

Norovirus

There has been good guidance on Norovirus control, mainly through the HPA.

The key elements are:

Diagnosis

- Prompt clinical recognition and action before virological confirmation
- Virological confirmation of a few of the initial cases.

Isolation

- Isolation of cases. Restriction of access and movement - patients, staff, visitors.
- Staff to stay away if they develop symptoms.
- Staff to be restricted to the affected ward(s).

Standard Precautions

- It is important to stress the need for hand hygiene with soap and water for patients, staff and visitors (as with *C. difficile*, alcohol gel is not effective against norovirus).

Cleaning

- Immediate enclosure, cleaning and disinfection of environmental contamination with vomit/faeces with hypochlorite or other chlorine releasing agents
- Deep clean prior to re-opening

Operational Management

- Ward closure to new admissions is an essential component of this. When it is not done promptly, that is when you get second waves and extended outbreaks.
- It is also important not to re-open a ward to admissions until the outbreak is over. (at least 48hrs)