

IPC Bulletin for Care Homes

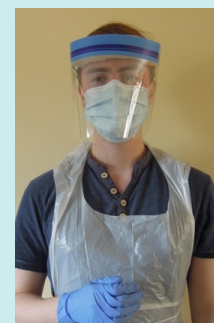
Issue No. 37 - April 2022

Standard infection control precautions (SICPs) 'Personal protective equipment' and 'Respiratory and cough hygiene'

This is the second in a series of bimonthly bulletins discussing the SICPs which form the basis of infection prevention and control measures necessary to reduce the risk of transmission of microorganisms from both recognised and unrecognised sources of infection. Each bulletin will provide an introduction to 2 of the 10 SICPs. As it is often not possible to tell who has or is carrying an infection, it is essential that all staff apply safe systems of working at every opportunity. The SICPs are recommended for all staff, in all care settings, at all times, for all residents, whether infection is known to be present or not. More information on each of the SICPs can be found at www.infectionpreventioncontrol.co.uk/resources/standard-infection-control-precautions-policy-for-care-home-settings/. The SICPs are also covered in more detail in the 'Preventing Infection Workbook: Guidance for Care Homes 11th Edition'.

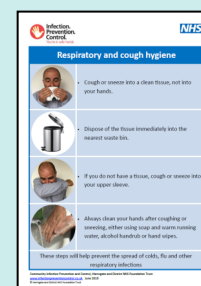
Personal protective equipment (PPE)

- Personal protective equipment helps protect both residents and staff, but to be effective, PPE must be used correctly. All staff should receive training in the [donning and doffing of PPE](#).
- Best practice is to use PPE dispensers to reduce the risk of the PPE becoming contaminated and be readily available at the point of use.
- Before undertaking any task, staff should assess the risks associated with the interaction or task to be undertaken and wear PPE that protects adequately when:
 - ◆ Dealing with a resident who has a confirmed or suspected infection
 - ◆ There is likely exposure to blood and/or body fluids, non-intact skin or mucous membranes
 - ◆ Decontaminating the environment or care equipment
 - ◆ In contact with substances hazardous to health, e.g. cleaning/disinfecting products
- Glove selection should be risk assessed based on sensitivity to latex, nature of the task, risk of contamination and need for sterile gloves. It is important to remember that gloves are not a substitute for hand hygiene.
- Single use PPE should be used when undertaking care tasks and removed after the completion of the task to prevent the spread of infections.
- The correct order of removal of PPE is important to reduce the risk of self contamination.
- Contaminated/infectious PPE should be discarded into the clinical infectious waste stream, non-contaminated/non-infectious PPE should be discarded into the offensive waste stream.
- It is recommended that, for assurance purposes, annual audits to assess the standard of staff PPE donning and doffing are carried out. A 'PPE Audit Tool for Care Homes' is available to download at www.infectionpreventioncontrol.co.uk/resources/personal-protective-equipment-audit-tool-for-care-homes/.



Respiratory and cough hygiene

- Respiratory and cough hygiene can help reduce the risk of spreading respiratory infections, protecting those in contact with the infected person, e.g. residents, family and staff.
- Staff should adopt good respiratory and cough hygiene practices themselves and promote them to residents.
- A 'Respiratory and cough hygiene' Poster is available to download at www.infectionpreventioncontrol.co.uk/resources/respiratory-and-cough-hygiene-poster/.



What's new

- Implementation date for the 'National Standards of Healthcare Cleanliness 2021' for Care Homes has been pushed back to November 2022 by NHS England.
- [COVID-19 visiting restrictions Poster](#).
- QNI IPC Champions Network 17 May 2022, 2:00 - 4:00pm.

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

www.infectionpreventioncontrol.co.uk

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