

# IPC Bulletin for Staff providing Domiciliary Care (Care at Home)

Issue No. 28 – October 2021

Organised yearly by the Association for Professionals in Infection Control and Epidemiology (APIC), this years Infection Prevention Week theme is:



## Here are 10 IPC measures to help you in Preventing Infection

### 1. Always practice good hand hygiene

Use the '[Your 5 moments for hand hygiene](#)' and carry out hand hygiene appropriately for every care intervention. Support service users with their hand hygiene, e.g. prompting, assisting.

### 2. Stay home if you are ill

People requiring care at home are likely to be more susceptible to infections, e.g. due to age, low immunity, underlying conditions. If you have an infection, stay at home until you are well. Staff who have viral gastroenteritis should stay at home until they are 48 hours symptom free.

### 3. Ensure service user's take antibiotics appropriately

Help your service users to take antibiotics exactly as prescribed and ensure they complete the full course. Remember, antibiotics will not treat colds and viruses.

### 4. Correct use of face masks

[Wear your face mask correctly](#) at all times. Remove and dispose the mask if you need to drink, eat or take a break, or if it becomes damaged, visibly soiled, damp, or uncomfortable to use. Only touch the elastic loops or ties when removing it.

### 5. Correct use of disposable gloves

Gloved hands can spread germs so remember to remove them safely after each episode of care or cleaning. Gloves need to be used when caring for service users with a confirmed or suspected infection or when there is a risk of exposure to blood and/or body fluids. **Remember gloves are not a substitute for hand hygiene and to clean your hands after removing them.**



### 6. Keep your vaccinations up-to-date

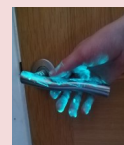
Domiciliary care staff should be up-to-date with their routine vaccinations, COVID-19 and flu vaccinations. **Have you had your COVID-19 booster or flu jab yet?**

### 7. Use natural ventilation and open some windows

During your visit open some windows, if safe to do so. Bringing fresh air into a room and removing older stale air that contains virus particles reduces the chance of spreading COVID-19.

### 8. Keep the service user's environment and care equipment clean

An unclean environment or piece of care equipment provides the perfect breeding ground for microorganisms e.g. bacteria. and viruses. An environment or care equipment that is not decontaminated properly can spread infection to service users, carers and visitors. Help to support service users to keep their environment and equipment clean.



### 9. Provide service users with advice on infection control

Infection prevention and control is everyone's responsibility, including service users and their families. Help them understand the importance of good infection control to keep themselves and other people safe, e.g. hand hygiene and cleanliness in the home.

### 10. Know who your Infection Control Lead is

It is a requirement under *The Health and Social Care Act 2008: Code of Practice on the prevention and control of infections and related guidance* that every domiciliary care provider has an Infection Control Lead who can promote and monitor infection control practices. All members of staff should know who the nominated lead is and feel they can approach them for advice if required.

#### What's new:

#### National Standard of Healthcare Cleanliness 2021

[www.england.nhs.uk/estates/national-standards-of-healthcare-cleanliness-2021/](http://www.england.nhs.uk/estates/national-standards-of-healthcare-cleanliness-2021/)

Visit our website to find lots of IPC resources, many of which are free to download.

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

Call us on 01423 557340, or find us on:

