

An audit of single room capacity for isolation at a London hospital Trust

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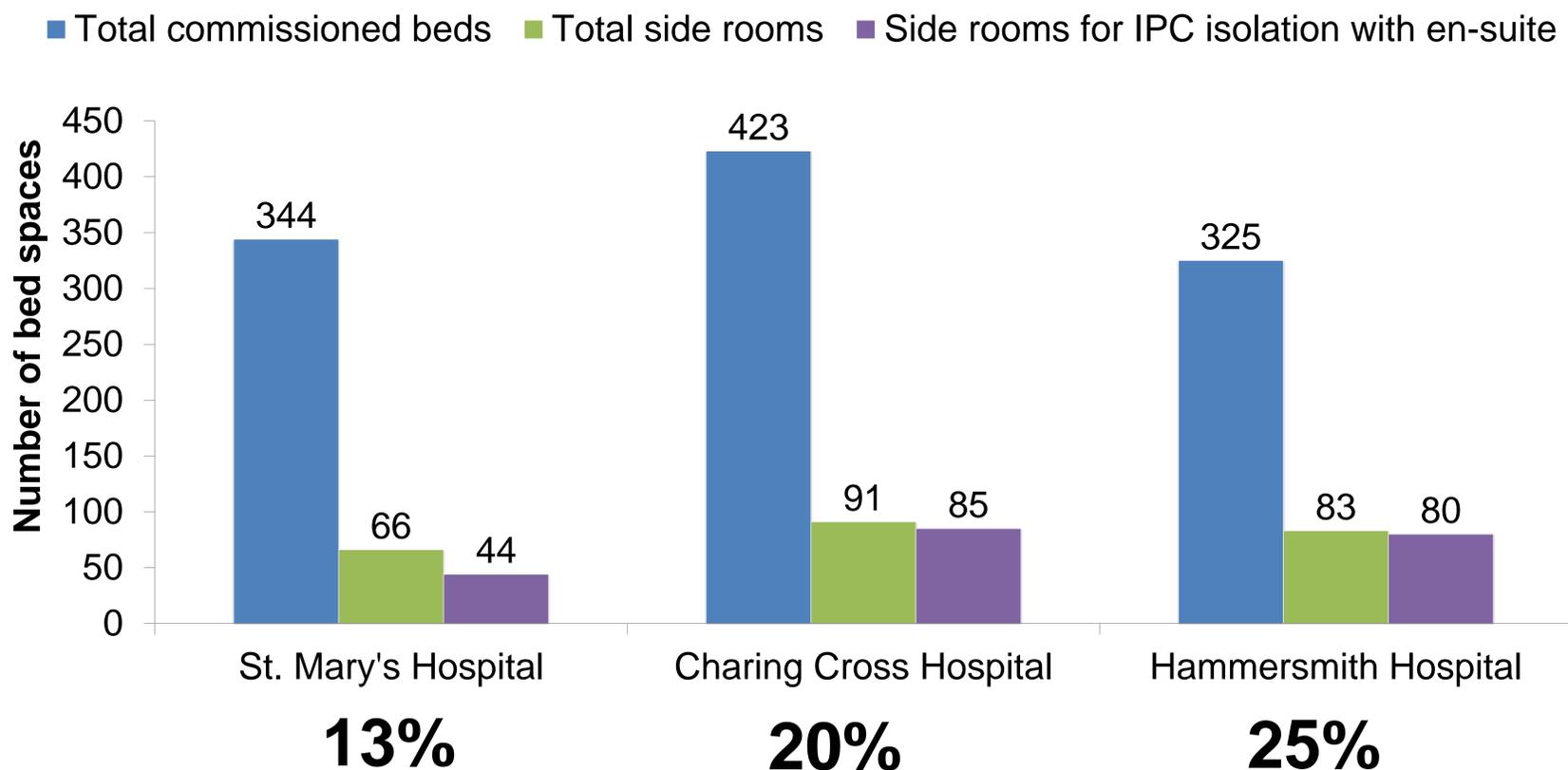
1. Introduction

- Single rooms are required to isolate patients who are infected or colonised with hospital pathogens, and patients with non-infectious requirements.
- Single rooms are in short supply in many NHS hospitals.¹
- We performed an audit of single room capacity.
- A review into single rooms was undertaken across the Trust in April 2015 to determine the type of isolation room available in each inpatient clinical area and the ratio of these against the overall bed base.

2. Methods

- Each inpatient ward was visited and the number of beds and single rooms was counted.
- Whether single rooms had an en-suite was also captured.
- Certain areas are ring-fenced for a particular patient group or cannot be used for isolation purposes (for example, positive pressure rooms that cannot be converted into isolation rooms).
- These areas were excluded from the review: Intensive Care, Paediatrics, Neonatal units and a specialist eye hospital.

Figure: Total number and percentage of side rooms at three hospitals in the Trust
(The percentage below each hospital is the proportion of single rooms with en-suite)



3. Results

- The overall proportion of single rooms with an en-suite of total commissioned beds was 19.1% (209/1092) for the Trust, and 12.8%, 20.1% and 24.6% for the three hospitals within the Trust.
- There were an additional 31 single rooms without en-suite facilities. These may be suitable for isolating some patients for infection control purposes, but are not ideal.
- All three hospital sites also have Private Patient units, amounting to an additional 60 single rooms with en-suite facilities for the Trust.

4. Discussion

- Two thirds of NHS Trusts surveyed by the NAO had insufficient isolation facilities.¹
- The low proportion of single rooms in the Trust as a whole (19.1%) and especially at one of the hospitals is a concern, and a barrier to implementing effective infection prevention and control.
- The demand on single rooms is increasing, with the emergence of CRE combined with existing infectious and non-infectious requirements.

References

1. National Audit Office. The prevention, management and control of Healthcare Associated Infections (HCAI) in hospitals. 2009.