Dear Parents-

You will be aware of the recent issues affecting the Royal Jubilee Maternity Hospital’s (RJMH) neonatal unit, involving babies being affected with a bacterial infection called Pseudomonas.

Pseudomonas is the name given to a bacterium (sometimes called a bug / germ), that is commonly found in soil and water. Pseudomonas rarely causes infection in people who are healthy. It sometimes causes infection in people who are already unwell or who do not have a strong / fully developed immune system.

Pseudomonas may also be found on the skin of some individuals and not necessarily cause infection. This is known as colonisation. Colonisation of pseudomonas on the skin may not necessarily require treatment.

Pseudomonas may cause
- Respiratory/chest infections
- Urinary tract / urine infections
- Wound infections
- Infections of the blood

Hand hygiene is an important way of preventing and controlling Pseudomonas infection. Hand washing should be carried out before and after contact with the patient and their environment.

Hands should be wet before applying liquid soap. The soap should be rubbed vigorously into all areas to produce suds / lather. The hands should be rinsed under running water and dried thoroughly.

It is really important to dry your hands properly using the disposable paper towels provided. Paper towels should be disposed of in foot operated pedal bins provided.

Hand sanitisers/hand-rubs may (should) also be used after hand washing with soap and water. After applying the hand sanitiser/hand-rub, hands should be rubbed together, covering all areas, until the hands are dry. The application of a hand sanitiser/hand-rub will ensure that any traces of pseudomonas in the water used for hand washing is eradicated. Nursing staff will show you how to use hand sanitisers/hand-rubs properly.

We do appreciate the anxiety and concern you may have and would like to reassure you that our neonatal unit is operating at the highest possible standards of infection control and barrier nursing.
If you wish to discuss any concerns with a senior member of the medical or nursing team, please don’t hesitate to let us know.

Yours sincerely,

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Sean Donaghy
Chief Executive