The STOP Campaign to improve the safety of patient care through better use of catheters and cannulas is making a difference to patients across Wales.

Launched in April 2012, the campaign has been adopted in NHS Wales health boards and trusts, to spread the message of good cannula and catheter care. Patients with these devices are at risk of infection if they aren’t applied or used correctly.

It is the first campaign from 1000 Lives Improvement to include ‘communications’ as a primary driver in its strategy. A large range of communication ideas and materials were made available to promote the central clinical messages of the campaign. Clinical and communications teams then worked together to develop their own communications strategies, using their frontline knowledge and experience.

Clinical data collected so far shows the impact of the campaign has led to safer practices and prevented people contracting dangerous infections. The success of the campaign has led to recognition in national awards.

Inside:
- How teams across Wales used the STOP resources
- Meet the campaign mascots!
- Linking communications and clinical teams
- Students take the campaign forward
- Ideas and materials given to teams

Abertawe Bro Morgannwg University Health Board asked local children to help them record a song encouraging staff to stop
The impact of the STOP Campaign

The STOP Campaign has been enthusiastically adopted across Wales. “All our hospital wards are receiving materials to promote this work and reduce the use of PVCs and urinary catheters,” says Tracey Nicholas, Infection Prevention and Control Nurse, speaking at the local campaign launch in Prince Philip Hospital, Llanelli.

“The STOP campaign resources are good because they highlight the problem of unnecessary use. The posters are bright and colourful and will definitely aid us in our work to reduce the use of devices and the rate of avoidable healthcare associated infections.”

Gail Lusardi, Senior Infection Control Nurse, Velindre Cancer Centre, says the STOP materials are fun reminders of a serious part of nursing care in the cancer centre. “It is very important that we reduce the possible risks of infection,” says Gail.

“Many of our patients are immunocompromised as a result of their illness and their treatment, particularly if they are receiving chemotherapy, so nurses need to ensure they are managing catheters and cannulas correctly and removing them as soon as possible.”

To launch the STOP campaign in Abertawe Bro Morgannwg University Health Board, staff created a video, complete with a special song.

“We have had a comprehensive training programme in place especially for this campaign,” says Nicola Williams, Assistant Director of Nursing. “It makes staff aware of when it is appropriate to use a cannula or catheter and teaches them the correct way of putting these devices in and looking after them.”

The effects of the STOP campaign are already being seen. The Welsh Ambulance Service has recorded a drop in cannulations, reducing the risk of infection for people being taken to hospital.

“The STOP Campaign has empowered ambulance staff to consider whether a cannula needs to be used and make the best decision for the patient,” says Andrew Jenkins, Assistant Clinical Director. “We have seen a very large drop in the use of these devices.”

Why we need to insert and maintain cannulas and catheters properly

I know from personal experience what can happen when a cannula is left in longer than necessary.

As a junior doctor, I admitted a patient in acute heart failure who had heart valve disease. I knew I needed to give medication to treat the heart failure and that the best way of doing this was through an intra-venous cannula.

I inserted the device and the patient was admitted to the coronary care unit to be stabilised and the patient improved. At this point the patient was well enough to be transferred to a ward and no longer needed intra-venous medications, so the intra-venous cannula could possibly have come out.

However, it was not removed and the patient developed an infection.

The infection spread rapidly and infected the already damaged heart valves which meant emergency surgery was needed.

Thankfully the patient survived the infection and the surgery, and was eventually discharged from hospital.

The experience however, left an indelible print on my mind of the unintended harm that can result from medical devices.

Harmed by catheters and cannulas

50% of urinary tract infections (UTIs) in hospital patients are linked to urinary catheters - 10.4% of all healthcare associated infections in Wales!

Treating UTIs costs £1,122 per patient.

A 1.6% infection rate has been recorded for peripheral venous cannulas (PVCs).

PVCs can lead to blood stream infections with a very high mortality rate.
Integrating communications into a clinical quality improvement campaign

Communications was built into the STOP Campaign, occupying a key place in the clinical strategy, contained in the programme’s ‘How to’ Guide. Communications was included as one of the five ‘drivers’ identified as vital to reducing infection by curbing unnecessary use of catheters and cannulas. This was the first time 1000 Lives Plus Improvement had included communications as part of a clinical intervention.

A communications guide and pack were created and supplied to local clinical and communications teams. An interview with the campaign lead, sharing her experience of causing infection by not removing a device quickly enough, was a key part of engaging clinicians and making them evaluate their practice.

