There is currently much debate nationally about the use and selection of Personal Protective Equipment (PPE).

As one of the largest teaching hospitals in the United Kingdom, the Trust’s Infection Prevention and Control team (IPCT) receive a large volume of calls each week surrounding selection and use of PPE. The IPCT decided that a visual tool needed to be created that could be used for reference, but also as a learning method.

Discussion around how this tool would manifest took place and the PPE wheel was born (Fig 1).

Focus groups using patient care scenarios conducted across 10 units have established current levels of knowledge and confidence surrounding PPE use. Participants \( (N=49) \) were asked to identify appropriate PPE, and indicate their confidence in their decisions (Fig 2).

Results confirmed the need for a tool, with widely varying confidence levels across the Trust (range: 0-80%). Knowledge of PPE was particularly poor when respiratory conditions were involved.

The tool was previewed at our 2016 IPC link staff study day. Staff felt the tool was potentially useful, and multiple requests for the finished tool were received. Final prototype development is scheduled for completion by Dec 2016 and the tool will be disseminated within the Trust during 2017.

Evaluation of its efficacy in helping staff learn about PPE will be conducted via repeat focus groups at 3, 6, and 12 months after launch. Different uses of the tool are also being considered, such as, a large wheel for the nursing environment, mobile app version and other digital formats to make the tool as easily accessible as possible.