

# Update for parents re small risk of infection for heart patients caused by heater cooler units

## **Message for Parents/Families from Dr Aaron Bell, Evelina London Children's Hospital**

Dear Parents and families,

Most of you will be aware of some recent reports about a very rare infection that can complicate heart surgery. This infection, *Mycobacterium chimaera* has been found in 28 patients, mainly adults without congenital heart problems having a valve repair or replacement. All centres that undertake cardiac surgery of any type have been instructed by Public Health England to notify their patients that have had any form of heart valve surgery about this. This involves a lot of the operations that we do for babies, children and adults with congenital heart problems.

Many of you are likely to receive an official letter in the post about this. The purpose of the letter is just to keep you informed, and to let you know where to find more information if you need it. I am sure some of you will worry about this, but please remember we have had no cases at all at Evelina London Children's Hospital or at St Thomas' Hospital and we continue to keep a very close eye on the situation both here and nationally.

Importantly, you do not need to do anything differently. This is just to make you aware of the issue so that in the very rare event there are any signs of infection they can be dealt with appropriately.

Dr Aaron Bell  
Consultant Paediatric Cardiology  
Head of Service, Evelina London Children's Hospital