

Welcome

to the 21st RESIST newsletter from the Antimicrobial Resistance and Infection Control Team (AMRIC). In this edition we reflect on International Hand Hygiene day on the 5th May 2024, pre-travel MMR vaccination and the 2023 Point Prevalence Survey. We also have lots of updates on antimicrobial resistance and IPC news.

Thanks for your comments and inputs, if you have any suggestions on content or want further information please contact us on hcai.amrteam@hse.ie

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Dr. Colm Henry, HSE Chief Clinical Officer

As healthcare workers our jobs are always challenging but any increase in the prevalence of serious illnesses circulating in the population makes our work that much more difficult. In the media, and in our day to day work, we can see the concern over things like Measles, Mpox, COVID and other infectious diseases. I want to commend the work you continue to do, to prepare for and deal with the increased workload that can be brought on during outbreaks.

Outbreaks put increased pressure on our resources and staff, as such it is increasingly important that we make use of every resource we can to help manage our workload and continue to deliver excellent quality of care. In a clinical setting, we have many tools that can assist us in fighting the acute symptoms of these ailments but, as always, the best protection is preventative care.

Vaccination is of course one of our primary weapons against preventable diseases. I encourage all healthcare workers and service users to endeavour to keep up to date with their vaccinations. Vaccines have helped us to all but eliminate diseases like smallpox and polio but increased misinformation, scepticism, complacency and vaccine fatigue means that diseases we thought were all but eliminated like measles are seeing a resurgence. Please encourage and support any of our colleagues, patients and service users who are not up to date with their vaccinations to get vaccinated as soon as possible. It may help them to talk to you if they have questions or concerns. As always, our staff, with their knowledge and experience, is our greatest resource.



*Dr. Colm Henry,
HSE Chief Clinical Officer*

*Continued
overleaf*

In addition to this the continued improvement of our IPC practices plays a key role in keeping service users and staff safe. The 5th May 2024 was World Hand Hygiene Day. This day is to remind us of the importance of hand hygiene in preventing the spread of infection, both in our day-to-day life and our work. Thank you to everyone who held an event to mark the day.

In addition, the guidelines, posters, webinars, leaflets and the many other resources at our disposal through AMRIC and other sources here in Ireland and internationally are key to us further improving quality of care and patient outcomes. I especially want to thank our frontline IPC specialists for always leading the way in continually developing their skills and understanding of IPC best practice.

Thank you for your continued commitment to providing services to the people that need our help and support.

Míle buíochas le achan dhuine, GRMA
Dr. Colm Henry, HSE Chief Clinical Officer

CHO4 Site Visits

We were very happy to have HSE Chief Clinical Officer Dr. Colm Henry join us for our site visit to Clonakilty Community Hospital in HSE South West.

The goal of our site visits is to support interaction, mutual learning and to review and discuss any local issues of concern relating to healthcare associated infection, infection prevention and antimicrobial stewardship.

They are invaluable to our work. They allow us to get a feel for how our guidelines and advice are implemented on the front line. They let us know of issues that may require our attention.

The office of the CCO prioritises these site visits to support the work and dedication of our IPC and AMS teams in acute and community services

The visit to Clonakilty Community Hospital was our second site visit of the day with our team having attended at St. Stephen's Hospital in Cork earlier that day.



I attended the 34th Congress of the European Society of Clinical Microbiology and Infectious Diseases (ESCMID Global) in Barcelona with my colleague Josephine Galway AMRIC Director of Nursing. Formerly known as ECCMID, this event ran from 26th to the 30th April and set a new attendance record with over 18,000 participants.

ESCMID is one of the best opportunities to meet with, learn from and co-operate with our international colleagues. Presentations are delivered in a variety of formats from more casual fireside chats to keynote lectures from some of the world's leading voices in IPC and AMS. There was no shortage of options, on the first morning there were 18 parallel sessions. It was also great to see presentations and posters from some of our colleagues in IPC and AMS from Ireland.

With so many options and given the high quality of all the work being presented it is a shame it is not possible to absorb all of it.

I attended a talk by Prof. Shiranee Sriskandan on Emergence of Group A streptococcal diseases: from strep throat to invasive infections. Prof. Sriskandan gave us an overview of pathogenesis of streptococcal infections as well as the epidemiology of recent UK streptococcal waves. Noting that the prevalence of the M1UK strain prompted consideration of the need for flexing of antibiotic guidance at different times of year.

