

Housekeeper IPC Champions

Introduction

A key part of the workforce at Dartford and Gravesham NHS Trust (DGT) is its Clinical and Non-Clinical Housekeepers. They play a vital role in the functioning of a ward by assisting patients, carers, and visitors with non-clinical tasks; communicating with ward staff, to ensure supplies and equipment levels are managed; reporting faults and ensuring cleanliness. They are responsible for making sure the ward and storage is kept clean and organised by tidying stock, cleaning the utility rooms and assisting with ward infection prevention standards.



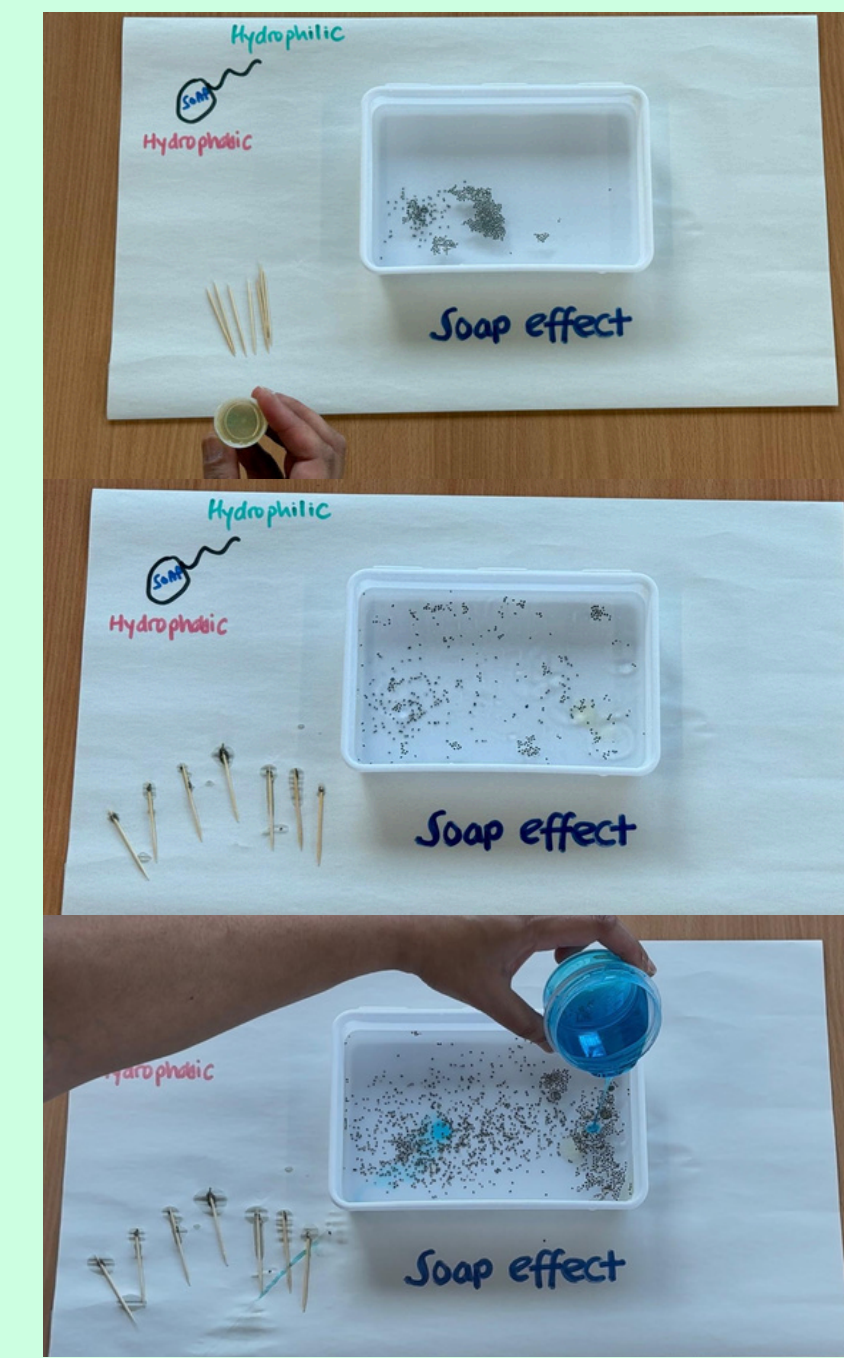
The Infection Prevention & Control team set up and established a Housekeepers' IPC Champions programme from June 2024 to March 2025. This programme was nurse-led via the Director of Infection Prevention & Control (DIPC), with content designed and tailored to the Housekeepers' roles and knowledge requirements, using Gama IQ programme.

