

- 3.2 Officials have accepted the observation made in our report and we are content with the proposed action plan and timescale to implement this agreed action (see section 5). The HSS Operations Group will undertake the follow-up of the action and report this to the HSS Audit and Risk Assurance Committee.

Nosocomial Transmission Group

- 3.3 We reviewed the NTG's terms of reference to ensure they were up to date, relevant and clearly defined the Group's key aims and objectives, which they were. We also reviewed a sample of NTG minutes from August 2020 to June 2021 to confirm the key topics covered in the meetings. All of the minutes reflected the scope of the NTGs agreed terms of reference, with the "UK Surveillance Data and Outbreaks" reports and "Strategic Overview" updates covered in the majority of meetings.
- 3.4 Our review also confirmed the attendance at each meeting ensured there was adequate and appropriate representation from within the Group's membership, as detailed in the terms of reference. Where named individuals could not attend, alternative representatives were in attendance.

Guidance

- 3.5 Guidance has been issued to NHS Wales throughout the pandemic by the WG – see Annex 3. We reviewed the guidance relating to Hospital Visiting, General Medical Services and Bed Spacing. In our opinion, the guidance was regularly reviewed in light of the latest scientific advice, relevant, clear and concise. We also confirmed that it had been issued to all Trusts and Health Boards in a timely manner.
- 3.6 We considered what further actions WG the might take to ensure the guidance issued is having the desired effect. We understand it is primarily for the NHS, through its internal governance arrangements, to ensure guidance is implemented and complied with. However, the NTG will consider any intelligence gathered from the NHS about issues arising with the guidance and provide any additional advice that may be necessary. The NTG also routinely monitors rates of transmission, as discussed below, but not with the expectation there is a direct correlation between the guidance issued and lower infection rates.
- 3.7 We have made one observation to strengthen the arrangements for documentation control / retrieval to ensure readiness for a formal COVID-19 public inquiry. **See 5.1.**

Reporting and Monitoring

- 3.8 The initial intention was for nosocomial infections to be reported through the established "serious incident reporting tool". However, Management identified the need to use a faster tool for reporting to keep pace with developments. Consequently, a bespoke form was designed and implemented by Autumn 2020 to gather the data required.
- 3.9 A nosocomial outbreak (OB) was defined as two or more positive cases linked in place and time, which triggers an outbreak investigation. The form was designed to capture data on:
- the number of OBs (new and existing);
 - staff and patients testing positive for COVID-19 associated with existing OBs;