Another interesting presentation was on international antimicrobial stewardship accreditation programmes. Spain is setting a standard in Europe as the EU develops its own pan European scheme. The UK's GAMSAS programme which has accredited some Irish institutions is looking to set a global standard.

But further afield we were also given an overview of schemes in India and Australia with both showing how differing geography, population densities and demographics dictate the format of any such scheme. Accreditation will play an important role in progressing AMS as we move to our next national action plan.

On a lighter note there was a screening of the Dustin Hoffman film *Outbreak* with a panel of experts interjecting to praise certain aspects but, more often, to point out the errors and dramatic licence taken by the film-makers. Though intended as a bit of light fun it was also surprisingly informative.

There was so much on offer I could go on, and it is great to have some of the material available to attendees on the online catch up programme until October; I have spent some time listening to sessions I could not attend in real time. I am grateful to the organisers for putting on such a fantastic event - a lot of work goes into making such a huge event run so smoothly. I would also like to thank my AMRIC colleagues for helping to organise our attendance and to thank Josephine for joining me.



Dr. Eimear Brannigan, HSE Clinical Lead for Antimicrobial Resistance and Infection Control



*Everybody needs a break,
Climb a mountain or jump in a lake.
Some head off to exotic places,
Others go to the Galway Races.*

Christy Moore, Lisdoonvarna

As the summer approaches, such as it is, many of us start to think about getting away to exotic and indeed not-so-exotic places for some rest, relaxation and to spend time with friends and family. If I can borrow an aviation analogy: the airline oxygen mask principle reminds us to tend to our own needs prior to those of others. As healthcare workers, we need to look after ourselves if we expect to be able to help our patients. A well-earned holiday is a welcome strategy to recharge our batteries.



Some will be fortunate enough to travel overseas for a holiday. Planning for these trips can help build

anticipation. It can also reduce the risk of avoidable banana skins that could cause a holiday slip up. The increase in measles globally introduces an additional health concern with overseas travel. Airports, ferry ports, buses and trains tend to corral us together cheek by jowl with other passengers. Our fellow voyagers can come from anywhere in the world, including countries with high levels of measles. Measles is arguably the most infectious communicable disease. An unvaccinated person who comes into contact with a case of measles has an estimated 90% likelihood of developing the illness.

People at greatest risk of becoming ill with measles include infants and people who are not fully vaccinated with the MMR vaccine. Young babies are at particular risk of complications. Overseas travel presents a high risk of developing measles for unvaccinated people. It can be a severe illness which requires hospitalisation in about one in five cases. Vaccination is safe and effective.

In response to concerns about the growing incidence of measles globally, **parents and guardians of babies from aged 6 months to 11 months inclusive are urged to have their infant vaccinated ideally at least 2 weeks before departing on an overseas holiday.** Vaccination is free from GP practices for eligible people. Babies vaccinated before 12 months of age should still get their 12 month MMR vaccine and a booster MMR at junior infants age.



People who are not certain if they are immune from measles should also ensure they have had two MMR vaccinations. If in doubt, it is safe to give an additional MMR vaccine. However, those born in Ireland before 1978 are considered immune and do not need an MMR vaccine

*Author: Dr Scott Walkin,
Irish College of General Practitioners Lead for Antimicrobial Resistance and infection Control (AMRIC)*





New Haughton Hospital holds Infection Control and Prevention Awareness Day

An Infection Control and Prevention Awareness Day was held recently in the New Haughton Hospital in New Ross, Co. Wexford.

Organised by the hospital, in conjunction with the HSE's Infection Prevention and Control Services, management and staff colleagues, residents of New Haughton and visitors alike were encouraged to be part of the day, the focus of which was an information stand.

The event followed on from New Haughton Hospital marking a year since it began its implementation of the national "RESIST" hand hygiene campaign.

New Haughton Hospital in New Ross provides long-term residential and respite care for 42 older persons. Residents also have access to community care services including, speech and language therapy, dietetics, physiotherapy, occupational therapy, chiropody, dental, audiography and ophthalmic services.

