

## "Are Infection Control Link Workers Valued?"



## Infection Control Link Nurses:

The concept of Infection Control Link Nurses was developed in the USA and was introduced into a hospital in Bradford in 1988.

## Link nurses-the background:

- Ching & Seto (1990) Education programme in Hong Kong.
- Horton (1993) Developed QIC programme.
- Millward et al (1993) Link nurses improved audit scores.

## Link Nurses- background:

- Charalambous (1995) Closes the theory practice gap.
- Teare & Peacock (1996) Raised profile of IC.
- Hill et al (2001) Improves communications and enhances practice standards.

## What is the role?

- Liaison
- Resource person
- Assist in education
- Participate in ICT activities-staff/patients
- Participate in policy development
- Surveillance
- Equipment



## National Audit Office 2000:

- Link nurses not substitutes for ICNs
- Increase awareness
- Detection of Outbreaks
- 59% of Trusts (UK) use link nurse system
- 7% tried but abandoned (UK)
- 18% reporting not successful (UK)

### Cascade Hand Hygiene Training Kit



Gibraltar Health Authority = Infection Prevention and Control Link worker.



Late 2007 saw the creation of the G.H.A infection link workers.

### Preparation of Link workers:

- Self nomination or selection by ward manager.
- Monthly meeting with ICNs
- E-line self-learning work
- Visits to laboratory, Sterile services
- Assessment of future learning needs.



### Link workers:

- A ward and Department link worker ,plus a deputy were co-opted into the group.
- Initially the group met every 2 weeks, for 2 hours. This lasted for a few months, but attendance started to drop, due to low ward staffing levels and night duty rosters.
- Early in 2008, a revival was started, this time the group met monthly for 2 hours. The group is growing.

### Link workers:

- The majority of link workers are from St.Bernard's Hospital,

Mental Health: KV5 Hospital and also The Community Mental Health Team.

Primary Care Centre.

E.C.A, The Elderly Care Agency.

G.H.A Ambulance service.



### Link workers:



On the 22<sup>nd</sup> and 23<sup>rd</sup> May this year 2008, the team had their 1<sup>st</sup> Infection Prevention and control seminar.

Guest speakers were from the G.H.A and Environmental Health Agency, plus the IPCNs.



## Link workers:

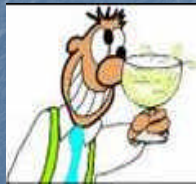


## Link workers:



## A Valuable Asset?

- Raises the profile of infection control
- Eyes and ears of the ICT
- Must be supported in the role
- Incentives
- Secondments
- Excellent source for recruitment into ICN jobs.



## Summary

**Infection Control has changed dramatically over the last few years and will continue to do so, irrevocably and for the better.**

**The provision of an Infection Control Link worker Network , enables the G.H.A to cascade training which reflects the latest government initiatives and ensures that this is reflected in care practice.**

**ICLNs are key to ensuring that Infection Prevention and Control is embedded fully into standards of care .**

## Link workers:

ARE THEY VALUED WHERE YOU WORK ??



Thank-you.