Shared Learning in Suffolk

Type of Event:
Infection Control - Norovirus Outbreak

Event:
Ward manager informed Infection Control Lead that a patient in one of their Bays has had two episodes of unexplained vomiting; advised staff to isolate patient in single room and observe. The patient is likely to be the index case. Overnight a number of further patients developed diarrhoea and or vomiting and a few staff members reported sick with the same symptoms. A number of staff were affected by the end of the outbreak. The Ward was closed to admissions following discussion with the Director Infection Prevention & Control and the General Manager. Norovirus policy implemented and followed by staff on the ward. In addition the standard operating procedure for the Ward, when affected by an outbreak, was also implemented to ensure correct provision for specific patients requiring admission.

Notable Practice:
- Patient Information leaflets available on Ward immediately
- Patients, relatives / carers updated regularly
- Regular updates to the Media by the Communications team
- Business Continuity for Specialist services activated in good time

Improvement:
- Information recorded as the outbreak progressed became inconsistent
- The lack of a Physical Barrier at the entrance to bays is not an effective Infection Control measure

Learning:
As a result of this incident the following improvements have been made:
- The lack of provision of Bay doors on the Risk Register has been reviewed
- The provision of Bay doors will be implemented on any new builds or refurbishments
- The role of an Outbreak co-ordinator to be reviewed
- All staff to receive refresher training in the data collection element of the Noro-virus Policy