Audit of Critical Care in NHSScotland
Annual Report
Scottish Intensive Care Society Audit Group

A Management Information publication for Scotland

Publication date: 13th August 2019

About this release

This release by Information Services Division, Health Protection Scotland and the Scottish Intensive Care Society Audit Group provides a summary of the activity, interventions and outcomes of critical care services in NHSScotland.

Main Points

- No unit was found to have a significantly higher mortality rate compared to the rest of Scotland.
- Delayed discharges from critical care continue to be a challenge for units, which is mostly due to bed shortages in other areas of the hospital.
- The population of patients in intensive and high dependency care settings is ageing and is increasingly likely to have comorbidities and complex chronic health conditions, posing a challenge for services.
- Health Boards highlighted staffing shortages in some areas with difficulty in filling medical and nursing staff posts.
- While many units have made progress over the last year towards attaining the minimum standards and achieving improvements in quality indicators, others continue to find this challenging.
- In 2018, 2.7% of patients in intensive care units developed a Healthcare Associated Infection. This remains unchanged from 2017.

Background

Critical care units are specialist hospital wards for the most severely ill or injured patients. They treat patients with a high level of complexity, with two out of three patients requiring the most advanced levels of support. This audit includes all Intensive Care Units and the majority of High Dependency Units in 2018 in NHSScotland. It is not possible to provide an accurate figure on the number of High Dependency Units due to differing provisions across all specialties and Health Boards however it is believed that more than 95% of all High Dependency Units participate in this audit. The audit covers over 46,000 patients admitted to critical care units in NHSScotland during 2018.
The Scottish Intensive Care Society Audit Group aims to improve the quality of care delivered to critical care patients by monitoring and comparing activities and outcomes. The audit of critical care is a co-ordinated quality improvement programme which provides data, analysis and feedback to raise standards and continued improvement in patient outcomes.

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Further Information

The full report including detailed excel tables and previous publications can be accessed on the SICSAG Annual Reports page on the SICSAG website.

Further information can be found on the Scottish Intensive Care Society Audit Group website http://www.sicsag.scot.nhs.uk/index.html.

Further information on Healthcare Associated Infections in Intensive Care Units is available from the HAI in Intensive Care Unit Surveillance web page.

The next update of this publication will be in August 2020.

ISD and Official Statistics

Information Services Division (ISD) is the principal and authoritative source of statistics on health and care services in Scotland. ISD is designated by legislation as a producer of ‘Official Statistics’. Our official statistics publications are produced to a high professional standard and comply with the Code of Practice for Official Statistics. Further information about our statistics.