

<b>Infection Prevention and Control Practice Guidance Note</b> <b>Control of Legionella and Legionnaires' disease: Preventing the accumulation of stagnant water – V05</b>		
<b>Date Issued</b> <b>Issue 1 – Feb 2020</b> <b>Issue 2 – April 2020</b>	<b>Planned review</b> <b>Feb 2023</b>	<b>IPC-PGN 27.2 – Part of CNTW(C)23 – Infection, Prevention and Control</b>
<b>Author/Designation</b>	<b>Kay Gwynn - IPC Modern Matron</b> <b>Matthew Lessells - Head of Estates, NTW Solutions Limited</b>	
<b>Responsible Officer/ Designation</b>	<b>Director of Infection, Prevention and Control</b>	
<b>Issue Notes: This guidance replaces all similar guidance issued by the former organisations.</b>		
<b>Key Points</b>		
<p>Practice Guidance Notes form part of the Trust's Infection Prevention and Control policy, and it is expected that staff will follow the guidance contained within them unless there is a compelling reason to deviate from it. Such reasons should be documented whenever the circumstance occurs and notified to the IPC team so that modifications to future editions can be made if necessary.</p> <p style="text-align: center;"><b>This Practice Guidance Note applies to all</b></p> <p style="text-align: center;"><b>Cumbria Northumberland, Tyne and Wear NHS Foundation Trust Staff (the Trust/CNTW)</b></p> <p><b>Ward and departmental managers in clinical areas are responsible for ensuring that:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Each shower, bath and basin is run for 2 minutes twice per week (both hot and cold taps if they are separate)</li> <li>• Toilets are flushed at least twice per week</li> <li>• Any other water outlets run for 2 minutes twice per week</li> <li>• Flushing on twice weekly regimes should be done 3-4 days apart</li> <li>• All actions are recorded in a log (See Appendix 1) To be kept for <b>5 years</b></li> <li>• If the outlet is never or rarely used, consider having it removed by contacting the Estates department</li> </ul> <p><b>Facilities/Domestic staff are responsible for ensuring that:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• In office areas all water outlets must be flushed for 2 minutes once per week, by facilities staff</li> <li>• All actions are recorded in a log (see Appendix 1 and 2), to be kept for <b>5 years</b></li> </ul>		

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<b>Appendices – listed separate to PGN</b>	
<b>Document No:</b>	<b>Description</b>
Appendix 1	Legionella Water Flushing Record Log Clinical Areas
Appendix 2	Legionella Water Flushing Record Log Non-Clinical Areas
Appendix 3	Advice Note for water outlets in closed areas

## 1 Introduction

- 1.1 Legionnaires disease is mainly acquired by inhaling the causative organism, **Legionella pneumophila**, which can be carried on small droplets of water as part of an aerosol.
- 1.2 Aerosols can be created in the hospital setting in a number of ways, typically by:
- taking a shower
  - running a bath
  - running water into a hand washbasin
- 1.3 The Legionella bacterium is naturally found in water and studies have shown that many large scale hot and cold water systems are colonised to some extent. However, by adopting a range of control measures the risks of anyone contracting Legionnaires Disease can be minimised. This IPC-PGN focuses on one such control measure, which is ensuring water in the pipe work is not allowed to stagnate and provide conditions that favour the multiplication of the bacteria.

## 2 Avoiding the accumulation of stagnant water

- 2.1 There are two control measures that can be readily implemented to prevent the accumulation of stagnant water; the removal of underused outlets and regular use/flushing.
- 2.2 Remove underused outlets, Ward managers/Department Heads should identify those outlets that are no longer required e.g. shower rooms that are used as store cupboards and request that Estates isolate the supply and where possible remove the outlet.
- 2.3 Regular flushing, Outlets must be regularly used. A flushing regime (as identified in the table below) backed up by a robust recording system will ensure outlets are used. The log sheets (Appendix 1 and 2) will identify all water outlets to be flushed.

Flushing Requirement	Examples
Clinical areas twice weekly flushing for 2 minutes	Wards and department where service users attend e.g. in-patient areas, community homes, physiotherapy, outpatients, day units
None clinical areas once weekly	These are areas that are completely none healthcare, which stand-alone from any clinical areas. If there is a shared water system, the area must be treated as healthcare

- 2.4 Closed buildings will have their water services drained down and isolated by Estates, where practical (See Appendix 3). The ward/department manager must notify Estates in writing when a closure will take place.
- 2.5 During refurbishment where the ward is decanted– Flushing to be carried out by Estates.
- 2.6 During periods with reduced activity, for example, holidays, service user ward leave etc. – flushing will still be the responsibility of the ward or department manager.

### 3 Action to be taken by all wards and departments

- 3.1 For clinical areas, it is the responsibility of the ward or departmental manager to ensure that the following actions are taken. These actions will be carried out by domestics/facilities staff.
- Showers, wash hand basins, sinks, sluice room sinks etc.: ensure each outlet is flushed for 2 minutes twice per week, both hot and cold taps if they are separate
  - Toilets: flush at least twice per week
  - Low use outlets that can be removed should be reported to Estates for action
  - All areas where Cumbria Northumberland, Tyne and Wear NHS Foundation Trust (the Trust/CNTW) staff work, must complete the flushing document
- 3.2 For non clinical areas based outside of ward environments, including, offices, communal facilities etc., it is the responsibility of the facilities department to ensure that the following actions are taken:
- Showers, wash hand basins, sinks, sluice room sinks etc.: ensure each outlet is flushed for 2 minutes once per week, both hot and cold taps if they are separate
  - Toilets: flush at least once per week
  - Low use outlets that can be removed should be reported to Estates for action

**Note** – Any water outlets deemed inappropriate to be flushed by facilities department, or where there are no domestics/facilities staff will be managed by Trust Estates department

- 3.3 The applicable Water Flushing Log Sheet (Appendix 1 or 2) is to be completed twice weekly for patient areas and retained by the manager on the ward/unit. Weekly electronic central reporting is required.
- 3.4 Domestic and support staff will be able to document showers, baths, toilets and basins which are 'run' as part of their cleaning schedule, as long as they can give assurance that the water outlet has been run for 2 minutes.

**All water outlets must be run for a consecutive 2 minutes**

- 3.5 It is important to report all problems with water supplies (too warm or too cool, discolouration, low pressures, etc.) to the NTW Solutions Limited Helpdesk, telephone: 0191 2456880 or via email [Ntwsolutionshelpdesk@ntw.nhs.uk](mailto:Ntwsolutionshelpdesk@ntw.nhs.uk) as soon as possible.

#### **4 References**

- HSG 274 Legionnaires disease, Technical guidance. April 2015