

## Infection Control Annual Statement

June 2025

### Purpose

This annual statement will be generated each year in accordance with the requirements of The Health and Social Care Act 2008 *Code of Practice on the prevention and control of infections and related guidance*. It summarises:

- Any infection transmission incidents and any action taken (these will have been reported in accordance with our Significant Event procedure)
- Details of any infection control audits undertaken and actions undertaken
- Details of any risk assessments undertaken for prevention and control of infection
- Details of staff training
- Any review and update of policies, procedures and guidelines related to infection prevention and control

### Infection Prevention and Control (IPC) Lead

The Walcote Practice has one Lead for Infection Prevention and Control: Dr Nicholas Hillier, Medical Director. The IPC Lead is supported by: Angela Ward, Practice Manager.

Dr Nicholas Hillier commissioned an IPC assessment and training visit to The Walcote Practice from an IPC expert organisation, Infection Prevention Solutions, in August 2024. This followed on from visits by West Hampshire CCG's (WHCCG) IPC experts in previous years - these were all also commissioned by The Walcote Practice since it opened in 2015, in order to ensure continued optimal IPC practices. Dr Nicholas Hillier keeps updated on infection prevention practice.

### Infection Transmission Incidents (Significant Events)

Significant events (which may involve examples of good practice as well as challenging events) are investigated in detail to see what can be learnt and to indicate changes that might lead to future improvements. All significant events are reviewed at the regular Practice management meetings and learning is cascaded to all relevant staff.

There have been no significant events relating to cleanliness or infection control in the past year.

There have been no complaints made regarding cleanliness or infection control.

### Infection Prevention Audit and Actions

#### Main Surgery

The Walcote Practice is a Private GP Practice which opened on 1<sup>st</sup> June 2015. The main surgery is located in a serviced office building in Winchester city centre. The original consultation/minor surgery room was designed, fitted and equipped with infection prevention and control (IPC) in mind, and as a result all furnishings and equipment used are in line with required IPC standards. In October 2018, a second consultation room was opened at the same premises by The Walcote Practice, with a third consultation room also being opened at the same premises in January 2022. All consultation rooms have been designed, fitted and equipped to the same standards.

In July 2015, Dr Nicholas Hillier commissioned an IPC assessment and training visit from Mr Matthew Richardson, an IPC expert from WHCCG. Mr Richardson assessed all areas of the Practice and produced a report of his findings. This included a list of recommendations to further optimise our IPC practices. These recommendations were implemented. Follow up assessment and training visits by an IPC expert (all commissioned by The Walcote Practice from WHCCG) were conducted in 2017, 2019 and 2022. All visits resulted in the Practice being found to be compliant in all areas, with several areas graded as outstanding. Some minor recommendations were made, all of which were implemented.

As an external IPC expert visit was no longer available through WHCCG in 2024, The Walcote Practice commissioned the services of an alternate organisation, Infection Prevention Solutions, in August 2024. An inspection visit was carried out at both the main and branch surgeries - suggested additional improvements and actions have been implemented.

#### Branch Surgery

In January 2023, The Walcote Practice opened a branch surgery within Healthshare Clinic Winchester (now Medicana Clinic Winchester), a private secondary healthcare clinic on the outskirts of Winchester. The clinical room utilised by The Walcote Practice as a consultation room at this premises was designed, fitted and equipped by Healthshare as part of their secondary healthcare clinic, with IPC standards in mind. Prior to opening, The Walcote Practice also carried out our own risk assessment and consultation room set-up assessment, again with IPC standards in mind. Cleaning at the branch surgery is carried out by Medicana's cleaning contractors and is audited quarterly by staff of The Walcote Practice. The branch surgery is included in audits relating to Infection Control and other standards in line with The Walcote Practice Audit Timetable.

#### Management has carried out a series of IPC audits throughout the previous year, as described below:

Regular audits of **Domestic & Clinical Cleaning** were undertaken at both surgeries by the administration team and results analysed and filed. Audits show primarily high standards with any minor issues immediately addressed with the relevant cleaning company and rectified quickly.

An audit on **Asepsis** was undertaken by Angela Ward, Practice Manager, in November 2024. Best practice was being followed in all areas, therefore no changes were required.

Audits on **Hand Hygiene Environment and Observation** were undertaken by Angela Ward in November 2024. Good practice was being followed throughout.

Audits on **Standard Precautions and Contact (Isolation) Precautions** were undertaken by Angela Ward in November 2024. All precautions employed were compliant.

An audit on **Minor Surgery** was undertaken by Dr Nicholas Hillier in January 2025 looking at all minor surgery and cryotherapy cases undertaken at The Walcote Practice in 2024. Over 547 procedures were conducted during this time. There was only one minor post-operative wound infection observed or reported at first review, resulting in an infection rate of less than 0.2% which is excellent. This post-operative wound infection was treated and demonstrated good wound healing.

