Accepted Manuscript

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M. Petrignani, J. van Beek, G. Borsboom, J.H. Richardus, M. Koopmans

PII: S0195-6701(14)00388-0

DOI: 10.1016/j.jhin.2014.11.015

Reference: YJHIN 4439

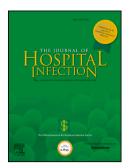
To appear in: Journal of Hospital Infection

Received Date: 13 June 2014

Accepted Date: 22 November 2014

Please cite this article as: Petrignani M, van Beek J, Borsboom G, Richardus JH, Koopmans M, Norovirus introduction routes into nursing homes and risk factors for spread: A systematic review and meta-analysis of observational studies, *Journal of Hospital Infection* (2015), doi: 10.1016/j.jhin.2014.11.015.

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Review

Norovirus introduction routes into nursing homes and risk factors for spread: a systematic review and meta-analysis of observational studies

M. Petrignani^{a,b,*}, J. van Beek^{c,d}, G. Borsboom^b, J.H. Richardus^{a,b}, M. Koopmans^{c,d}

^aMunicipal Public Health Service Rotterdam–Rijnmond, Rotterdam, The Netherlands

^bPublic Health Department, Erasmus MC, University Medical Centre Rotterdam, Rotterdam, The Netherlands

^cVirology Department, Erasmus MC, University Medical Centre Rotterdam, Rotterdam, The Netherlands

^dNational Institute for Public Health and the Environment, Bilthoven, The Netherlands

E-mail address: m.petrignani@rotterdam.nl (M. Petrignani).

SUMMARY

Norovirus causes substantial morbidity and mortality in nursing homes, with high attack rates in residents and staff. Immediate implementation of infection control measures is crucial. The aim of this review was to assess the evidence for sources and modes of introduction of norovirus, and factors contributing to spread. A systematic review of the literature was performed, including peer-reviewed original studies on outbreaks confirmed by reverse transcriptase-polymerase chain reaction. Data on source, index case, transmission mode, attack rate, outbreak duration, and risk factors were extracted. Attack rate and outbreak duration were compared by mode of introduction. Based on the selection criteria, 40 outbreak reports and 18 surveillance studies were included. There is little systematic information available on norovirus introduction into nursing homes, but, from evidence obtained from outbreak reports, it was determined that outbreaks often start with single index cases (57.5%), associated with higher attack rates among residents (P = 0.02). Foodborne introduction was described for 7% of outbreak reports that were characterized by finding multiple index cases. In surveillance studies only 0.7% of outbreaks was reported to be foodborne, 28.5% as person-to-person, and 70.8% remained unknown or not mentioned. Risk factor analyses suggested that transmission was associated with bedside care and exposure to vomit. These findings lead to the following recommendations: (i) to standardize outbreak reports; (ii) to improve early detection and isolation of sporadic cases; (iii) to improve personal hygiene of

^{*}Corresponding author. Address: GGD Rotterdam–Rijnmond, Afdeling infectieziektebestrijding, c/o Mariska Petrignani, Postbus 70032, 3000 LP Rotterdam, The Netherlands. Tel.: +31 (0)10 433 9389.

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