Objectives

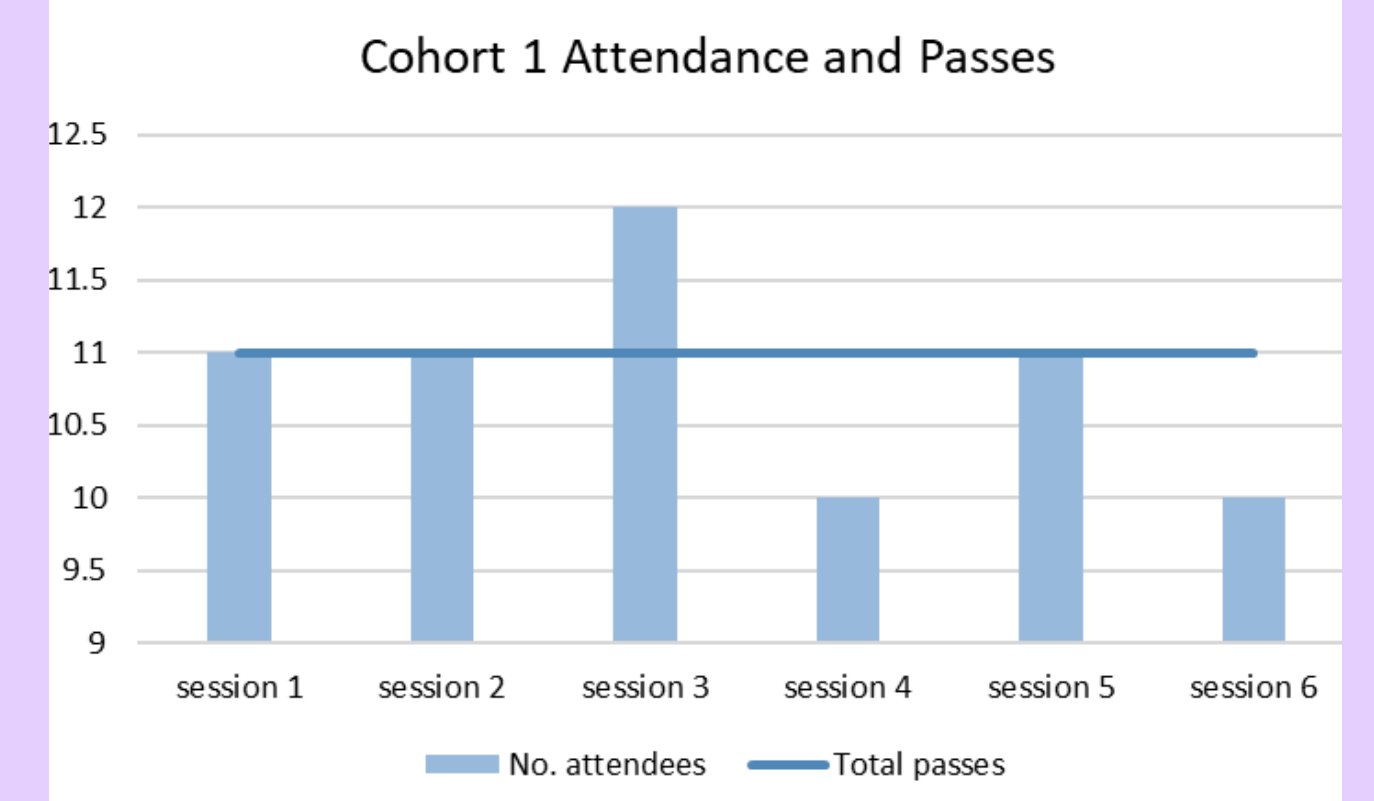
1. Learn about infection prevention and control, why healthcare-associated infections occur and how you can reduce the risk of transmission by implementing standard infection control precautions.
2. Focus on the differences between decontamination, cleaning and disinfection, their intricacies, and how they support environmental hygiene and reducing the risk of hospital-acquired infections.
3. Understand disinfectants, the different types and their activity. Look at what factors influence disinfectant activity and how to interpret disinfectant claims. Use of disinfection in the 'real-world' setting of the healthcare environment.

Methodology

Housekeepers enrolled in a multimodal delivery method, CPD-accredited course, which was bespoke-designed and delivered in-house with sponsorship of hospitality from industry experts. The course structure comprised a combination of online learning with tests (Gama iQ) and six two-hour practical sessions featuring demonstrations, simulations, quizzes, and assessments.