An audit on **Phlebotomy and Sharps** was undertaken by Angela Ward in July 2024. All practices were found to be compliant. No sharps injuries have been sustained since The Walcote Practice opened in June 2015.

An audit on **Vaccine Storage and Transportation** was undertaken by Angela Ward in June 2024. All practices were compliant.

An **Annual Infection Prevention and Control (IPC) Audit** was undertaken by Angela Ward in May 2024 for each surgery individually. Each surgery achieved an overall compliance score of 100%.

The results of each of the above audits were discussed at the corresponding regular Practice management meeting, with any learnings and actions filtered to relevant staff.

The Walcote Practice will continue to undertake each of the above audits in the following year to ensure that all areas of infection control are regularly monitored and that excellent IPC practices are maintained.

## Risk Assessments

Risk assessments are carried out so that best practice can be established and then followed. In the last year the following IPC-related risk assessments were carried out or the topics were reviewed:

**Blood borne virus/ sharps/ needlestick risk:** Risk assessment review undertaken which confirmed that appropriate prevention/control/monitoring measures are in place including use of safe sharps with safety-shielded needles. Blood spill kits are available. Nil changes were required.

**COSHH:** COSHH assessment checklists have been reviewed and updated. The appropriate measures for prevention/control/monitoring are in place, including clinical waste management.

**Curtain cleaning:** The Walcote Practice's main surgery uses wipeable privacy screens which are cleaned regularly as part of our cleaning schedule. The window blinds are very low risk and therefore do not require a particular cleaning regime, other than regular vacuuming to maintain cleanliness. The branch surgery uses disposable curtains which are replaced regularly - the expiry date is listed on the curtain.

**Immunisation:** As a Practice we ensure that all appropriate staff are up to date with Hepatitis B immunisations and are offered any occupational health vaccinations applicable to their role (i.e. MMR, Seasonal Flu). We offer vaccinations at the Practice and via home visits to our patient population.

**Legionella (Water) Risk Assessment:** The Practice water safety risk assessment, including that for the branch surgery, was reviewed to ensure that the water supply continues not to pose a risk to patients, visitors or staff. Safe practices have been continually maintained.

**Minor Surgery Room Requirements:** During the set-up of each consultation and/or minor surgery room in the main and branch surgeries, the directors carefully optimised these in line with the NHS Networks Infection Prevention Practice Checklist for Minor Surgery. These high standards have been maintained.

**Sharps bins:** The use of temporary closure flaps on sharps bins was risk assessed due to their differing locations and clinical usage frequencies. Practices were optimised to maximise both patient and staff health and safety. The same practices have been implemented across all Practice consultation rooms.

**Toys:** We provide only wipeable toys in the waiting and consultation rooms, which are cleaned regularly.

**Portable Fans:** This risk assessment has been reviewed to ensure that, if portable fans are required on hot days, any potential IPC risks are minimised.

**Assistance Dogs:** The Walcote Practice has thoroughly risk assessed the use of assistance dogs at both surgeries and staff are trained in the infection control measures and cleaning measures to employ, should an assistance dog attend either surgery with its owner.

## Training

Each team member receives IPC induction training upon commencing provision of services to Walcote Health Ltd.

Each person also receives IPC Refresher Training annually.

Various elements of IPC training are also delivered throughout the year and training records kept.

## Policies & Procedures

The IPC-related Policies & Procedures (P&Ps) which have been written, updated or reviewed in the last year include but are not limited to:

- Health & Safety P&P
- Infection Control & Decontamination P&P
- Legionella P&P
- Needlestick Injury & Sharps P&P
- Infectious Diseases P&P
- Safe Specimen Handling P&P
- Staff Immunisations P&P
- Risk Management P&P
- Significant Event/Critical Incident Review P&P
- Vaccine Storage & Transportation P&P
- Accident & Incident Reporting P&P
- Health and Safety Training P&P
- Personal & Protective Equipment (PPE) P&P
- Quality Assurance & Good Governance P&P
- Pandemic P&P

P&Ps relating to Infection Prevention and Control are available to all staff and are reviewed and updated annually. All of these P&Ps are also amended on an ongoing basis as current advice, guidance and/or legislation changes.

## Responsibility

It is the responsibility of each individual to be familiar with this Statement and their roles and responsibilities under this.

## Review date

June 2026

## Responsibility for Review

The Infection Prevention and Control Lead and the Practice Manager are responsible for reviewing and producing the Annual Statement.

Signed by: 

**Dr Nicholas Hillier MA(Cantab) MBBS MRCGP DRANZCOG DOccMed**

Medical Director and Lead GP, The Walcote Practice

For and on behalf of The Walcote Practice