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**To reduce the risk of Legionnaires [and other waterborne bacteria]:**

In areas with vulnerable patients they should consider the following practices:

- Only have water outlets where absolutely essential. Avoid mains water wherever possible.
- Where water is required for vulnerable patients use sterilized water.
- Where hand wash taps are installed, ensure good plumbing practices are followed including good flow, frequent operation and good design and materials.
- Ensure good maintenance and disinfection, with particular emphasis on the tap outlets.
- Carry out regular swab testing to ensure the tap outlets, sinks and traps are free from pathogenic micro-organisms.
- Hand wash facilities should ONLY be used for that purpose.
- Hand washing should be followed by rigorous drying with appropriate paper towels.
- After hand drying Alcohol gel [or equivalent] should be used to ensure no pathogenic micro-organisms remain on the hands.

Materials are important that EPDM lined hoses appeared to encourage growth of micro-organisms which contributed to the Department of Health issuing an ALERT to advise of the potential problem.

- Suggest changed to PEX hose which appeared to be far superior.

Many years ago the USA department responsible for the elderly banned the use of aerators following their concerns that such outlets could increase the risk of spreading Legionnaires. The theory being that Legionnaire is most commonly spread by aerosols and a major cause of aerosols is bubbles bursting. Therefore it was viewed that aerators increased the risk of aerosols which may spread Legionnaires.

- Suggest changed from aerators to Flow laminar outlets.

The taps are only a small part of the total plumbing system. Water treatment, maintenance, disinfection and water testing regime that all contribute to reducing the risk of Legionnaires [and other waterborne bacteria]. Things that the tap design and plumbing installation may help with include:

1. Purging is generally considered to be beneficial
2. Adequate water flow
3. Material use
4. Type of tap outlet