

IPC Bulletin for Care Homes

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Produced by an NHS Community Infection Prevention and Control (IPC) Team based in North Yorkshire for distribution to subscribers.

Make reducing inappropriate glove use your New Year's resolution for 2026



DID YOU KNOW:

- Over 300 billion gloves are used in healthcare every year. It is estimated that between 30% and 50% of glove use is unnecessary
- Disposable gloves contribute significantly to carbon emissions from both their production and disposal
- If you make 2026 the year to reduce unnecessary glove use, you will save money and help reduce the environmental impact
- The NHS as an organisation contributes between 4% and 5% of the UK's total carbon emissions

Improper glove use can increase the risk of infection

- Wearing disposable gloves gives a false sense of having clean hands. However, gloves can easily become contaminated just the same as your hands.
- Never apply alcohol handrub to gloves as the alcohol handrub may affect the integrity of the gloves.

Appropriate glove use

- ✓ Use gloves when anticipated or likely exposure to:
 - ◇ Blood and/or other body fluids
 - ◇ Non-intact skin
 - ◇ Mucous membranes
 - ◇ Resident with a confirmed or suspected infection
 - ◇ Hazardous chemicals
- ✓ Gloves selected are appropriate for the tasks being undertaken, taking into account the substances being handled, type and duration of contact, size and comfort of the gloves.
- ✓ Use gloves as part of standard infection control precautions.

[NHS England » Chapter 1: Standard infection control precautions \(SICPs\)](#)

Gloves are not required

- ✗ When handing out oral medication.
- ✗ When assisting a resident to get dressed.
- ✗ If you are helping a resident to eat or drink.
- ✗ When you are collecting resident's used crockery, e.g. plates and trays.
- ✗ When assisting a resident with their mobility.
- ✗ When completing administrative tasks.



What's new

- **IPC training event** for Care Homes and Domiciliary Care: 16th March, 2026 - Book now to reserve your place. www.infectionpreventioncontrol.co.uk/events/
- Revised **IPC CQC assessment preparation Pack for Care Homes** available to order by completing the [order form](#) @ £89.99.
- [QICN Adult Social Care Nursing Network](#), 3rd February, 2026.

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

www.infectionpreventioncontrol.co.uk

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