
1 Introduction

This book covers the standard principles of infection prevention and control, which should be adhered to at all times, and provides concise guidance for immediate infection control management of patients with a range of infections. The book is not intended to replace more comprehensive texts, but should be used in conjunction with them.

The authors would urge the reader to adhere to guidance contained within the Infection Prevention and Control Manual in their place of work at all times, as locally developed guidance may differ from what is written here.

The idea for this book came from the questions asked by nurses and other healthcare professionals during training sessions, ward rounds and phone calls received by the infection control team from nurses seeking advice on how to care for a patient with a specific infection.

Hospital infection control policies are not always immediately accessible to staff who are busy caring for patients and, even when policies are accessed, staff often wish to discuss the advice given just to check that they are doing the right thing. Clinical governance arrangements dictate that policies must be formatted in a certain way, which does not enhance their readability or improve the accessibility of the information sought by the nurse with the infected patient in front of her/him. In some instances the language used can be obstructive and unhelpful, with acronyms and jargon used, which are not necessarily understood by the intended audience.

This book was written by an infection control nurse and an infection control doctor with the aim of making it easier for ward nurses to get infection control right. The book is set out in such a way that the information required about immediate infection prevention and control measures is given first and further information is given later. There is no jargon; abbreviations are limited and fully explained where used and every attempt has been made to demystify some of the language and terminology commonly used within the realms of infection control.