Developing a Model for Infection Control in the Independent Healthcare Sector in the United Kingdom

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ABSTRACT

The aim of the infection control model

THE AIM OF THE INFECTION CONTROL MODEL

In 2006 it was decided that bpas would employ its own infection control nurse to lead and develop the service. Using the Department of Health’s initiatives and the independent healthcare regulatory body’s recommendations, a tailor made infection control model was developed for bpas.

Initially the aims of the model were to:
- assess our current standards of infection control through audit and make improvements where necessary
- provide infection control education to all clinical staff
- develop and implement relevant infection control policies, procedures and guidelines
- set up an infection control committee

THE MODEL

It was decided that the bpas infection control model would consist of:
- Audit • Surveillance • Education and training
- Policy development • Provision of information to staff and clients
- Development of a link nurse programme
- Development of an infection control committee

DEVELOPING THE MODEL

As many of the United Kingdom’s infection control initiatives have been aimed at NHS organisations, independent healthcare providers have had to make their own decisions on the type of infection control services that they would require. Based on this information bpas decided to develop its own model for an infection control service that would meet our needs. Figure 1 shows a jigsaw chart that represents ideas that emerged in a brainstorming session, some of which were incorporated into our infection control model.

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EVALUATING THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE MODEL

This graph (figure 3) illustrates the mean and range of the infection control environmental audit scores from 2006 to 2008. The graph shows that the average scores have improved and the reduced range demonstrates that the lower scoring units have made significant improvements to their scores.

COMMUNICATION AND EDUCATION

To improve communications we developed a double page infection control bulletin (see figure 4). This provided up to date information on infection control at bpas and was also used as an education tool.

THE FUTURE

The infection control model developed at bpas has now been in place for 3 years and significant improvements have been made. The profile of infection control throughout the organisation has been raised, staff feel empowered and supported during audits and many more staff are contacting infection control for advice. It is anticipated that the model will now be expanded to include some research activities, and an e-learning package is being developed to enable more staff to access infection control education.