

The Health, Social Care and Sport Committee - Inquiry into Sepsis

HIW consultation response - November 2019

1. What understanding there is about sepsis incidence, how sepsis is presenting to services, and outcomes from sepsis;

Healthcare Inspectorate Wales (HIW) cannot comment on this issue.

2. Public and professional awareness of sepsis;

Healthcare Inspectorate Wales (HIW) cannot comment on the public awareness of sepsis. Following a programme of hospital inspections over a number of years, HIW has identified that overall, there is a good professional awareness of sepsis. However, the level of awareness and staff knowledge, skills and understanding varies between different clinical areas. In an acute area such as the emergency department or assessment unit, we have seen examples of good professional awareness, however in less acute or non-acute areas, professional awareness and the knowledge, skills and understanding of staff can be lower, although generally satisfactory.

3. Identification and management of sepsis in out-of-hospital settings, including use of relevant screening tools/guidance, and the referral process between primary/secondary care;

Healthcare Inspectorate Wales (HIW) cannot comment on this issues.

4. Identification/management of sepsis in acute (hospital) settings;

During the course of HIW's acute hospital inspections, the clinical peer reviewers consider the identification and management of sepsis. This is considered during hospital ward inspections (including independent hospitals), maternity, emergency department and surgical inspections.

The evidence is gathered by reviewing samples of documentation within patient records, treatment plans, patient vital sign observation charts (otherwise known as National Early Warning Score (NEWS) charts), and whether there is an appropriate use of such tools to identify acute illness, such as sepsis. In addition, the clinical peer reviewers will establish if a sepsis care bundle or other tool has been implemented if sepsis is suspected or confirmed, if appropriate to do so. The HIW clinical peer reviewers will gain an overall informed view around sepsis in the areas inspected, and should provide a rationale for their conclusion.

Based on the evidence from our inspection programme, HIW has identified that there are generally good processes in place for the identification and management of sepsis in acute hospital settings.

5. The physical and mental impact on those who have survived sepsis, and their needs for support;

Healthcare Inspectorate Wales (HIW) cannot comment on this issue.