Speaking at the Awareness Day in the New Haughton, the hospital's Director Nursing Margaret Nowlan O' Neill said:



"New Haughton Hospital has an excellent reputation as a care facility and is deeply appreciative of the support the hospital receives from families and the wider community in the area it serves."

"Our record in hand hygiene has also been excellent but we are always looking to continuously improving infection prevention practices. Our selection last year to participate in the RESIST programme and our in-house initiatives, such as today's Awareness Day, will help us to do that. HSE Clinical Nurse Specialists in Infection Prevention and Control Theresa Duffy and Kerensa McRedmond joined us for the Awareness Day. It was a great success, created lots on interest on Infection Prevention and Control and Hand Hygiene and our visitors were very interested in the chats regarding their own hand hygiene practices."

Kerensa McRedmond (Clinical Nurse Manager 2/Infection Prevention & Control, HSE) added:

"Staff, residents, patients and visitors all have a role to play, to help stop the spread of Healthcare Associated Infections and join the superbug resistance. The RESIST programme and Awareness Days help facilities like New Haughton refresh and energise its hand hygiene approach and our Link Practitioner and Infection Control Nurses will be supporting them to do that"



We would like to welcome 2 new members to the AMRIC team.

Deirdre Collins, Epidemiologist



A native of Dublin Deirdre has spent her years since finishing her undergraduate degree living, studying and working in Perth, Australia.

A graduate of Trinity College and The University of Western Australia Deirdre has experience researching cholera in Papua New Guinea and pneumococcal carriage in Aboriginal people.

She completed her PhD and postdoc on the epidemiology of *C. diff* infection in the Asia-Pacific, spending 12 years working with a *C. diff* research/reference lab.

Deirdre can help with all things *C. diff*, interpreting lab data and data analysis presentation, project design and navigating ethics and governance

You can contact Deirdre by email: Deirdre.Collins8@hse.ie

Angie O'Brien, Communications Lead

Angie O'Brien, a Waterford native, joined the AMRIC team in March 2024.

Angie's background is in publishing and public relations. Angie worked in publishing and PR in London before returning to Ireland to work in health service communications.

Angie can help team members to get the most out of their communications activities and can advise on media relations, stakeholder engagement, publications, plain English, campaigns, internal communications, digital and social media, etc.



You can contact Angie at: angie.obrien@hse.ie

Deirdre and Angie have already shown themselves to be great assets to the AMRIC Team.



We would like to congratulate our colleagues in University Hospital Limerick for having their poster accepted to the ESCMID Conference in Barcelona this year. The poster pertains to the impact of our IV Care Team and how that impact was achieved. The poster is reproduced in full below.

The impact of a newly established Intravenous Care Team on peripheral venous catheter blood stream infections in an acute hospital in Ireland

Margaret Carroll¹, John McCarthy¹, Breda O'Brien¹, James Powell², Mary Byrne², Nuala H. O'Connell²

¹ Department of Infection Prevention and Control, University Hospital Limerick, Limerick, Ireland.
² Department of Clinical Microbiology, University Hospital Limerick, Limerick, Ireland



Background

Insertion of a peripheral venous catheter (PVC) is one of the commonest interventions performed in acute care. A risk associated with PVCs is nosocomial *Staphylococcus aureus* bacteraemia (SAB), which can be associated with considerable mortality, morbidity, prolonged length of hospital stay and increased healthcare costs. An intravenous care (IVC) team commenced work in supporting best practice with PVC management in September 2022. The objective was to optimise patient's experience by reducing infections and other adverse effects resulting from PVCs.

IV Care Team



Care bundle steps for preventing Infection in PVCs

Algorithm Steps

PREVENT INFECTION
when inserting and maintaining a peripheral venous catheter (PVC)



- The PVC is clinically indicated
 Aseptic Technique
 Hand Hygiene before inserting of PVC
 2% Chlorhexidine in 70% IPA to disinfect the skin
 Sterile transparent semi-permeable dressing in place
 Review clinical need for PVC daily
 Remove if no longer required
 Hand hygiene before accessing the PVC
 2% Chlorhexidine in 70% IPA wipe before accessing catheter hub
 PVC dressing dry and intact
 Remove the PVC if signs of infection or VIP greater than 2

