

# Healthcare Associated Infections 2019 Annual Report

An Official Statistics publication for Scotland

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## About this release

This release is by Antimicrobial Resistance and Healthcare Associated Infection (ARHAI) Scotland, part of NHS National Services Scotland (NSS). It reflects the work undertaken on healthcare associated infection (HCAI) prevention and reducing antimicrobial resistance (AMR) during 2019. Data are provided for common HCAs, which are an important cause of severe illness, death, and higher treatment costs. The published data can be used to improve care of patients.

Prevention and effective management of urinary tract infection (UTI) is an important way of preventing Gram-negative bacteraemia, a life threatening complication. In Scotland the most common cause of UTI is *Escherichia coli* bacteria. Bacteria resistant to Carbapenem antibiotics are known as carbapenemase-producing organisms (CPOs). These are a growing concern, as there are few antibiotics left for treatment of these resistant infections.

*Staphylococcus aureus* bacteraemia (SAB) is a life-threatening bloodstream infection. *Clostridioides difficile* infection (CDI) can cause diarrhoeal illness, especially in vulnerable patients who have received antibiotics. Surgical site infections (SSI) are bacterial infections of surgical operation sites which can have serious outcomes for patients. Intensive care units (ICUs) treat the most severely ill or injured patients, which makes these patients at increased risk of infection.

This release also details the improvement work to prevent these infections.

## Main Points

In relation to surveillance of HCAI:

- There has been an increase in the annual incidence of *Escherichia coli* urinary infections, and in carbapenemase-producing organisms (CPOs) over the last five years.
- There has been a decrease over the last five years in the annual incidence of:
  - *Staphylococcus aureus* bacteraemias (SAB),
  - *Clostridioides difficile* infection (CDI) in healthcare, community, and in patients aged 15 years and over,
  - Caesarean section surgical site infection (SSI),
  - HCAI in intensive care units (ICU).
- In 2019, 213 healthcare outbreaks and incidents were reported, compared to 170 in the previous year.

The intelligence obtained in the support of outbreaks, incidents, and surveillance systems is used to develop a knowledge base to better prevent, prepare for, and control outbreaks, reduce nosocomial infections, and contain AMR. In 2019, ARHAI Scotland:

- Continued to review and develop guidance documents for the prevention and control of infection across all care settings.
- Published best practice recommendations within Chapter 3 of the [National Infection Prevention and Control Manual \(NIPCM\)](#). These are to be implemented in the event of a healthcare water-associated or healthcare ventilation-associated infection incident or outbreak.
- Re-launched the 'Stay at home' campaign in partnership with Health Scotland, providing information to the public on preventing the spread of Norovirus.
- Launched the children's hydration campaign 'Think2drinkH2O' and evaluated the adult hydration campaigns.

## Background

The purpose of this report is to present the outputs of ARHAI Scotland health protection programmes to reduce HCAI, including surveillance and development of guidance and tools. This report details the progress made by ARHAI Scotland to support the reduction of HCAs in NHSScotland as well as providing data to inform local and national HCAI reduction activities.

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## Further Information

Find out more in the [full report](#). The data from this publication is available to download from our web page along with a background information and metadata document.

The next release of this publication will be September 2021.



### ARHAI Scotland and Official Statistics

ARHAI Scotland, a division of NHS National Services Scotland, works at the very heart of the health service across Scotland, delivering services critical to frontline patient care and supporting the efficient and effective operation of NHSScotland. Our official statistics publications are produced to a high professional standard and comply with the Code of Practice for Statistics. [Further information about our statistics.](#)