



Follow up report

The prevention and control of infections South Western Ambulance Service NHS Trust

Region:

South West

Provider's code:

RYF

Type of organisation:

Ambulance trust

Date of initial inspection:

26 & 27 August 2009

Type of follow up:

Correspondence

Date of follow up:

26 October 2009

Date of publication:

13 January 2010

Introduction

When we inspected the South Western Ambulance Service Trust on 26 & 27 August 2009, we found no evidence that the trust has breached the regulation to protect patients, workers and others from the risks of acquiring a healthcare-associated infection.

Of the 17 measures we inspected, we had no concerns about 16. For the other one measure we found areas for improvement and made a recommendation to the trust.

On 26 October 2009 we contacted the trust to gain assurance that it had implemented this recommendation and asked for further evidence on the 9 November 2009.

Our overall judgement

When we followed up, we found no evidence that the trust has breached the regulation to protect patients, workers and others from the risks of acquiring a healthcare-associated infection.

The trust provided assurance that it had addressed the one area for improvement.

Our findings when we followed up

Measure that the trust had improved on follow up

Using effective arrangements for the appropriate decontamination of instruments and other equipment, which are detailed in appropriate policies

(For full wording see Code of Practice criterion 2 and guidance 2h).

What we recommended after the initial inspection

The trust should ensure it uses effective arrangements for the decontamination of instruments.

What we found during the follow up

The trust has updated its decontamination policy, which now clearly defines the differences between single-use patient equipment and items that are reusable. It issued a clinical alert instructing staff to check emergency response bags, and through this is assured that single-use items of patient equipment are being stored in their original packaging.

Compliance with the decontamination policy is checked as part of a monthly audit for each ambulance station. Results are presented to the infection prevention and control group for review. The trust's board receive an overall score for each station through monthly performance reports.

The trust's annual infection control programme includes the replacement of equipment.

Ambulance staff have been made aware of the requirements of the decontamination policy through the cascade of information via the intranet and the weekly chief executive's bulletin.