

11 October 2011

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Media Release

Tackling infections at the RUH

Staff at the Royal United Hospital will be promoting the benefits of good hand hygiene in killing infections next week.

Among the initiatives taking place during the hospital's Infection Control Week, which starts on Monday (17 October), matrons will be demonstrating to staff and patients on all wards the importance of washing your hands correctly using 'glowboxes'.

Glowboxes use UV light to simulate the appearance of bacteria on hands which have been washed using a special cream.

Leaflets will also be given out, highlighting how hands are the biggest spreaders of germs and how handwashing lowers the transmission of diarrhoea and colds. Hands should be washed frequently during the day with hot water and soap to prevent spreading germs, and especially after you've been to the toilet and before and after food preparation.

A stand will be in place outside the hospital's Lansdown Restaurant for members of the public to talk to staff about Norovirus, the winter vomiting bug. The bug can be brought into the hospital by infected visitors and can have devastating effects as it spreads rapidly, leading to wards being closed to new admissions and visiting restrictions introduced.

Anyone who has had diarrhoea or vomiting is urged to stay away from the hospital until they are clear of symptoms for at least 48 hours.

Senior Infection Control Nurse Yvonne Pritchard says: "Our infection control week is all about promoting the simple measures everyone in the hospital environment - whether they are staff, patients or visitors - can take to keep infections away.

"We have had a lot of success in tackling bugs at the RUH and want everyone to make sure they do their bit so that we can keep infection rates as low as possible.

"Hand hygiene is important for all, and everyone should make sure that they wash their hands with the alcohol gel available on entry to and exit from a ward."

The RUH has consistently reduced the occurrence of two of the most well-known healthcare associated infections, MRSA bacteraemias and Clostridium difficile. Cases of MRSA fell from 17 in 2009/10 to two in 2010/11, while Clostridium difficile reduced from 113 to 51 cases during the same period.