Introduction
Venepuncture and cannulation are basic procedures carried out in all hospitals either on patients admitted as an inpatient or those visiting as an outpatient. Application of tourniquet is required for this procedure and the types available can be split into reusable and disposable.

Several studies\(^1,2,3,4,5\) have shown the use of reusable tourniquets are a potential vector for transferring bacteria. C.Fellowes et al in 2006\(^2\) showed 25% of tourniquets carried MRSA and in a separate study\(^3\) 38% of the reusable tourniquets were blood stained.

The Nottingham University Hospitals (NUH) Trust utilizes a variety of tourniquets as shown below in Table 1.

Methods
The survey was carried out in Nottingham University Hospital outpatient phlebotomy department and on inpatients during February 2015. The users who reviewed tourniquets included phlebotomists, doctors and nurses.

Three questionnaires were used–
• Current tourniquet usage in Trust
• Patients’ preference of tourniquet – short and detailed version questionnaires
• User feedback on all tourniquets

Discussion
Majority of staff members still use reusable tourniquets in NUH despite several studies confirming risk of infection. Tournistrip is the preferred disposable tourniquet by patients. Equal number of staff members have a preference for Tournistrip and Vene K. By switching to Tournistrip and cutting down orders on the Whenzou and Vene K tourniquets–
• better patient care can be provided
• tourniquets will be easier to use for staff
• substantial money can be saved for the Trust—almost £14,000
• risk of infection can be reduced

Table 1

| Brand | Number of Units Ordered | Price per Tourniquet | Total Number of Tourniquets | Total Spent  
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Vacutainer</td>
<td>5085</td>
<td>£0.11</td>
<td>127,125</td>
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<td>Vacuette</td>
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<td>4250</td>
<td>£403</td>
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<td>£0.38</td>
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<tr>
<td>Whenzou</td>
<td>2710</td>
<td>£0.45</td>
<td>2710</td>
<td>£1219</td>
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<td>Tournistrip</td>
<td>121</td>
<td>£0.22</td>
<td>24,200</td>
<td>£5274</td>
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</table>

Results
• 29 out of 47 staff members used reusable tourniquets. 43 out of 47 felt reusable Whenzou is easier to use.
• The mean comfort score given by patients for disposable tourniquets is shown in Graph 1.
• 121 out of 155 patients felt Tournistrip was equal to, good or better than a reusable tourniquet.
• Graph 2 shows that equal number of staff members prefer Vene K and Tournistrip. Some staff members did not pick an answer as they preferred a reusable tourniquet.

Graph 1

Graph 2

References