be supporting you. Michelle Bell, Lucy Champion, Lucy Watkins and Lisa Eastmead-Hoare will be your main contacts with regards to IP&C.

You may have met one or two of them already, if not face-to-face, then via email.

Our GP newsletter will be released on a bi-monthly basis, providing updates in relation to outbreaks, educational resources, training days etc.

NHS Somerset ICB has a redesigned website and our



IPC webpages are currently being updated. We are developing a specific section for Primary Care education and resources. More downloadable documents will be added to help you on your

IPC journey so don't worry if it looks a bit sparse!

The IPC team would like to wish you a safe and Merry Christmas, with best wishes for 2024.

Guidance on the wearing of facemasks within Primary Care

According to current guidance, health and care settings can now plan the use of non-pharmaceutical interventions, such as mask-wearing and enhanced ventilation, based on local prevalence and levels of risk.

- Staff members should consider wearing a facemask as part of personal protective equipment

required for transmission-based precautions when clinically caring for patients who have a suspected or confirmed acute respiratory infection including COVID-19. This is likely to include settings where untriaged patients may present.

- Patients with respiratory symptoms attending emergency treatment should be advised to

wear a facemask/covering, if tolerated, or be offered one on arrival. All other patients are not required to wear a facemask unless it is a personal preference.

For assistance in risk assessment and adherence to these guidelines, we have developed an [assessment tool](#). This tool aligns with the most current government guidance.

Treatment of asymptomatic bacteriuria (ASB) may cause harm

- **DO NOT** use urine dipsticks in diagnosis of UTI in older people. ASB increases in the elderly and can give a positive dipstick result
- **DO NOT** treat ASB in the elderly—treating ASB increases antibiotic side effects and antimicrobial resistance
- Elderly patients are at a

greater risk of infection with C.Difficile. This risk increases after a course of antibiotics

- Do not perform urine dipstick on catheter urines. Presence of catheter itself produces pyuria and causes a positive dipstick result
- Cloudy or foul-smelling urine may not be indicative of

a UTI. Investigate other causes such as dehydration, kidney stones, or certain diets

- Unnecessary use of antibiotics can cause harm including side effects such as vomiting and C.difficile, as well as increasing the risk of antibiotic resistance.

Dates for your diary

Our next virtual IPC clinic will be held on Wednesday 7 February at 2pm-4pm, and rather than booking a slot, you can access the clinic via this [link](#) where you will be able to ask IPC related questions to one of our practitioners.

LMC Lead Nurse Forum meetings

The LMC run Lead Nurse Forum meetings and the next one is planned for Wednesday 14 February at 2pm to 3.30pm. Please click this [link](#) to join. Future dates are listed below:

25/04/24 2-3.30pm
12/06/24 2-3.30pm
12/09/24 2-3.30pm
20/11/24 2-2.30pm

Scabies

WE have seen several scabies outbreaks in our care homes requiring whole home treatment.

Your practice may see either staff or relatives. You can see which care homes have outbreaks using the Somerset Dashboard.

You can contact the [Somerset ICB Infection Control Team](#) for additional advice if you require it.

For more information: [Scabies resource pack](#)