Methods

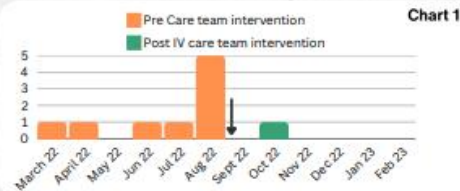
- An important intervention was standardisation of consumables with availability in each clinical area.
- Ward based training provided in best practice for insertion and care of PVCs to all staff with responsibility for PVC management.
- Patients were educated and empowered by providing information on PVC management and how they can assist in preventing infection from these devices.
- The IVC team inserted PVCs.
- Adherence to best practice was achieved through monitoring and auditing of PVC care bundle compliance, generating quality improvement plans for each clinical area.
- Engagement with key stakeholders
- The impact the IV care team strategies were measured using UHL surveillance data on PVC related *S. aureus* bacteraemia cases

Results

UHL surveillance reported there were 9 PVC related SABs from March-August 2022 pre- the IVC team intervention. There was 1 infection from September 2022- February 2023 post- the IVC team intervention. See chart 1.

Pre- the intervention there was one mortality indirectly associated with a PVC SAB as well as two significant morbidity sequelae (one endocarditis necessitating a prosthetic valve insertion and admission to intensive care settings whilst a second case was associated with osteomyelitis). Post- the intervention there was no significant morbidity or mortality associated with the one case.

Hospital PVC SAB related costs pre- the intervention equates €305,513 to compared to €26,408 post- the intervention. See chart 2.



References

HSE Guiding Framework for Prevention of Peripheral and Central Venous Catheter Related Infection 2021, available:



Scan me

Conclusion

Having a dedicated IV care team focusing on improving the safety and quality of PVC care in all clinical areas resulted in a 90% reduction in PVC related SABs, with significant positive impact in mortality and morbidity. Resultant associated healthcare costs were reduced by 91%. Most importantly the patients experience is optimised when best practice is adhered to in PVC care and management.





RESIST Launch at St. Anthony’s Unit, Clonmel

The HSE/South East Community Healthcare’s St. Anthony’s Unit in Clonmel, Co. Tipperary has joined in implementation of the national “RESIST” hand hygiene campaign.

At this time, St Anthony’s is under the management of Cashel Residential Older Persons Services. An 18 bedded facility, St. Anthony’s provides long term and palliative care to older people. The new 50 bedded en-suite bed Residential Care Centre is currently under construction on an adjacent site. It is due for completion later this year, with the intention to open services as a standalone Community Nursing Unit. Speaking at the launch of RESIST in St. Anthony’s Unit recently, Person in Charge, Nisha Abraham said:

“Infections that can happen in any healthcare service but when healthcare workers like doctors, nurses and carers keep their hands clean, they help prevent the spread of serious healthcare-associated infections (HCAIs). “Cleaning your hands properly, at the correct time, when delivering care to patients and residents is the most effective way to stop the spread of many infections.”

Joining Nisha and her St. Anthony’s colleagues for the launch in Clonmel, Michelle Hennebry (Infection Control Specialist/South Tipperary, HSE) said:

“Staff, residents, patients and visitors all have a role to play, to help stop the spread of healthcare associated infections and join the superbug resistance. This programme will help each facility it is rolled out in to refresh and energise its hand hygiene approach and our Link Practitioner and Infection Control Nurses will be supporting them to do that”.



Pictured at the launch of the HSE’s national “RESIST” hand hygiene campaign’s implementation in St. Anthony’s Unit, Clonmel were (left to right): Michelle Hennebry (Infection Control Specialist/South Tipperary, HSE), Nisha Abraham (Person in Charge, St. Anthony’s Unit), Tracy Duggan (Staff Nurse), Sujitha Govindasamy (Staff nurse), Daragh McLoughlin (Health Care Assistant), Christine Connolly (Kitchen Assistant), Karen Coyle (Staff Nurse/Infection Prevention & Control link practitioner,), Luka Chege (Health Care Assistant), Martina Moloney (Activities Coordinator), Meenu Jose (Staff Nurse), Rose Spillane (Kitchen Assistant), Imee Mathew (Staff Nurse), Pamela Landers (Infection Prevention & Control Clinical Nurse Specialist, HSE) and Dr. Rosemary Curran (Consultant Microbiologist, HSE/South East Community Healthcare)





Office of the
Nursing & Midwifery
Services Director

Ireland has again participated in the pan-European point prevalence survey (PPS) 2023. The survey is overseen by The European Centre for Disease Prevention & Control (ECDC). This is the third such survey. The first survey was in 2012 and the second was in 2017.

