



STOP INFECTIONS NOW

KNOWLEDGE IS POWER

“MRSA IN IRELAND: ADDRESSING THE ISSUES”.

A recently published report.

A REACTION,

By: Dr. Teresa Graham.

I welcome the publication of this report . Any attention paid to MRSA and to other healthcare acquired infection is very welcome. Thanks to the very powerful and very expensive PR of the HSE, these infections have come to be accepted with more or less a shrug of the shoulders. You hear people saying ‘I had my surgery, then I got an infection and I had to spend another thirty days in hospital’ in such a matter- of- fact way, as if it were inevitable .

Turning to the report itself, I find it a bit difficult to see the rationale behind doing it, beyond perhaps putting a lot of information together in the one document, which is helpful. There is nothing new in here. A very large percentage of it has been in previous reports dating from 1995, and in

fairness, this is stated and reference is made to all previous reports, except that of 1995. From, perhaps, a petty personal point of view, the only original research done into HCAs in Ireland in the recent past has been our own into the social and psychological effects of MRSA, and we were not asked for any contribution to this report.

That being said, this report has done a valuable service in drawing attention to some important issues. Firstly: the figures being used for the prevalence and incidence of HCAs are unreliable. We are relying on estimates, and we know that the surveillance is patchy at best.

Secondly, as it made clear in this report, the situation regarding death from, or contributed to by, HCAs is even more confused. We haven't a notion of the number of deaths in the past, or even the present, as what is worse is that there seems to be no plan in place to rectify this sorry state.

The full text of the report can be found on the web site of the Irish Patients Association, www.irishpatients.ie