

What actions were taken after previous HALT studies?

National level

- Guidelines for diagnosis and management of UTI in LTCFs for residents > 65 years published
- Guidelines for antibiotic prescribing in primary care published by ICGP, RCPI & HSE and are available at www.antibioticprescribing.ie

At facility level

Feedback indicates that a wide range of actions involving all members of the multi-disciplinary team were undertaken including;

- A catheter assessment and management record was developed due to a higher than expected urinary catheter use
- Pilot of an antibiotic care bundle based on a routine day 3 review of antibiotic prescriptions

Where can I get further information?

The primary care antibiotic prescribing guidelines, UTI diagnosis and management guidelines for LTCF etc. may be accessed at www.antibioticprescribing.ie or via the HPSC website

The results of previous HALT surveys in 2010, 2011 & 2013, along with all documentation (protocol and data collection forms) for HALT 2016 may also be accessed on the HPSC website

Follow the link below to get this information:

[http://www.hpsc.ie/hpsc/A-Z/
MicrobiologyAntimicrobialResistance/
InfectionControlandHAI/Surveillance/
HCAInlongtermcarefacilities/](http://www.hpsc.ie/hpsc/A-Z/MicrobiologyAntimicrobialResistance/InfectionControlandHAI/Surveillance/HCAInlongtermcarefacilities/)



The national survey of healthcare-associated infection in long term care facilities (HALT) May 2016

Information for General Practitioners



What is the HALT survey?

HALT is a point prevalence or 'snapshot' survey of long-term care facilities (LTCFs) in European countries, which will take place in May 2016.

The survey asks four key questions:

1. How many residents have a healthcare-associated infection (HCAI)?
2. How many residents are prescribed antimicrobials and why?
3. What type of antimicrobial resistance is reported for specific bacteria (e.g., MRSA)
4. What are the infection prevention and control resources and practices in the facility?

The HALT survey was previously undertaken in Ireland in 2010, 2011 and 2013. Key findings of HALT surveys in Ireland included:

- The prevalence of HCAI in LTCF residents in Ireland was comparable with other EU countries
- The percentage of residents who were prescribed antimicrobials in Irish LTCF (10%) was more than double that of the EU average (4.3%)
- In Irish LTCF, antimicrobials were frequently prescribed for prophylaxis or prevention of infection, a practice which is not evidence-based

How is the study being managed?

A multi-disciplinary subcommittee of the RCPI Clinical Advisory Group on HCAI and antimicrobial resistance is overseeing the HALT survey in Ireland.

A coordinating team, based in the Health Protection Surveillance Centre (HPSC) is coordinating the survey along with staff from each participating LTCF and, if available, local infection prevention and control nurses

Ethical approval is not required as HALT is a high-level resident safety audit and all data collected is anonymous

What is the timeline?

January 2016: Invitation to participate issued

April-May 2016: Training of data collectors

May 2016: Data collection by participating LTCF and electronic data return to HPSC

June–August 2016: Validation and analysis of data in HPSC*

Q4 2016: Local reports will be made available to each participating facility and a national report will be published by HPSC

**The Irish results will also be forwarded to European Centre for Disease Control for inclusion in the European report.*

What do GPs need to be aware of?

Prior to the HALT survey

The Director of Nursing/LTCF Manager should let GPs know that the LTCF is participating in HALT 2016

While LTCF staff will be provided with training and supported by the HPSC during the study, they may need to contact GPs to obtain further information to answer specific questions (e.g., microbiology results, indication for a resident's antimicrobials).

When local and national reports are available

The local LTCF HALT contact will receive the local and national report from HPSC and will be requested to share the findings of these reports with local GPs.

The local reports will provide comparative data with: the national dataset, facilities with similar resident populations (e.g., intellectually disabled) and if applicable, their own results from participation in previous HALT surveys

Actions arising from the reports will depend on each facility's results. However, based on the previous studies, prophylactic antimicrobial use was a key area of concern