



### **Sepsis Learning Event asks 'Could it Sepsis?'**

Sepsis is a term which describes the most severe form of infection and is potentially fully treatable in a number of cases. Major regional improvement work is now underway to identify sepsis earlier and more consistently and to administer appropriate antibiotics swiftly. Healthcare staff in acute hospitals, across the region are working with the Health and Social Care Quality Improvement Hub in Northern Ireland to test this approach in the adult non-neutropenic and non-maternity setting. This regional improvement project will be spread across the NI acute sector once the prototype has been fully tested.

Whilst many people may have heard about sepsis, fewer know what is really is or what the symptoms are. Sepsis is organ malfunction due to infection which may be life threatening and can develop very quickly. In an adult sepsis it may feel like you have flu, gastroenteritis or a chest infection at first. Early symptoms include fever, chills and shivering, a fast heartbeat and quick breathing. Symptoms of sepsis or septic shock can include feeling dizzy or faint, confusion or disorientation, nausea and vomiting, diarrhoea and cold, clammy and pale or mottled skin,

Dr Mark Vignesha Roberts, Clinical Director, Improvement Hub for HSCQI who is working with teams on the sepsis regional improvement work commented:

'We are working to help our clinicians use their clinical skills, alongside the patient's symptoms and signs and history to make a faster diagnosis of sepsis and give the antibiotics quicker once the diagnosis is made. The message we need our healthcare staff to think about is 'Could it be sepsis?'

Giving patients with evidence of sepsis antibiotics quickly is one of the measures that we know improves the outcome for the patient, but this is only the case if antibiotics are protected from overuse, otherwise they lose their effectiveness. Hence inappropriately using antibiotics for single viral or other self-limiting infections create challenges and patients and

families need to help clinical staff in their quest to use antibiotics responsibly and not overuse them. Media campaigns such as the recent 'Antibiotic Guardian' campaign have been reminding us all that antibiotic resistance is one of the biggest threats facing us today.”

At the Learning Events staff from the sepsis test sites spoke about the ongoing work, the learning and the progress being made and reinforced the importance of the sepsis work.



**WHSCT Team at Altnagelvin at Sepsis learning event**



**WHSCT Team at South West Acute Hospital**





**BHSCT Team at Sepsis learning event**



**SEHSCT group at Sepsis learning event**