

# IPC Bulletin for Care Homes

Issue No. 12 — November 2018

## Respiratory etiquette

November is COPD (Chronic Obstructive Pulmonary Disease) awareness month, in support of this, please find below information on how to support your residents to carry out good respiratory etiquette. Those people with respiratory conditions are more at risk of developing respiratory infections, especially in the colder months. Carrying out good respiratory etiquette can help reduce the spread of such infections.

### Did you know?

- **Coughing can spread droplets as far as six metres.**
- **Sneezing can spread droplets as far as eight metres.**
- **These droplets can stay suspended in the air for up to ten minutes before settling.**

### Respiratory infections

Along with viral gastroenteritis, respiratory infections such as influenza, are a common cause of outbreaks within a care home. Promoting a high level of standard infection control precautions to staff and good respiratory etiquette to both staff and residents can help prevent the spread of respiratory infection.

Standard infection control precautions and good respiratory etiquette should be promoted regardless of whether or not the resident has a known infection.

### Antibiotic Awareness Week 12-18 November 2018

If a resident is prescribed antibiotics to help treat a respiratory or any other infection, ensure that they are given exactly as instructed, avoid missing doses and complete the course even if the resident appears to be better. These small steps can help stop residents developing resistance to certain antibiotics

If you require IPC education as part of your annual update or evidence for CQC compliance, visit our innovative website for health and social care providers and see our award winning 'Preventing Infection Workbook: Guidance for Care Homes'.

We have also produced an excellent 'IPC CQC Inspection Preparation Pack for Care Homes' at only £69.99 to support you with your IPC requirements for CQC registration.

So have a look and see what you think!

[www.infectionpreventioncontrol.co.uk](http://www.infectionpreventioncontrol.co.uk)

### Respiratory etiquette

Good respiratory etiquette includes:

- Coughing or sneezing into a clean tissue or into your upper sleeve if a tissue is not available, not into your hands
- Disposing of the tissue immediately in the nearest waste bin—in a care home setting the bin should be foot pedal operated
- Carrying out hand hygiene after coughing or sneezing, even if a tissue was used— either using alcohol handrub, liquid soap and warm running water or hand wipes
- The nose and mouth are home to a large number of germs. Always clean your hands after touching them to avoid spreading germs

Residents with poor mobility or cognitive function may need support to carry out good respiratory etiquette:

- Ensure clean disposable tissues are easy accessible for all residents
- Ensure waste bins are located appropriately to avoid used tissues being stored on open surfaces
- Support residents to access and use hand hygiene facilities or hand wipes