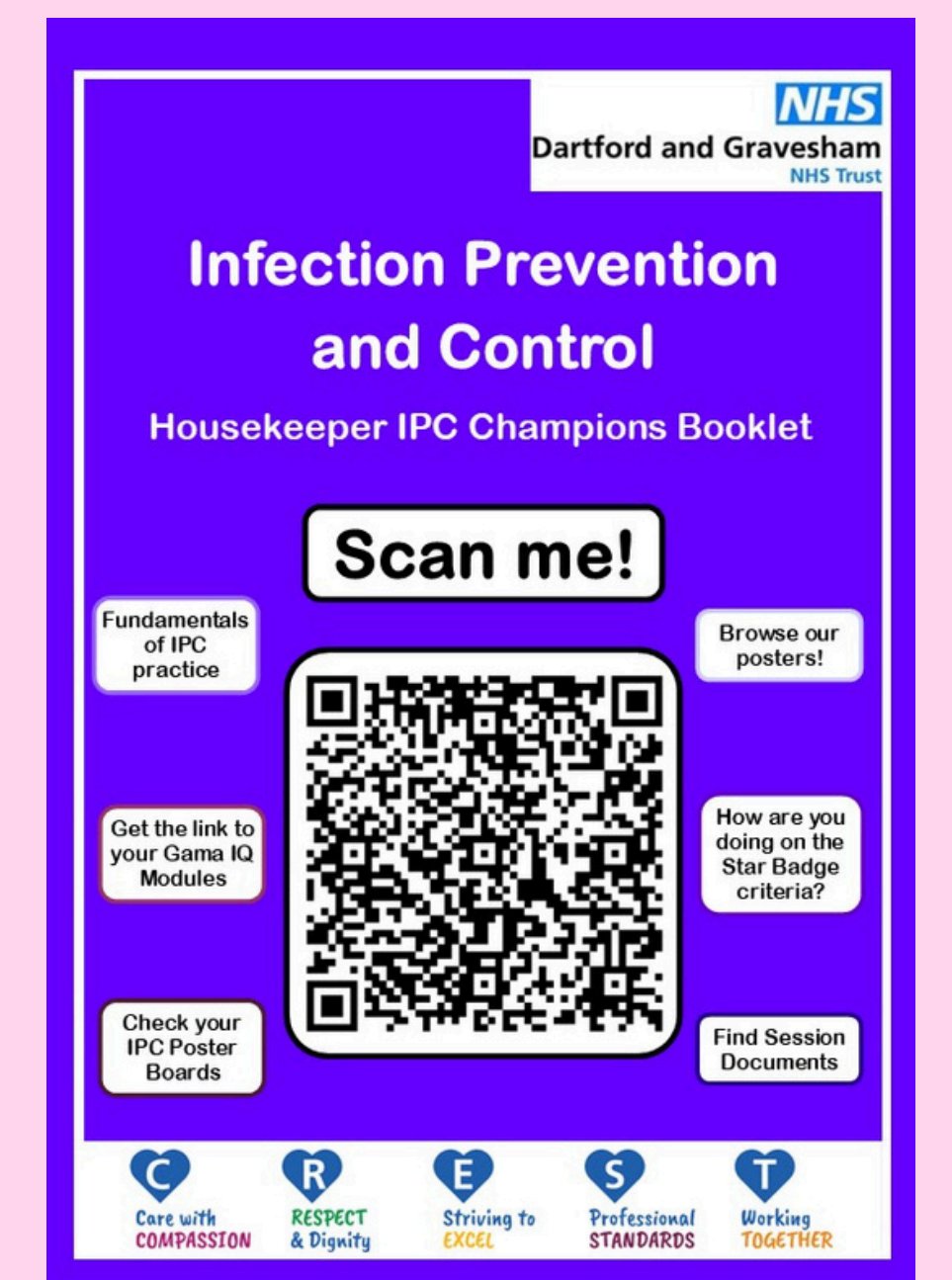


Uptake



Materials

As a team, we have been using www.padlet.com to create materials, references and updates, that the Housekeepers can use at any given time which they have access to via our Infection Prevention and Control Intranet page.



