# Communication templates ­for infection prevention and control (IPC) walk rounds | Ngā tātauira mō te whakawhiti kōrero mō te ārai me te whakahaere pokenga (IPC)

* + 1. **Ward notification (*email or letter that notifies clinical and operational leader of purpose and time for IPC walk round)***

Dear *[clinical and operational leader name]*

Our organisation is committed to continuous improvement of processes related to infection prevention and control (IPC). One way of identifying opportunities to improve IPC communication and practices is to conduct IPC walk rounds. The Infection Prevention team coordinates IPC walk rounds with senior leadership.

The walk rounds focus on IPC education and training, healthcare associated infection (HAI) surveillance, multimodal strategies, monitoring of IPC practices and feedback, and environment, materials and equipment. This is part of our effort to become a global leader using the World Health Organization’s Guidelines on Core Components of Infection Prevention and Control.

Your ward/department was selected for our walk round, and we greatly appreciate your staff’s time and willingness to provide input.

*[Ward name]* has been scheduled for an IPC walk round on *[date]* from *[start time]* to *[end time].* This walk round is part of our commitment to IPC and improving patient care.

The goal of the walk round is to provide an opportunity for a senior leadership team member to meet with staff who work in your ward, to highlight good practices and discuss any concerns. All staff members play a vital role in IPC, so the walk rounds team would like to use this visit as a chance to speak with all staff working at the time of the scheduled walk round.

These rounds are casual in nature and give staff the opportunity to identify and discuss IPC problems directly. There are no right or wrong answers to the questions the senior leader will ask. This conversation helps foster a culture of open communication and to identify ways to improve systems and share best practice.

*[Attach a list of sample questions to review with your staff prior to the IPC walk round.]*

To make this opportunity worthwhile, it would be valuable for you and your team to think about what you would like to discuss. Before the IPC walk round, you are asked to ensure that you are (or a delegate is) available to participate in the walk round.

Please inform staff members of the IPC walk round and their opportunity to engage in the process. The rounding team may also welcome the chance to talk with patients, if possible, and this can be decided on the walk round day.

If you have any questions or need further clarification, please contact *[IPC team]* at *[phone or email]*. We look forward to meeting with you and your team.

Kind regards

*[IPC staff]*

* + 1. **Opening statement during IPC walk rounds (provided by senior leader)[[1]](#footnote-1)**

We are here on an IPC walk round today. The team is made up of a senior leader (myself, [*name and role*]), a member of our IPC team [*name*], the clinical and operational leader [*name*], and the scribe [*name*] who will help with taking notes of the topics we discuss and proposed actions.

We are interested in focusing on IPC systems and processes, not individuals. Each of us has an important role to play in IPC so your views are very valuable. We must highlight that this is an informal discussion and not an inspection or audit.

Problems tend to fall into a few different categories. Some problems are on a local level, which means solutions may be more readily found and implemented. Others may be clinically simple but administratively more complex to solve. Some problems require significant budgetary investments or the attention of an action team to assess the problem before attempting a solution. All of you participating in this walk round should know that your input will help prioritise opportunities.

We are here to listen to you, because we want to work together to improve practices related to IPC. Our aim is to discuss good IPC practice and concerns, and to work with you to improve the environment and overall delivery of care related to IPC.

*Optional:* During our visit today, we would like to meet with one or two patients (if appropriate for the area being visited) to ask them for their views on IPC also.

So, before we dive into conversation, could you please introduce yourselves and tell us your roles?

* + 1. **Closing statement at end of IPC walk rounds (provided by senior leader)[[2]](#footnote-2)**

Thank you for taking the time to meet with us today and share your thoughts and ideas. We appreciate how busy you are and hope you have found value from the conversation. We are very glad we have come here today because this has been particularly beneficial for us. We have agreed that some actions can be managed by yourselves or that you need to discuss with your clinical and operational leader [*list items*]. You have also highlighted opportunities that the clinical and operational leader and myself will need to discuss further to follow up [*list items*].

From here, the actions we have agreed together to prioritise will be sent within two weeks to you (clinical and operational leader) and to support you with follow up.

One of the things we have been so impressed with today is how proactive you and your team have been with… [*give an example of an IPC initiative that has been discussed*]. We would like to think about how you can share this great initiative with other similar areas in the hospital.

To reinforce that IPC is an organisational priority, we would appreciate if you could share with your colleagues about today’s walk round and the ideas we covered so that all staff are aware of the topics and actions discussed.

* + 1. **Initial communications after IPC walk rounds**
       1. **Thank you to participating frontline staff *(this could be written as an email or postcard sent to staff)***

Thank you for talking with our leaders and participating in the IPC walk rounds to improve IPC practices and safety culture. Your input is highly valued, and further follow up with your clinical and operational leader will include prioritisation and implementation of the actions discussed.

For questions or additional feedback about the IPC walk round process, please contact Infection Prevention at *[phone number or email address]*.

* + - 1. **Email or letter that highlights topics discussed, recommended solutions and request for action review and prioritisation**

Kia ora *[clinical and operational leader name]*

Thank you very much for committing your time and participating in the IPC walk round to *[ward]* on *[date]*. We enjoyed meeting and talking with you and your staff about IPC opportunities and found it very informative.

As agreed, please find attached a draft version of the action plan that emphasises the IPC action points we will take forward together with the intention of resolving or raising further awareness on the issue.

*[Senior leader’s name]* who rounded in your area would like to highlight the following items provided by your staff as positive feedback:

* *[item]*
* *[item]*
* *[item]*.

Below are opportunities your staff identified that they would like to see resolved:

* *[item]*
* *[item]*
* *[item]*.

Please take a moment to consider these ideas and respond as to what actions, if any, are feasible for implementation. If any actions need to be clarified or amended, please feel free to do so. Please respond with the actions you prioritised and your anticipated date of completion for each item by *[date – two weeks from date of this letter]*.

Once your response is received, the final action plan will be emailed to all members of the rounding team, to ensure agreed actions are completed.

*[Attach summary of topics discussed and proposed solutions by staff]*

We also ask for your feedback on the IPC walk round process. Do you have any recommendations as to what would make these IPC walk rounds more effective? Have you found participation in the IPC walk rounds beneficial?

Thank you for your dedication to providing the highest quality of care to our patients.

Kind regards

*[IPC staff]*

* + 1. **Final communications – summary of final agreed actions to clinical and operational leader:**

Kia ora *[clinical and operational leader name]*

Thank you very much for committing your time and participating in the IPC walk round to *[ward]* on *[date]*.

As agreed, please find attached the final version of the action plan that emphasises the IPC action points we will take forward together with the intention of resolving or raising further awareness on the issue.

Again, we would like to mention the positive feedback provided by your staff:

* *[item]*
* *[item]*
* *[item]*.

Below are the final actions and intended deadlines to be worked on by you and your team:

* *[item]; [deadline date]*
* *[item]; [deadline date]*
* *[item]; [deadline date]*.

Please keep me apprised of your progress, so I can inform the appropriate leaders and committees, and keep the IPC walk rounds database up to date. Please also contact me if you have any questions or concerns related to the action implementation.

Kind regards

*[IPC staff]*

1. Quality Improvement Division, Health Service Executive. 2016. *Quality and Safety Walk-rounds: A co-designed approach, toolkit and case study report.* Dublin, Ireland: Quality Improvement Division, Health Service Executive*.* [↑](#footnote-ref-1)
2. *Ibid.* [↑](#footnote-ref-2)