The survey is designed to answer two questions:

1. *What percentage of patients develop an infection as a result of being admitted to European hospitals?*
2. *What percentage of patients in European hospitals receive antibiotics?*

In Ireland, the survey is coordinated by the Health Protection Surveillance Centre (HPSC), the national agency responsible for the monitoring of infectious diseases and antibiotic use.

Results from the survey will be used by the nurses, doctors, other healthcare workers and support staff who work in the health service to help us all improve antibiotic use, reduce hospital-acquired infections and improve patient care.

The survey is repeated routinely to measure improvement in antibiotic use and healthcare-associated infections over time.

This survey will also check the number of patients receiving antibiotics, the reasons for the antibiotics and whether or not they were used according to the hospital guidelines. The information collected in this survey will help to identify areas where antibiotic use may be improved, so that antibiotics stay reliable for future patients.

Thank you to everyone who has participated in the survey and facilitated its completion.

Sixty-five acute hospitals participated in PPS 2023, representing the first time that all acute hospitals in Ireland have taken part. This is an increase from 60 and 50 hospitals in 2017 and 2012, respectively. Across these facilities 12,587 patients have been included.

The PPS 2023 National Report is now available on the HPSC website:

<https://bit.ly/2023PPSReport>





RESIST Campaign launches in the South East

The HSE/South East Community Healthcare’s Millview residential mental health care centre in Enniscorthy, Co. Wexford has joined in implementation of the national “RESIST” hand hygiene campaign. Speaking at the launch of RESIST in Millview, CNM2/Service Manager Helen McGahan said:

“Cleaning your hands properly, at the correct time, when delivering care to patients and residents is the most effective way to stop the spread of many infections. When healthcare workers like doctors, nurses and carers keep their hands clean, they help prevent the spread of serious healthcare-associated infections (HCAIs). These are infections that can happen in any healthcare service.”



The HSE/South East Community Healthcare’s Wexford Residential Intellectual Disability Service has also joined in implementation of the national “RESIST” hand hygiene campaign. Speaking at the launch of RESIST in Wexford Residential Intellectual Disability Services, Area Director of Nursing Brigid Murphy said:



“Wexford Residential Intellectual Disability Services has an excellent record in hand hygiene but we are always looking to improve our standards. The RESIST programme will help us to do that and we are delighted to have been selected to be part of the rollout in HSE residential facilities.”

The HSE/South East Community Healthcare’s Farnogue Residential Healthcare Unit in Wexford has also joined in implementation of the national “RESIST” hand hygiene campaign. Treesa Antony (Acting Person in Charge, Abbeygale House) says:

“Some infections found in healthcare facilities can be very serious. We can all help stop the spread of these infections by making sure that our staff, residents and visitors clean their hands. We want our staff to continue their hand hygiene training and join the Superbug Resistance. We have always implemented good hand hygiene practices in Selskar, but this new programme will help us to refresh and energise our hand hygiene approach.”





We would like to congratulate our colleagues from around the country for the excellent work they put in to mark Hand Hygiene Day 2024 on May 5th 2024. Here are a selection of photos from their events.



Royal Hospital Donnybrook,



Our Lady's Hospital
Manorhamilton, County Leitrim



Cherry Orchard Hospital



Director of Nursing Antoinette Kirwan, ADON Sandra Massey Traynor, Chiara Parisella CNM2 and Agnes Murray. St.Luke's Hospital Rathgar





South Infirmary-Victoria University Hospital



St James' Hospital



Sacred Heart Hospital Carlow



Clontarf Hospital Hand Hygiene Day 2024



Professor Catherine Wall Director of QRSM and Shaini Paul Mathew IPC ADON Tallaght University Hospital



National Rehabilitation Hospital





Hand Hygiene Day 2024 (continued)



Meath community Unit



The National Maternity Hospital



University of Limerick, Department of Nursing and Midwifery



Clontarf Hospital



This is a reminder to all staff that you have access to a wide range of patient leaflets and translated patient information. Please allow 7 working days for completion of orders.

