Looking after and sharing information about your child

We have a duty of care to help patients and families understand how information about them is kept and shared and we include the following information in all our patient leaflets:

Information is collected about your child relevant to their diagnosis, treatment and care. We store it in written records and electronically on computer. As a necessary part of that care and treatment we may have to share some of your information with other people and organisations who are either responsible or directly involved in your child's care. This may involve taking your child's information off site. We may also have to share some of your information for other purposes; such as research etc. Any information that is shared in this way will not identify your child unless we have your consent. If you have any questions and/or do not want us to share that information with others, please talk to the people looking after your child or contact PALS (Patient Advice and Liaison Service) on 0121 333 8403.

This leaflet has been produced by the Infection Prevention and Control team.
**What is Norovirus?**

Norovirus is one of the most common viruses that cause stomach bugs in the UK. Norovirus normally occurs in winter therefore is sometimes known as the ‘winter vomiting bug’ although you can become ill with it at any time of the year.

**What are Norovirus symptoms?**

- Sudden onset of sickness
- Projectile vomiting
- Watery diarrhoea
- Stomach cramps
- Aching limbs
- Fever

**How long will I be infected for?**

- Symptoms appear one to two days after someone becomes infected.
- If you or your child develop any symptoms, inform your named nurse.
- Symptoms normally last for two or three days, however may continue for longer episodes in vulnerable patient groups.
- An infected person will remain infectious for at least 48 hours after their last symptom.
- You can get norovirus more than once because the virus is constantly changing. This means the body doesn’t recognise it and you become unwell.

**How is it spread?**

- Infected vomit can spread the virus onto surfaces up to 2 metres away and the virus can survive for up to two weeks.
- An infected person can spread the virus by touching others with contaminated hands or by contaminating surrounding surfaces which other people then touch.
- Via eating contaminated food.

**How to prevent norovirus**

Norovirus is not always preventable, but the below steps can be put in place to limit the spread:

- Frequent hand washing with soap and water - particularly after using the toilet, preparing food and on entering and exiting the ward. **Do not rely on alcohol gel** because this is not as effective as soap and water against norovirus.
- Prompt disinfection of any surfaces or objects that could be contaminated.
- Avoiding visiting the hospital **until at least 48 hours** after the symptoms have passed.
- If there is on outbreak of norovirus on a ward, measures will be put in place to prevent the outbreak spreading; including restricted visiting and the temporary closure of some facilities on the affected wards.

**What does isolation mean?**

- The patient and their visitors will be confined to a side room, **and not allowed to visit communal areas including the play room and the parent kitchen**
- Hospital staff will wear disposable gloves and plastic aprons at all times to prevent them passing the infection on to other patients.
- Everyone must wash their hands thoroughly when leaving the isolation room.

**Where can I get more information?**

If you would like more information, please speak to a member of the nursing or medical team caring for your child.