Future Directions

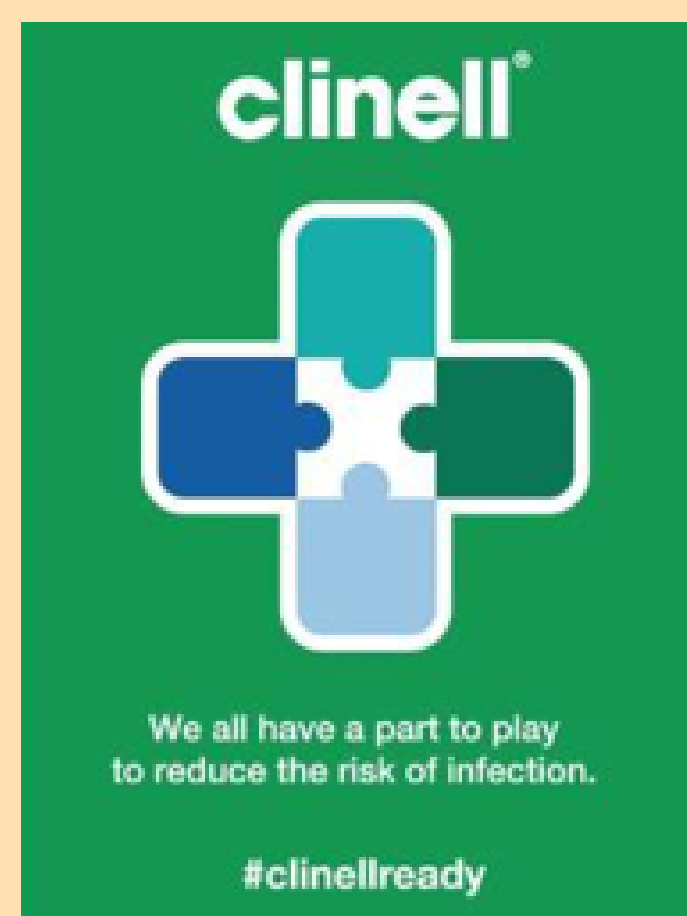
Housekeepers now follow a framework of initiatives which, if consistently maintained, correspond to star ratings based on performance and local standards.

The Housekeepers' star rating badges signify their progression through the course and their adherence to high standards within their ward or department.

Although the cohorts have an end date, as an interactive Infection Prevention & Control team, we are engaging with the Housekeepers by meeting up with them all on a quarterly basis so they can share any issues or innovations with each other, while also receiving the support and guidance from the Infection Prevention & Control Team.

Housekeepers have been given IPC Champions calendars which provides them with a weekly reminder of infection control precautions and methods to check on their wards. They also have access to a Microsoft Teams chat with the team, as well as intranet pages containing helpful information.

Gama IQ Completion badge



Star Rating badge



STAR BADGE CRITERIA	
PPE	
1	Donning and Doffing Stations kept stocked and in all areas required
2	PPE Stock maintained, including all types of FFP3 Masks
Equipment	
1	All green cleaning labels present
2	Commodore are cleaned correctly with the correct wipes
Inventory	
1	Stock levels maintained and expiry dates adhered to
2	Stock kept in the correct storage spaces
3	Hand sanitisers are refilled regularly
Linen / Beds	
1	Linen cupboard kept clear and not overflowing
2	No linen cages to be left in Hospital Street
3	No mattresses to be left in the corridor
4	Matresses to be cleaned have decontamination form and clear plastic bag
Waste	
1	Correct waste segregation managed
2	Sharps bins correctly labelled and not overflowing
Training	
1	Complete the Gama IQ programme
2	Attend at least 5 of the Housekeeper IPC Champion sessions
Winter	
1	Ensure ward / bay closures are made clear
2	Keep visitors books up to date
Meal Service	
1	Ensure wipes are on patient meal trays
2	Make sure patients have access to water to keep hydrated
Environment	
1	Ward is kept clutter free at all times
2	Any faults are reported through the PFI Helpdesk
3	Curtains are changed every 6 months and Serco informed
IPC Posters	
1	IPC Notice Board is kept up to date
2	Hydration posters are in all toilets
3	Isolation posters are correct on side room doors when required

Outcome

As a result of the program, the hospital is already experiencing the standardisation of cleaning protocols and improved access to cleaning resources. One example is the decontamination of body spills and improved availability of spill kits, to enable incidents to be resolved quickly and effectively. Another is the shared use of equipment in the patient environment, such as mattresses, that are kept clean and infection transmission prevented. Both improvements were brought forward by part of Cohort one.

Evaluation

Testimonial from participant:

"I have enjoyed the Housekeeper's sessions and found it interesting to learn new things about IPC. The games were good and the training from Gama colleagues was great and was really interactive with all of their products. I have taken away the things that I should be doing and it has given me assurance that the job I am doing is right. I have more confidence to answer questions from colleagues on IPC things and challenge them especially when it comes to cleaning. Only thing to improve is can we have some shorter names for the germs!"

Word Cloud from Evaluation Forms



For further information

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Acknowledgements

Gama Healthcare