Clinical and communications teams were provided with STOP campaign materials to help them alert all NHS Wales staff to the risk posed by these medical devices. Teams who had piloted the Stop Order helped to develop the communications materials, especially the design of ‘cartoon characters’ representing a PVC and a catheter. Clinical staff advised on the ‘look’ of the characters to ensure they were instantly recognisable to other staff.

A range of merchandise was produced to keep the campaign in view

Staff in Hywel Dda Health Board spread the message

Equipping staff to communicate!

Teams across NHS Wales were supported with several resources to spread the message about the STOP Campaign, including:

- A special communications guide and pack that included template press releases and staff stories is for intranet sites.
- Merchandise - posters, postcards, coasters and sticker sheets featuring eye-catching cartoon characters
- Unique commissioned photos.
- Videos with frontline staff.
- Suggested tweets. (There was also intensive promotion on the main 1000 Lives Plus Twitter feed, resulting in multiple retweets and interactions.)
- A dedicated issue of the 1000 Lives Plus e-newsletter, which was sent to over 5,000 contacts in NHS Wales.

Linking communications and clinical teams

One of the key features of the STOP campaign was linking together infection control staff and communications teams in NHS Wales organisations.

Why STOP?

S - **Stop** and ask if the device is really needed?

T - **Think** and give the necessary attention to detail, including clinical indicators for use

O - **Consider Options** and whether there are alternatives.

P - **Prevent** healthcare associated infections by ensuring the use and maintenance of them is as safe as possible.

“The communications pack was an invaluable resource. It helped the communications team to understand the aim of the campaign itself and the infection control team responsible for delivering the campaign to understand what support a communications team can provide.”

Alex Fry, Communications Officer, Hywel Dda Health Board

www.1000livesplus.wales.nhs.uk/STOP
Meet our mascots

The STOP communications resources were based around a highly visual approach featuring cartoon characters developed to make the campaign stand out.

There were some challenges in getting the ‘look’ of the characters, representing a cannula and a catheter, right. The designs were extensively tested with clinical staff, including the Reducing Healthcare-Associated Infections steering group, to ensure they were acceptable and were recognisable to other staff.

The use of cartoons meant that posters and merchandise could be displayed in patient areas without causing unnecessary concern among patients, but without understating the clear clinical message.

The characters appeared on posters, coasters, stickers for sharps bins, and information postcards. Special fold-out ‘z-cards’ were also produced containing the key questions staff needed to answer in order to comply with the correct procedure for insertion and maintenance of catheters and PVCs.

Engaging through Twitter

The STOP Campaign was heavily promoted by 1000 Lives Plus on Twitter in the fortnight after the campaign was launched, resulting in multiple retweets and interactions. It has been regularly promoted since then, keeping it in view of the more than 1,700 people who follow @1000LivesPlus

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Students take the campaign forward

In September 2012 the STOP Campaign was developed further for use by students. This included new promotional material and a revised version of the Communications Guide being produced to enable students to confidently promote the Stop Order as they embark on clinical placements.

“By using the pack and passing on the knowledge, it made others in the profession and my fellow students aware of the implications of unnecessary medical devices and made them aware of regular cannula inspection, signs of infection and of their clinical need.”

Kirsty Butcher, nursing student, University of Glamorgan

www.1000livesplus.wales.nhs.uk/STOP
Making a national impact!
Where is STOP being used?

The STOP Campaign is launched in Prince Phillip Hospital, Llanelli

Health Board Chief Executive Paul Roberts attended the launch of the STOP Campaign in Princess of Wales Hospital, Bridgend

The Welsh Ambulance Service NHS Trust is using STOP to promote safer use of cannulas and catheters.

Find out more:
www.1000livesplus.wales.nhs.uk/STOP

1000 Lives Improvement is part of Public Health Wales, supporting organisations and individuals to deliver improved health, healthcare outcomes and user experience in NHS Wales.

www.1000livesplus.wales.nhs.uk/STOP
The STOP Campaign developed and supported by 1000 Lives Improvement won Gold at the Chartered Institute of Public Relations PRide Cymru Awards 2013, for the Best Healthcare Campaign.

“The campaign was very well researched and planned. Using engaging visuals... A key part of its success was the engagement between clinicians and communication teams within individual health organisations to deliver the campaign.”

CIPR Award Judges

This case study has been published by 1000 Lives Improvement.

This work began when 1000 Lives Improvement was known as 1000 Lives Plus and some references to this previous name are therefore included in this publication.

For more information about the STOP Campaign, please get in touch. www.1000livesplus.wales.nhs.uk/STOP

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