

Q&As for call centre

1) What is VRE (vancomycin-resistant enterococci)?

Enterococci are bacteria that are normally present in the human intestines and in the female genital tract and are often found in the environment. These bacteria can sometimes cause disease. Vancomycin is an antibiotic that is often used to treat infections caused by bacteria that are resistant to more commonly used antibiotics such as penicillins. In some instances, enterococci have become resistant to this drug and thus are called vancomycin-resistant enterococci (VRE).

2) How is VRE spread?

VRE is usually passed to others by direct contact with stool or urine containing VRE. It can also be spread indirectly via surfaces such as door handles, bench tops, etc. VRE is not usually spread through casual contact such as touching or hugging. VRE is not spread through the air by coughing or sneezing. Hand washing is the most important and practical means of preventing transmission of VRE.

3) Is VRE affecting appointments?

No. Appointments and elective procedures have not been cancelled as a result of VRE.

4) I have been in hospital, was I tested?

Not all patients were tested. If you were tested you would have been told beforehand. If you have been tested and your results were positive you will have been contacted.

5) I've been in hospital and am back at home, am I likely to develop VRE?

It is extremely unlikely that you will develop VRE.

I want to get tested, how do I go about arranging this?

If you wish to be tested you can see your GP.

6) I have been tested (or I have a family member that has been tested), when will they get the results?

The results are usually available within 3-4 days. Only if the test result is positive will you be contacted.

7) I am due to come into hospital, how safe is the hospital / how safe will I be?

There is a very low risk of getting a hospital-acquired infection in any hospital.

The chance of you contracting VRE is extremely low.

In the rare instance that you are infected with VRE, it is treatable.

8) My loved one/family member has VRE. How do I know they are going to be OK?

ADHB is monitoring patients extremely closely and treating VRE infection according to best practice. Talk to your loved one's doctor or nurse about their individual situation.

9) Can I come and visit my family member/friend who is currently in hospital

Yes, visitors are asked to adhere to normal hygiene procedures, such as washing hands.

10) Is the infection affecting appointments at Greenlane Clinical Centre?

No. Appointments at Greenlane Clinical Centre are not affected.