standard of infection control within the home and staff are also more vigilant in spotting any infection issues so that they can be addressed.’

Countywide, the tools have also been credited with helping to reduce the length of diarrhoea and vomiting outbreaks as a result of norovirus. A review of all diarrhoea and vomiting outbreaks reported to date in 2014/15 has found that most have been contained within a period of eight days compared with 15 in previous years.

They have also helped cut hospital admissions when norovirus has been circulating in the community. To date in 2014/15 no residents from care homes have been admitted to hospital due to diarrhoea and vomiting, dehydration or associated urinary tract infections.

Cutting admissions
Chief nurse of Shropshire CCG Linda Izquierdo says: ‘Care homes in the independent sector are responsible for some of the most vulnerable people in society. It is vitally important staff practise infection prevention and control procedures to the highest standard. Any shortfall can lead to hospital admission and subsequently affect NHS services.

‘Check to Protect has taken a partnership approach to clinical and care processes to improve cleanliness and safety for patients in the independent sector. Early signs are promising, and are a credit to Tanya and the team’s hard work and enthusiasm.’

The judges were also impressed. They praised the widespread effect of Check to Protect and Ms Kidson’s leadership.

Chief nurse at North Hampshire CCG Jan Baptiste-Grant says: ‘The building blocks laid by Check to Protect bode well for the future – the initiative has strengthened the relationship between Ms Kidson’s team and the independent care sector.

‘Creating an environment in which independent sector nurses could have their voices heard has built trust and confidence,’ says Ms Kidson. ‘That trust has created something special in Shropshire and the sector’s enthusiasm for this has been truly inspirational.’

Elaine Cole is deputy editor, Nursing Standard

Worldwide research finds dementia affects women more than men

Report co-author Dawn Brooker says: ‘The reality is that more women live with dementia, more women are family carers and more women make up the health and social care workforce. Dementia initiatives will affect women differently from men and all policy makers need to be aware of this.’

Professor Brooker, director of the Association for Dementia Studies at the University of Worcester, adds: ‘This report underlines the fact that the increasing prevalence of dementia worldwide will have a significant impact on women worldwide and needs to be recognised at a family, community and policy level.’

ADI is urging all countries to acknowledge and address the disproportionate effect of dementia on women, and to provide tailored information and support to better enable women to provide care and to feel cared for themselves.

In the UK, two thirds of people with dementia are women. It is the leading cause of death among UK women, accounting for 12% of deaths in 2013, more than heart disease, stroke or the most common forms of cancer.

Women are living longer than men so may not have a partner to care for them. The report identifies that in England and Wales, 60% of women aged over 75 are widowed compared with 29% of men. Women also provide the lion’s share of informal care for relatives with dementia in the UK.

Head of policy and public affairs at Alzheimer’s Society George McNamara says: ‘The role reversal from daughter to carer can pose real emotional and practical challenges for families. Government, business and wider society must ensure that women carers have personalisation and needs to be recognised at a family, community and policy level.’

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