

WHAT SERVICES DO THE STANDARDS APPLY TO?

These standards have been designed to apply to all community health and social care services outside the acute hospital setting.

Examples of these services include but are not limited to:

- ambulance services,
- care delivered in the home,
- general practices,
- dental practices,
- residential services for older people and people with a disability,
- day care services,
- pharmacies.



The National Standards and other supporting material are available to download from www.hiqa.ie

WHAT CAN YOU DO?

Everyone has a role to play in preventing and controlling infections in community health and social care settings.

We can all take measures to protect ourselves and others from infection.

These include:

- Cleaning your hands and asking staff if they have done the same.
- If you cough or sneeze, cover your mouth and nose with a tissue, dispose of tissue and wash your hands or use an alcohol hand-rub gel.
- Ensure you get all necessary vaccinations.
- Ask questions and voice any concerns you may have about infection prevention and control to the people caring for you.
- Always follow the advice of a qualified healthcare professional when taking medicines such as antibiotics.

CONTACT US

For more information please contact the HIQA standards team:

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Your guide to the National standards for infection prevention and control in community services.



WHAT IS THE PURPOSE OF THESE NATIONAL STANDARDS?

The Health Information and Quality Authority (HIQA) has developed specific national standards to help prevent and control healthcare-associated infections in community health and social care services in Ireland.



WHAT ARE HEALTHCARE-ASSOCIATED INFECTIONS?

Healthcare-associated infections develop either as a direct result of healthcare interventions, such as medical or surgical treatment, or from being in contact with a health or social care setting. They can have a huge impact on people, causing distress and anxiety, serious illness, disability and in some cases even death.

WHAT DO THE STANDARDS MEAN FOR ME?

You are provided with information and involved in decisions about your care to help prevent, control and manage healthcare-associated infections and antimicrobial resistance.

Your rights to privacy and confidentiality are respected when your information is being shared within and between services.

Your risk of acquiring an infection is reduced by staff:



adhering to hand hygiene practices



following policies, procedures and best practice in infection prevention and control



making sure that all areas of their premises are clean and fit-for-purpose



disposing of waste materials appropriately



safely preparing and serving your food in a clean environment.

WHAT IS ANTIMICROBIAL STEWARDSHIP?

Today, many common infections are more difficult to treat as they are resistant to antimicrobial medication, including commonly used antibiotics. This is in part due to the overuse and misuse of antibiotics. Antimicrobial stewardship is about:

- only taking antibiotics when needed and as prescribed, and
- ensuring that every person receives
 - the right antibiotics
 - for the right infection type
 - at the right time.



If you have an infection that you do not need antimicrobial (such as antibiotic) treatment for, you are advised about how to manage this infection yourself at home.