



This critical care unit is participating in a research study to identify patients at high risk of fungal infection. Trained staff collect information on possible factors related to these infections for every patient admitted to this unit.

Evaluating the risk of fungal infection to better target treatment to improve patient care

Research Ethics Committee (REC)
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Patient Information Advisory Group (PIAG)
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What is a fungal infection?

Patients admitted to intensive care units are at risk of infection, such as those affecting the blood and other organs. These can result in long stays in the unit and in higher mortality. Infections may be caused by bacteria, a virus, or a fungus (fungal infections).

How can fungal infections be prevented?

Research studies have shown that giving patients antifungal drugs soon after they are admitted to an intensive care unit reduces the risk of serious fungal infections. However, if every patient was given these drugs it would increase the risks of side-effects, interactions with other medication, and drug resistance.

What is FIRE?

The Fungal Infection Risk Evaluation (FIRE) is a research study that aims to identify what things make a patient more likely to develop a fungal infection (risk factors). By identifying patients at high risk of invasive fungal infection, it is hoped that improved prevention and treatment strategies can be developed.

Will being in this study affect my care?

No. The care you receive in this unit will be exactly the same as if the study was not taking place. The study involves collecting a small amount of information during your stay in the unit.

What information is collected?

Whether the patient:

- has any risk factors that suggest they are more likely to develop a fungal infection;
- is receiving antifungal drugs;
- develops a fungal infection.

Who collects this information?

A trained member of staff from this unit collects the information about each patient.

How is the information used?

The information collected is sent to an independent charitable research organisation called ICNARC (Intensive Care National Audit & Research Centre).

At ICNARC, this information will be analysed to assess which risk factors indicate a fungal infection and assess the potential for giving earlier treatment to patients at high risk of fungal infection.

How secure is the information?

ICNARC has a very secure computer system and a strict information security policy that has been approved by the Department of Health. All ICNARC staff sign a contract agreeing to keep data secure and confidential. ICNARC is also registered under the Data Protection Act.

Can patients refuse to give this information?

Yes. If you don't want your information to be used, you have the right to request that this isn't sent to ICNARC. If, as family/close friends, you are concerned that the patient would not want this information used (and the patient is unable to say so themselves), then you should discuss this with a member of the health care team in this unit. Refusing will not affect the care and treatment the patient is given.

What if I change my mind about participating?

You can change your mind at any time, you should discuss this with a member of the health care team in this unit. This will not affect your care and treatment.