



# Consultation on draft Revision of the National Standards for the Prevention and Control of Healthcare Associated Infections in Acute Healthcare Services

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The Pharmaceutical Society of Ireland (PSI) is an independent statutory body, established under the Pharmacy Act 2007. It is charged with, and is accountable for, the effective regulation of pharmacy services in Ireland, including responsibility for supervising compliance with the Act. The PSI is also charged with ensuring compliance with certain medicines and controlled drugs legislation. It works for the public interest to protect the health and safety of the public by regulating the pharmacy profession and pharmacies.

The PSI welcome this opportunity to make a submission to the draft revision of the national standards for the prevention and control of Healthcare Associated Infections in acute healthcare services.

The PSI has reviewed the draft revised national standards, and consider the draft standards very clear, easy to understand and comprehensive. The PSI fully support the aim of the standards, to encourage a multidisciplinary team-based approach, within acute healthcare services, to prevent and control Healthcare Associated Infections for patients. The PSI is aware that the introduction of antimicrobial stewardship, including specialist antimicrobial pharmacists, has been found to have a strong positive effect in a number of Irish hospitals. The PSI considers that the new draft standards provide a robust framework to improve the existing procedures in place in acute hospitals regarding the prevention and control of Healthcare Associated Infections, and to ensure consistency in approach and outcome by all providers.

In particular, the PSI welcomes the recognition of the role of the antimicrobial pharmacist on the antimicrobial stewardship team (Feature 3.7.3 of Standard 3.7). It is accepted that of all the healthcare professions, pharmacists have the widest knowledge in the science and use of medicines, and therefore PSI consider pharmacists have a key role to play in maximising the benefits for patients arising from medicine use and minimising the potential for patient harm. The current evidence indicates that specialist pharmacists such as antimicrobial pharmacists are ideally placed to inform best practice prescribing protocols and guidelines and to share specialist knowledge through education of the wider healthcare team and patients about the correct use of antimicrobials. As set out in Feature 3.7.4 of Standard 3.7 the PSI would highlight the importance of collaboration within the wider healthcare team to ensure the consistent correct use of antimicrobials and in this regard PSI recognise the importance of the wider clinical pharmacy service in the hospital in ensuring antimicrobial prescribing guidelines, policies and procedures developed by the antimicrobial stewardship programme are followed and implemented in patient care.

PSI would again like to express our support for the new standards and would be happy to contribute to the further development of the standards.