



case study

North Tees and
Hartlepool



NHS Trust

North Tees and Hartlepool NHS Trust
University Hospital North Tees
Hardwick Road
Stockton on Tees
TS19 8PE
T: 01642 617617
W: www.northteesandhartlepool.nhs.uk

"MRSA - You Can Make a Difference"

at North Tees & Hartlepool NHS Trust

North Tees and Hartlepool NHS Trust is an acute hospital trust with 2 main hospital sites, the University Hospital of North Tees in Stockton and the University Hospital of Hartlepool in Hartlepool.

The Trust serves a population of over 270,000 and provides a variety of services on both sites, including A&E, intensive care, maternity, orthopaedics, surgery and medicine.

Lesley Wharton is the Lead Nurse responsible for Infection Prevention and Control at North Tees and Hartlepool NHS Trust. Lesley's team is dedicated to addressing the challenge of minimising the incidence of hospital acquired infection. This is no doubt part of the reason why the Trust has one of the lowest rates of MRSA (methicillin resistant staphylococcus aureus) infection in England, according to figures released by the Department of Health covering April 2004 to March 2005.

Lesley sees infection control education as a key component in any successful infection control strategy: "The new Chief Nursing Officer Christine Beasley made infection control education for all healthcare staff one of her national priorities on coming into post at the end of 2004. However



Lesley Wharton

effective Infection Control training has always been important to us because of the potential consequences of poor practice, including patients developing a healthcare associated infection which can cause distress, pain, disability and unfortunately, in some cases, death."

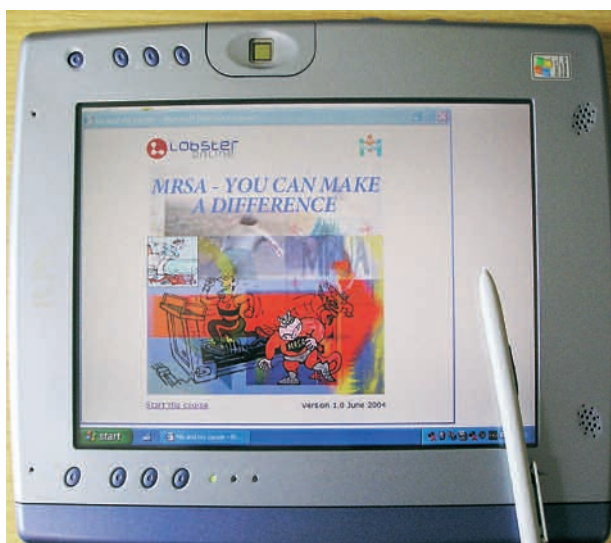
"It is widely recognised that by ensuring that fairly simple measures such as good hand hygiene are in place, up to 30% of these infections can be prevented. Effective education is needed to ensure that members of staff know what measures to take and what their individual responsibility is with regard to infection control. Although the primary focus of education is to protect patients, it also helps to ensure safety of staff and visitors to the Trust."

In November 2004, North Tees and Hartlepool NHS Trust took out a licence giving access to the *MRSA You can make a difference* on-line learning





case study



programme offered by The Training Foundation.

Lesley was primarily attracted to the programme because of the flexibility it offers: "We chose to use this programme because of the ease of access. The course can be used at home or at work, and at any time of the day. Traditional courses are usually run during office hours on week-days, making attendance difficult for staff who choose to work nights or weekends."

"This online course is fun, informal and deals with infection control from a slightly different perspective, encouraging every member of staff to be aware of their responsibilities and *to make a difference.*"

Records of training are kept centrally by the training and development department. These records show that the uptake for infection control training has increased as a result of the flexibility which the programme offers.

Lesley Wharton feels the results have been very worthwhile: "From a business perspective this programme has contributed to our ability to provide evidence of staff training for assessment by the Clinical Negligence Scheme for Trusts (CNST) and the Healthcare Commission."

The benefits will become financially significant if the Trust maintains its current CNST level. The Trust's evidence on this has been accepted and should allow the Trust to make savings of up to 20% on its annual insurance premiums. The

resulting saving will certainly cover the annual licence for *MRSA You can make a difference.*

Lesley is personally committed to the programme for the future: "I feel that *MRSA You can make a difference* is a fun and non-threatening way of dealing with some of the serious and important issues in infection control. It is both appropriate and available to all our staff and is a valuable tool in our quest to improve infection control knowledge and practice. We will increase use of the programme as a course facilitated by infection control staff to assist those who are less confident with using a computer. I hope to secure funding for further years to allow more staff to use the programme in the future."

From a business perspective this programme has contributed to our ability to provide evidence of staff training for assessment by the Clinical Negligence Scheme for Trusts (CNST) and the Healthcare Commission

