

## 6. Summary

Although there have been major medical advances throughout the years, the incidence of nosocomial infections has remained unchanged. Device-associated infections make up a significant proportion of all nosocomial infections. In this prospective observational study, we reviewed the incidence of infections in peripheral venous catheters.

From the middle of July 2012 until the middle of November 2012, we surveyed the infections in 89 peripheral venous catheters at the general surgical ward of the Universitätsmedizin Greifswald. We used an infection data sheet which followed CDC standards towards infections and was developed by the Institute of Hygiene and Environmental Medicine Greifswald.

Twenty infections were reported during this period, including 16 between September 17th and October 12th, 2012, the period where students in their first four months of their practical year had their compulsory assistance at the general surgical ward. Their responsibilities during this period were, aside from admitting new patients, to take blood samples and insert peripheral venous catheters. In this study we hypothesize that insufficient skills in performing adequate hygienic measures and working aseptically before and while inserting a peripheral venous catheter are the main cause of these infections. No subsequent intervention study could be carried out in order to clarify our findings.

This study concluded that in order to maintain high hygiene standards and have control over infection rates, it is vital that all personnel on the ward are trained and educated in hygienic measures on a regular basis. In particular students, before being given permission to begin their practical ye-

ar, must attend compulsory theoretical and practical training in order to ensure standardized hygienic measures in every aspect of their work.