Infection. Prevention. Control.
You're in safe hands

NHS

IPC Bulletin for Domiciliary Care



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

Are you prepared for the winter season?

The winter season results in an increased pressure across health and social care settings with more respiratory illnesses, such as flu and COVID-19, and an increase in diarrhoea and vomiting, e.g. Norovirus. These can affect both service users and staff which result in staff shortages at a time when workload is high. The following steps can help you be better prepared to manage the increase of infection during the winter season.

1. Encourage uptake of vaccinations

Vaccination provides protection against catching or spreading infections.

Service users are eligible for:

Flu and pneumococcal vaccinations if aged over 65 years or adults under 65 and in a clinical risk group.

RSV vaccinations if aged over 75 years or aged 65-74 years and have a long-term lung condition or are immunocompromised.

COVID-19 vaccination if aged over 75 years or have a weakened immune system as outlined in the COVID-19 Green Book chapter.

Staff: Domiciliary care staff are eligible for the flu vaccination. Staff are eligible for the COVID-19 vaccine if they have a weakened immune system as outlined in the COVID-19 Green Book chapter. If any staff are pregnant they are eligible for the RSV vaccine.

What is RSV and who is eligible for the vaccine? – UKHSA

Your guide to who's eligible for the autumn 2026 flu vaccine – UKHSA

Who's eligible for the 2026 COVID-19 vaccine 'Autumn Booster'– UKHSA

2. Are staff prepared

- ✓ Check your IPC Policies are up-to-date and ensure staff know what to do if a service user has respiratory symptoms or gastrointestinal infection.
- ✓ Ensure staff's IPC training is up-to-date. Plan some refresher training on hand hygiene, the importance of being 'Bare below the elbow' and how to put on and remove PPE safely.
- ✓ Ensure staff have access to a supply of gloves, apron, facemask and eye protection. Check the expiry dates!
- ✓ Check your supply of handrub and chlorine based cleaning solutions are suitable and in date.
- ✓ Ensure you dispose of waste correctly.

3. Protect your service users



- ✓ Encourage service users to perform good hand hygiene, especially before mealtimes.
- ✓ Remind staff when to wash their hands. Your 5 moments for hand hygiene for Domiciliary Care Poster - Infection Prevention Control
- ✓ Follow the advice in the 'Catch it, Bin it, Kill it' and 'Respiratory and cough hygiene' posters.
- ✓ Be aware of which service users are eligible for COVID-19 treatments to avoid delaying treatment.

International Infection Prevention Week (IIPW) 19th-25th October, 2026



- This year IIPW celebrates the journey — from the plague doctors of the 1600s to the infection prevention and control of tomorrow.
- **Past. Present. Protected.** Three words that honour the history, the progress and the promise of infection prevention
- Activities are available for the week on infectionpreventionandyou.org.

Who to contact if you suspect an outbreak:
Report suspected outbreaks to your local Community Infection Prevention and Control (IPC) or UK Health Security Agency (UKHSA) Team.

Write the contact number here:

IPC training event:
For Care Homes and Domiciliary Care: 15th March, 2027
www.infectionpreventioncontrol.co.uk/events/

Visit our website to find lots of IPC resources, many of which are free to download. Call us on **01423 557340**
www.infectionpreventioncontrol.co.uk

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