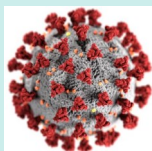


IPC Bulletin for Care Homes

North Yorkshire and York winter special - January 2023



Winter viruses are on the increase in our area

In addition to COVID-19 continuing this winter, residents and staff in care homes are particularly susceptible to infections which normally increase over the winter months, such as seasonal influenza (flu), respiratory syncytial virus (RSV) and stomach infections, e.g. Norovirus.

1. Be prepared

- Flu vaccination - ensure residents and staff are immunised against flu.
- Ensure Infection Prevention and Control (IPC) Policies are up-to-date and followed by staff.
- Ensure all staff are trained in PPE (personal protective equipment) donning and doffing.
- Ensure staff and residents follow good hand hygiene.
- Promote good respiratory etiquette - display 'Catch it, Bin it, Kill it' and 'Respiratory and cough hygiene' Posters.

2. Identify infections early

- **Norovirus** symptoms are sudden onset of diarrhoea and/or projectile vomiting and nausea. Other symptoms include raised low-grade fever, headaches and stomach cramps.
- **Influenza/respiratory infection** symptoms can include high temperature, aching body, cough, headache, loss of appetite.
- **COVID-19** symptoms are a new continuous cough, high temperature and a loss of, or change to, the individual's sense of smell or taste. Assess all residents twice a day.

3. Take immediate action

- Isolate residents who show symptoms of the above infections as soon as possible.

Visit our website to find lots of IPC resources and the above posters, many of which are free to download.
www.infectionpreventioncontrol.co.uk

Call us on **01423 557340**, or find us on:



4. Report an outbreak

- Flu, respiratory illnesses and COVID-19 confirmed or suspected - report to UKHSA.
- For flu: report to UKHSA so that swabbing and antiviral treatment can be arranged.
- Suspected Norovirus - contact your local IPC or UKHSA.
- Contact numbers:
 - ◇ UKHSA 0113 386 0300
 - ◇ North Yorkshire and York Community IPC Team 01423 553740

5. Stop the spread

- Always follow correct PPE guidance.
- Encourage residents to wash their hands.
- Always clean your hands using either liquid soap and warm running water or alcohol handrub if hands are visibly clean.
- Open windows regularly, e.g. 10 minutes every hour, to increase ventilation and disperse viral particles.
- **Don't forget:**
Alcohol handrub is not effective at killing viruses that cause diarrhoea and vomiting.
- Frequent decontamination of equipment and the environment using an appropriate disinfectant.

What's new

- Health and Social Care Act 2008: code of practice on the prevention and control of infections and related guidance (Updated 13 December 2022).
- National infection prevention and control manual for England (**Version 2.4 coming soon**).