

# Personal Items and Laundry Tip Sheet for Continuing Care Residents, Families and Visitors during COVID-19 Pandemic

Note: This recommendation was developed by the Continuing Care Working Group to provide information about handling personal effects and laundry; cleaning at home and visits in continuing care during the COVID-19 pandemic.  
If you have any questions or comments contact IPC [ipcsurvstdadmin@ahs.ca](mailto:ipcsurvstdadmin@ahs.ca).

## Best practice recommendations

### 1. Pick-up and delivery of personal items and laundry

- 1.1 Check with the facility for pick-up and drop-off times.
  - There may not be drop-off/pick-up on evenings, weekends, or holidays.
  - Laundry:
    - Soiled laundry for pick-up will be in a disposable bag or sealed bin labelled with the resident's name.
    - Clean laundry for drop-off: place in a new disposable bag or in a clean, sealed bin and label with the resident's name and room number.
  - Personal items for drop-off: place in a new disposable bag or in a clean, sealed bin and label with the resident's name and room number.
- 1.2 Designated visitors may bring personal items in, after consulting with the director of care, unit manager, charge nurse, or lead licensed practical nurse (LPN), at the time of their visit.

### 2. Personal Items e.g., food, gifts, letters

- 2.1 Refer to the [Family and Patient Tip Sheet for Personalizing Spaces in Continuing Care](#) and the public health information about [food](#).
- 2.2 Consult with the director of care, unit manager, charge nurse, or LPN prior to bringing personal items in for the resident as they may be limited to those needed for personal care or that contribute to day-to-day activities and well-being. For example:
  - Mobility devices such as walkers or canes, dentures, hearing aids, glasses, personal hygiene items, books and magazines, etc.
  - Personal electronic devices like laptops, tablets and cellphones.

Note: Other valuables such as money, wallets, jewelry may not be accepted at this time.

### 3. Handling laundry

- 3.1 Transport clothes in a closed container, disposable plastic bag or a washable cloth bag that can be laundered at the same time as the clothes.
- 3.2 Launder resident's clothing separately from other laundry using a regular wash cycle followed by a cycle in the dryer.
  - Have minimal contact with laundry. Do not shake or hug dirty laundry. Place directly from the laundry container or bag into the washer.
  - Discard plastic bag, if one was used or clean the container.
  - Wash hands after handling soiled laundry and before handling clean laundry.
  - Fold clothing on a clean surface.
  - If laundry is being returned to the facility, return in a clean labelled bag or closed container.
- 3.3 Washing machine surfaces, especially touch surfaces such as doors/setting knobs or buttons, may be wiped down using any household disinfectant product.

For more information contact  
[ipcsurvstdadmin@ahs.ca](mailto:ipcsurvstdadmin@ahs.ca)  
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Version	Date (YYYY-MM-DD)
Created	2020-04-24
Updated	2020-11-30
Revised	2020-11-30

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## 4. Visiting

Visiting may be restricted in continuing care settings during COVID-19. Visitors will be asked to:

- 4.1 Undergo health assessment screening prior to your visit to confirm you are healthy.
- 4.2 Coordinate your visits with the facility operator. Book a visit using the [request a visit](#) tool. View the [scheduling a visit with your loved one\(s\) in continuing care sites](#) infographic for help on booking a visit.
- 4.3 Adhere to safe visiting practices including [hand hygiene](#) and wearing a [mask](#) continuously while indoors. For more information please review [protecting residents at congregate care facilities](#) and [what to expect](#), before your visit.

## 5. Cleaning Tips for Families and Visitors at Home

### 5.1 Hard surfaces

- Any of the following household products are effective for cleaning and disinfecting hard surfaces at home when used according to label instructions:
  - Household bleach: refer to this [Environmental Public Health document](#) for more details about dilution, high touch surfaces, e.g., tabletops, light switches, door knobs, sink taps, toilet handles, counter tops, cleaning technique etc.;
  - commercial benzalkonium chloride, e.g., Lysol™ and other antibacterial products;
  - hydrogen peroxide;
  - alcohol >70%.
- For more details refer to this MyHealthAB patient care handout, [Caregiving: Reducing Germs and Infection in the Home](#).

5.2 Refer to the Government of Canada website [Hard-surface disinfectants and hand sanitizers \(COVID-19\): List of disinfectants](#) to check if a specific disinfectant is listed.

### 5.3 Upholstered furniture or soft surfaces

- Clean any visible soil from soft or porous surfaces such as upholstered furniture, carpets, rugs, and drapes using disinfectants or cleaners that won't damage the surface, e.g., disinfectant listed above or soap and water.
- Consult manufacturer's recommendations for cleaning and disinfection of these surfaces. If appropriate manufacturer's recommendations are not available, consult Public Health.
- Consider discarding items that cannot be appropriately cleaned and disinfected.

## 6. Resources

AHS IPC [Tips for Personalizing Spaces in Continuing Care](#).

AHS IPC [Handling Personal Laundry during COVID-19 Letter](#).

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