

HEALTH AND SPORT COMMITTEE

HEALTH HAZARDS IN THE HEALTHCARE ENVIRONMENT

SUBMISSION FROM The Royal College of Pathologists (RCPATH)

- **What is the scale of health problems acquired from the healthcare environment in Scotland?**

RCPATH is not in a position to comment about the provision in any of the Scottish Boards or on the issues that affect them particularly.

RCPATH will be interested in being part of the solutions given the expertise of our fellows in understanding the causes and consequences of Healthcare Associated Infections (HAI). [Medical microbiologists](#) have a central role in anti-microbial stewardship, and careful and appropriate use of these drugs helps limit HAI. The Scottish Government published a 5 year strategy for 2016-21 (<https://www2.gov.scot/Resource/0050/00507589.pdf>) with more information on this page - <https://www2.gov.scot/Topics/Health/Services/Preventing-Healthcare-Infections> which should address this question.

- **What/where are the main risks?**

We cannot comment on specific clinical risk. The risks associated with HAI are well described and have been recent topics of public interest. The current incident illustrates the concerns expressed by the healthcare community in general and pathologists with specific HAI expertise in particular.

- **Are the current systems and processes in Scotland adequate for monitoring, reporting, eliminating or controlling these hazards?**

RCPATH is aware of the risks associated with HAI and infection control and the public health in general. To that end, RCPATH is supporting a course this year - Engineering Aspects of Infection Control, in July and September 2019, in Wessex (<https://www.rcpath.org/event/engineering-aspects-of-infection-control-5.html>), which explores practical infection control in hospitals. We support the development of professionals with regard to all of these aspects of healthcare via Combined Infection Training, Medical Microbiology and Medical Virology postgraduate medical curricula. RCPATH is not in party to data that would allow us to comment on the achievement of standards in Scotland.

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