



Treatment Safety Update

Supporting safer healthcare



Welcome to the September 2020 edition of ACC's Treatment Safety update

The few months since we last updated you have been a period of significant change, resulting in huge pressure on our health sector.

As New Zealanders we can all be proud of the way we have worked together to respond to the challenge of COVID-19, and of our health sector, for adapting so quickly over this time.

Despite this period of change, we remain committed to working with you on initiatives to reduce the incidence and severity of treatment injuries. We know that due to the resources that are committed to the COVID-19 response, some of this activity may have to adapt or slow down, and we are continuing to talk to our partners in the sector about this.

Below is an update on our initiatives, including some changes we have made to adapt to the challenges of COVID-19.

Dr Nick Kendall's retirement

Dr Nick Kendall, Manager Treatment Safety, retired from ACC in mid-July. Nick unfortunately experienced an injury in June requiring major surgery and decided it was time for him to focus on his own health and rehabilitation. Nick's significant knowledge and expertise in treatment safety will be sorely missed.

We remain committed to the work we are doing to support the safety of treatment, in collaboration with our partners and stakeholders in the wider sector. We'll be taking our time to consider plans for the leadership of our treatment safety work programme and will provide updates on this.

If you have any questions about treatment safety please contact Injury Prevention Leader NE, Sarah Marshall on sarah.marshall2@acc.co.nz or 021 724 967.

Pressure injury prevention and management

Thousands of people develop a pressure injury every year in New Zealand, even though evidence

tells us they are most often preventable. These injuries come at a significant cost to the health system and impact quality of life for people who are affected. In the most severe cases they can cause death.

In partnership with the health sector the Treatment Safety team has a programme of work underway aimed at reducing the incidence and severity of pressure injuries.

New pressure injury prevention resources now available



The Pressure Injury team recently released the new 'No Pressure' pressure injury prevention resources.

These new resources, available in both online and printed formats, were largely developed out of conversations with the New Zealand Wound Care Society (NZWCS), who had a vision to create a nationally consistent set of prevention resources.

[Read more](#)

New international guidance launched

On 18 May 2020, the New Zealand Wound Care Society Pressure Injury Advisory Group launched the [2019 International Guideline for the Prevention and Treatment of Pressure Ulcers/Injuries: Clinical Practice Guideline](#) in New Zealand.

This is the third edition of the guideline, which aims to develop evidence-based recommendations and good practice statements for the prevention and treatment of pressure injuries for use by health professionals throughout the world.



Updated unit standard available

The New Zealand Qualification Authority (NZQA) unit standard: [Demonstrate knowledge of pressure injuries and pressure area care, and preventive care](#) was updated in April 2020.

This is a level 3 unit standard for people providing services in a health or wellbeing setting. It may be a learning opportunity for the kaiāwhina workforce. Achieving the standard means your knowledge and skills in pressure injury prevention and care are nationally recognised.

Medication Safety

The current focus of ACC's medication safety programme is to reduce the prescribing rate of the anti-seizure medication sodium valproate, and to educate people of child-bearing potential about the risks and benefits of these medications. This will reduce the risk of children being affected by Fetal Anti-Convulsant Syndrome (FACS). FACS can cause physical malformations such as heart defects, cleft palate and spina bifida, as well as learning and behavioural difficulties, and has a life-long impact on children and families.



New prevention resources now available

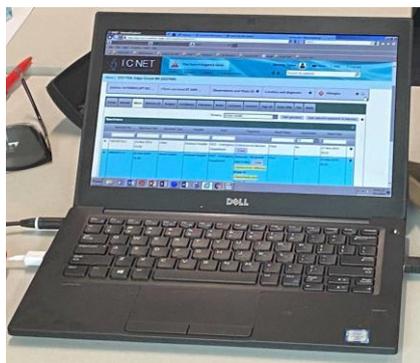
The Medication Safety team has recently released an updated set of information resources developed to prevent FACS.

These resources reflect new developments and research in this field and were reviewed by a panel of experts in general practice, midwifery, obstetrics, psychiatry, neurology, pharmacy and health quality and safety, and representatives of consumer groups for epilepsy and mental health.

