

Central Venous Access Team (CVAT)

Across a large hospital like Addenbrooke's many patients will require central venous lines for treatments such as chemotherapy, antibiotics, nutrition or as a method of monitoring them if they are critically ill. The lines are often inserted into the large vessels near the heart and the technique for doing this is skilled and complex. Approximately 1,000 lines are inserted into adult patients every year.

The Central Venous Access Team (CVAT) offers a holistic approach to the insertion and maintenance of all aspects of CVADs (central venous access devices) with resulting reductions in infection; complication rates and shortened length of stay.

The team is integral to patient care and safety across the hospital, standardising and optimising best practice, advancing improvements through education, research, innovation, and audit. Through its work the team has contributed to the decrease in healthcare-acquired infection across the hospital.

Why was the team set up?

The views of patients, clinicians, nurses and managers demonstrated that expectations were not being met by what was essentially an *ad hoc* service with no central approach to standards and techniques; complications rates were high and continuity of care a challenge. No centralised service also meant inadequate auditing, little support or advice for staff or patients and no drive to implement new techniques or innovations to benefit patient care.

The central principles for the redesign were to:

- **establish** a central, multi-disciplinary team with the knowledge and expertise to set and communicate practice against the gold standards from national guidance (*EPIC, Winning Ways and Saving Lives*)
- **provide** a central service to support colleagues in becoming more competent and confident in managing the different devices after insertion
- **provide** the catalyst for education, research and audit, fostering an attitude to encourage innovation in improving patient care

The team has put patients at the heart of practice and reduced infection.



Some of the team ...

A unified approach to patient care has ...

- **improved** the patient experience
- **supported** innovation in practice
- **standardised** practice
- **promoted** safety
- **reduced** infection
- **reduced** patient stay
- **increased** productivity
- **invested** in staff skills