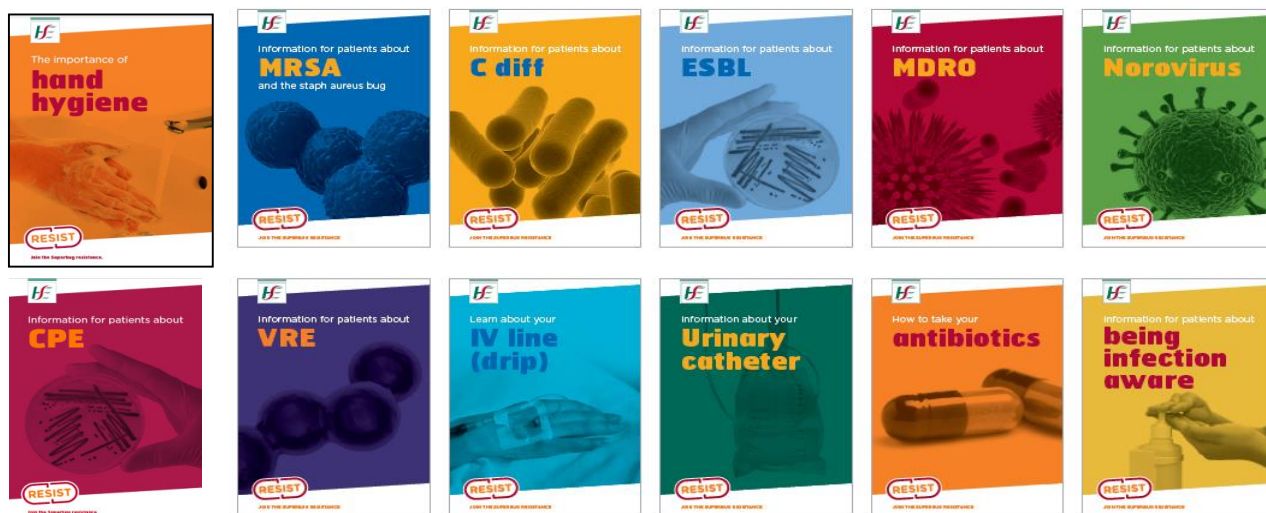
There are a number of AMRIC print resources available to order including awareness posters, guidance posters and patient information leaflets. These resources are available to order online from www.healthpromotion.ie. To place an order you should first set up a professional account when registering. To access the AMRIC resources you should select RESIST from the search box. This will bring up the many items that are currently available to health professionals to order.

The printed patient information leaflets include the following:

CPE	<i>C. diff</i>	VRE
MRSA	ESBL	IV lines
How to take your antibiotics	Norovirus	Urinary catheters
Infection prevention in hospital	Multiple Drug Resistant Organisms (MDROs)	

We have updated healthpromotion.ie so now you can view a PDF preview of all of our items before ordering.

If you are having any issues with ordering a complete guide can be found on the HPSC website at this link:
<https://bit.ly/AMRICOrders>



RESIST merchandise (t-shirts, note books, bags etc) is reserved for hand hygiene day, European Antibiotic Awareness Day and RESIST launches. Merchandise will continue to be issued via the AMRIC team and are not available to order online. If you have any queries please contact the AMRIC team hcai.amrteam@hse.ie





If you have an article in mind, please send in an outline of what it will be about, along with an estimated word count, as well as suggested photography. The more photographs the better!

Please bear in mind that due to space restraints, not every article submitted will make it into the newsletter

- News articles - maximum 400 words
- Feature articles - maximum 900 words for a two-page feature
- Photographs in jpeg format,
- Clear captions for all photographs submitted, particularly if it's a stand-alone picture with extended caption

If you have any suggestions on content or want further information please contact: hcai.amrteam@hse.ie or liam.mcloughlin2@hse.ie

Upcoming Deadlines

Autumn edition

Initial ideas by:
Friday 23rd September 2024
Finished articles by:
Monday, 16th October 2024

Winter edition

Initial ideas by:
Friday, 15th December 2024
Finished articles by:
Monday 9th January 2025

Upcoming events / Awareness Days

National Sepsis Summit: 3rd Sept 2024
NPSO conference: 17th Sept 2024
WONCA Europe conference: 25th – 28th Sept 2024
International Infection Prevention Week: 13th – 19th Oct 2024
European Antibiotic Awareness Day: 19th Nov 2024