[Read more](#)

Healthcare Associated Infection Prevention

ACC has a multi-faceted programme of work underway to reduce the incidence and severity of Healthcare Associated Infections (HAI). This is a high priority for ACC as HAIs are both the most frequent form of patient harm and a common treatment injury claim.



ICNet adapts to support COVID-19 response

In response to the COVID-19 outbreak, the Infections team at ACC has been working with Canterbury DHB and Baxter Healthcare to enable DHBs to access the national instance of the ICNET infection surveillance platform. The platform supports rapid reporting and alerting of patients tested for COVID-19 and other respiratory infections.

[Read more](#)

HAI Guiding Principles work continues

ACC is continuing to work with Synergia and the wider sector to develop a set of Guiding Principles aimed at reducing HAI. These principles will act as a framework and practical resource for all those involved in infection prevention and control, to support the reduction in avoidable HAI.

ACC and Synergia are now working with several healthcare organisations that are interested in piloting the Guiding Principles as they plan and implement infection prevention and control.

The pilot will run for 12 months.

Neonatal Encephalopathy

ACC Treatment Safety priorities include reducing the incidence and severity of neonatal encephalopathy (NE) treatment injuries in New Zealand. We created an NE Taskforce that has completed extensive research and investigation into the causes of NE. This shows that over 50% of cases have preventable features, a finding that has been replicated in other countries such as the United Kingdom. The Taskforce has set the challenging goal of reducing these cases by 25%.

New tool showing signs of success in Bay of Plenty

Bay of Plenty District Health Board recently began using the Newborn Observation Chart and Newborn Early Warning Score (NOC/NEWS) tool for identifying newborn babies at risk of NE and is seeing early signs of benefits for mothers and babies.



[Read more](#)

Surgical Safety

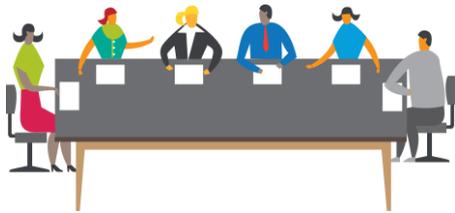
The national implementation into DHBs of the NetworkZ multidisciplinary operating room simulation training programme is progressing.

The programme started in 2016, with about twelve months of set-up and scenario development work. It was then provided consecutively to four cohorts of five DHBs. This involves training and accrediting instructors and helping the DHB to run the programme. Cohorts one and two now require minimal support.



[Read more](#)

Education and prevention programme for surgical mesh



In December 2019, the Ministry of Health released a report '[Hearing and Responding to the Stories of Survivors of Surgical Mesh](#)'. Nineteen recommended actions were included in the report. One of these, Action 10, was that the Ministry in collaboration with ACC will lead an interdisciplinary education, prevention, and training program.

Following the Surgical Mesh Roundtable meeting in early March, the Ministry of Health convened a small working group to ensure progress was being made on this action during the COVID-19 pandemic response. This group has been working on scoping and costing and has liaised with Queensland Health about their experiences.

[Read more](#)

New perineal tear cover guidance

ACC's Clinical Services team has finalised and made available a guide to ACC cover for perineal injuries during childbirth. The guide is now available on our [website](#).

This document summarises scientific research on causes of perineal injuries during childbirth and discusses when ACC can cover these as treatment injuries. It has been developed in collaboration between ACC and representatives from the Royal Australian and New Zealand College of Obstetricians and Gynaecologists (RANZCOG); New Zealand College of



Midwives; Midwifery Department, AUT; and DHB midwives and obstetricians.

It outlines the factors ACC's Cover Assessors and Clinical Advisors consider when assessing whether ACC can provide cover and entitlements for a perineal injury caused during childbirth.

The document is also a useful guide for clinicians in explaining ACC's approach to making cover and entitlement decisions on claims related to perineal injuries. The guide will enable a better understanding of when it may be beneficial to submit a treatment injury claim.

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