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DR FOSTER HEALTH TO PUBLISH INFECTION CONTROL FEATURE MARCH 23 2009

[Dr Foster Health](#) will publish a selection of its latest hospital infection control data in an online feature on March 23 2009.

Dr Foster Health is releasing the Infection Control feature in anticipation of the [Health and Social Care Act of 2008](#)'s Code of Practice on April 1 2009. The Act contains guidance about the prevention and control of healthcare associated infections (HCAIs) in UK hospitals.

MRSA and fear of picking up MRSA or other "superbug" infection is the public's main concern about NHS hospital care, according to a UK-wide BBC poll. Of the 1,040 people questioned, 40 per cent mentioned the risk of potentially deadly infections such as MRSA and Clostridium difficile as their top NHS concern (1).

Despite the concerns raised by those surveyed 82 per cent said they were proud of the health service, with around 50 per cent saying it was still "the envy of the world".

Figures from the Health Protection Agency for April 2007 to March 2008 showed that the number of MRSA cases fell to 4,438 or 588 above the target. An 18 per cent reduction in the rate of Clostridium difficile infection was also seen in the third quarter of 2008, compared with the previous quarter (2).

Dr Foster Health Infection Control feature will provide a timely and independent view of how well the NHS is meeting the challenge of reducing hospital acquired infections and includes answers to the following questions:

- Are hospitals screening patients for MRSA at pre-admission assessment clinics?
- What kinds of patient groups do hospitals screen for MRSA?
- Do hospitals have a dedicated isolation ward with regards to MRSA-colonised* patients?
- Do hospitals employ an antibiotic pharmacist to guide the use of certain antibiotics for Clostridium difficile-infected patients?
- What method of MRSA screening do hospitals use when admitting patients through Accident & Emergency (A&E)?

* Colonised means that patients have MRSA living on their bodies. They can bring in MRSA into a hospital, where it can infect other patients by entering a surgical wound, for example.

(1) NHS at 60- "MRSA superbug infections are patients biggest fear" (BBC/ ICM Research - CATI Fieldwork: June 6-8 2008)

(2) Health Protection Agency Financial Year - Annual reports and rates of MRSA bacteraemia (April 2001 - March 2008)

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Dr Foster Health is the leading innovator in benchmarking public services and communicating information about services to the public. We produce authoritative and independent guides to health services in the public and private sectors. Our aim is not only to inform, but also to act as a catalyst for change.

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