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

NHS

IPC Bulletin for GP Practice Staff

Issue No. 70 - October 2026

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 the healthcare system with more respiratory illnesses, such as flu and COVID-19, and an increase in gastrointestinal infections, e.g. Norovirus. These can affect both patients and staff which result in staff shortage 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.

- ✓ Ensure patient systems are up to date and capture all those who are eligible for vaccinations.
- ✓ Promote uptake of vaccinations for eligible staff.

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. Is your GP Practice prepared?

- ✓ IPC audits should be undertaken with actions completed. A list of Audit Tools for General Practice - Infection Prevention Control
- ✓ Check your IPC Policies are up-to-date and staff are aware of what to do when patients present with an infection.
- ✓ Ensure the Practice 'Business continuity plan' is up-to-date.
- ✓ Check all staff have completed their IPC training. 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 clinical rooms have a good supply of gloves, aprons, facemasks and eye protection. Check their expiry dates!
- ✓ Check your supply of cleaning solutions to ensure they are suitable and in date.
- ✓ Ensure alcohol handrub is available for patients and staff and in date.
- ✓ Have masks available for patients who wish to use them or have symptoms of a respiratory virus.
- ✓ Declutter communal spaces and clinical rooms to facilitate cleaning.
- ✓ Ensure you are disposing of waste into the correct bins.

3. Refresh your notice boards

- ✓ Display hand hygiene (Your 5 moments for hand hygiene for Care Homes Poster - Infection Prevention Control) and respiratory and cough hygiene posters, (Catch it, Bin it, Kill it' and Respiratory and cough hygiene
- ✓ Display signage advising visitors with infections. Stop the spread of infection for General Practice - Infection Prevention Control
- ✓ Promote your latest hand hygiene and IPC cleaning audit scores.

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.

What's new:

- IPC training event for General Practice: 1st February, 2027. **BOOK NOW to reserve your place** at www.infectionpreventioncontrol.co.uk/events/
- 'QICN General Practice Network Webinar': 9th December, 2026

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

FOLLOW US ON facebook

© Harrogate and District NHS Foundation Trust, Community Infection Prevention and Control