Healthcare Infections, Medical Device Usage and Antimicrobial Usage in Welsh Hospitals

Public Health Wales has published the Welsh results of an ECDC Point Prevalence survey on healthcare associated infections (HAI), the use of medical devices and antimicrobial usage in hospitals carried out during November 2011. 9,094 in-patients from all seven health boards in Wales, plus Velindre NHS Trust, participated in the survey; 75% of the patients surveyed were in acute hospitals with 25% in community hospitals. Females accounted for 55.5% of the patient population. Sixty-six per cent of patients were ≥65 years of age (median age for females of 77 years, and 72 years for males). Rates of HAI in Wales have dropped since the last survey in 2006 from 6.4% to 4% in 2011 although slightly different definitions were used for each survey. Urinary tract infections (20.9%) and surgical site infections (SSI) (19.6%) were the commonest HAI identified overall, followed by gastro-intestinal infections (11.5%), pneumonia (11%), and bloodstream infections (8.9%). The results also show that 37% of patients surveyed had at least one medical device in place such as a cannula, catheter or intubation, and that 50% of the urinary tract infections identified were associated with the use of a urinary catheter. The results of the antimicrobial usage survey showed that 27.4% of patients were prescribed one or more antibiotic with overall usage highest in acute hospitals (32.7%) and in the 65-79 years age group. The commonest antimicrobials used in acute hospitals were combinations of penicillins including beta-lactamase inhibitors (32.0%), imidazole derivatives (12.7%), beta-lactamase resistant penicillins (9.2%), and macrolides (8.5%). In non-acute hospitals the commonest agents used were trimethoprim and derivatives (22.2%) and combinations of penicillins including beta-lactamase inhibitors (16.3%). Overall 48.4% of antimicrobials were given for a community-acquired infection, 31.1% for hospital-acquired infection, and 15.1% for medical or surgical prophylaxis. In the acute sector the commonest sites of infection requiring antimicrobials were respiratory (24.1%), skin, soft tissue, bone and joints (16.3%), and urinary tract (12.5%). In the non-acute sector the commonest sites were the UT (23.3%), skin, soft tissue, bone and joints (19.7%), and respiratory (18.7%). The full report can be downloaded from the Public Health Wales website at: http://www.wales.nhs.uk/sites3/page.cfm?orgid=379&pid=56207