NHS
Cornwall and Isles of Scilly

Infection prevention and control water safety audit tool

This short 8 question audit tool is intended to support primary care and care homes infection prevention and control responsibilities in ensuring water safety. Please perform this audit at least quarterly and create and review action plans for areas of non-compliance as required.

Providers statutory obligations for water safety are enforced by the Health and Safety Executive (HSE). The legionnaires' disease technical guidance has lots of useful information and control of legionella bacteria audit checklists (1 and 3) are also helpful. For detailed technical guidance on management of water systems in healthcare premises, please refer to the Health Technical memorandum 04-01 safe water in healthcare premises.

The responding to the detection of legionella in healthcare premises guidance describes when a healthcare premises should contact the UK Health Security Agency health protection team. Read national guidance, data and analysis on legionnaires disease.

Information required	Response
Name of setting audited	
Date audited	
Completed by	
Infection prevention and control lead	

Water safety audit

Question	Response	Comments
1. Has the setting undertaken an assessment by an approved water engineer?	☐ Yes ☐ No	
2. Is the setting undertaking the actions listed by the water engineer?	☐ Yes ☐ No	
3. Is water sampling being performed?	☐ Yes ☐ No	
4. Are weekly water temperature checks being performed at sentinel taps (nearest outlet and furthest outlet from hot water supply and nearest outlet and furthest outlet from cold water supply)?	☐ Yes ☐ No	
5. Are flushes of little used outlets being performed at least weekly?	☐ Yes ☐ No	
6. Is there evidence of managing limescale?	☐ Yes ☐ No	
7. Is there evidence of quarterly cleaning, disinfection and limescale removal of showerheads and flexible pipe?	☐ Yes ☐ No	
8. Have “dead legs” (water outlet in an unused area) been removed, if identified by the water engineer?	☐ Yes ☐ No	

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Infrequently used water outlet flushing and temperature monitoring guidance

1. Legislation requires that water systems in healthcare premises need to be cleaned, maintained and monitored.
2. Temperatures that prevent the growth of legionella need to be ensured, the hot water supply should be at least 60°C (measured at least 55°C at the outlet) and the cold water below 20°C.
3. Bacteria may multiply in parts of the water system that are infrequently used, therefore infrequently used water outlets should be removed under the direction of a qualified water engineer.
4. Infrequent use is defined as an outlet used less than once per week.
5. All infrequently used water outlets should be flushed through on a weekly basis.
6. All infrequently used outlets need to be logged and weekly flushing and temperatures recorded.
7. If recommissioning a shower after a period over 1 week of no use, shower heads must be removed before flushing to avoid producing aerosols, showers with fixed heads should have the showerhead inserts removed.
8. Check for blockages of plug prior to commencing flushing and remove any obstructions.
9. Test the hot and cold water supplies separately.
10. Water should be run at a flow rate to minimise aerosols.
11. Ensure water is free flowing and draining into the plug.
12. Using a calibrated thermometer, run water through the water outlets until the temperature stabilises and record temperature on log.
13. Flush the outlet for 5 minutes for the hot water supply and 5 minutes for the cold water supply and record flush on log.
14. Dry any splashes.
15. Report any concerns to your line manager immediately.

Flushing and temperature checking record template for infrequently used water outlets

Name of setting:

Date	Staff member name	Time of flush	Location	Type of outlet (such as sink, bath, tap, shower)	Hot water supply temperature	Cold water supply temperature	Comments