

Initial Infection Prevention and Control (IPC) Measures*:

Based on the type of illness presenting (ILI or GI), implement initial IPC measures as soon as an outbreak is suspected to help reduce the spread of infection. It is not necessary to wait until a causative agent is identified.

Strict Hand Hygiene:

- ✓ Reinforce frequent and thorough hand hygiene before and after providing care to clients/residents and after touching used client/resident care equipment or soiled environmental surfaces.
- ✓ Assist clients/residents with frequent hand hygiene
- ✓ Alcohol based hand rubs containing at least 70% alcohol are as effective as soap and water when hands are not visibly soiled.
- ✓ Wash hands with soap and water if visibly soiled or if they feel dirty.
- ✓ Plain soap and water are recommended following glove removal when caring for residents with diarrhea and/or vomiting.

Restriction of Symptomatic Clients/Residents:

- ✓ When possible, symptomatic clients/residents should be advised to stay in their rooms with meals served in their rooms as recommended by Public Health.
- ✓ If this is not practical, ill clients/residents should be restricted to their own floors and avoid contact with others in common living areas (e.g. dining room, social areas) as much as possible.
- ✓ Medically necessary appointments should be kept unless the client is not physically able to attend. Discussions should occur between the responsible staff at the housing site and the health care professionals involved in the appointment to ensure precautions can be taken in transit and at the appointment site.
- ✓ Clients/residents who are not ill are not restricted from normal daily activities.

Staffing (including volunteers, students)

- ✓ Exclude symptomatic staff from working. Specific recommendations for staff exclusions during confirmed outbreaks will be provided by Public Health.
- ✓ Cohort or assign staff to care for asymptomatic clients/residents before symptomatic clients/residents.
- ✓ Consider minimizing movement of staff, students or volunteers between units/floors, especially if some units are not affected.
- ✓ If possible, during initial investigations of ILI, assign staff members that have been immunized against influenza to care for symptomatic clients/residents.
- ✓ Ideally, staff assigned to housekeeping duties should not be involved in food preparation or food service during outbreaks. If this is not possible, ensure meticulous attention is paid to IPC practices.

Group/Social Activities and Non-Resident Events

- ✓ When a GI outbreak is being investigated, Public Health advises that:
 - All previously scheduled resident social and special events/activities (e.g. special holiday meal celebrations, birthday parties, entertainers, school groups, community presentations) are cancelled/postponed effective immediately on all affected units/sites or entire facility (as applicable) until the outbreak investigation is declared over by Public Health.
- ✓ As a general principle, it is also recommended that non-resident events previously booked for areas in the outbreak facility (e.g. meetings) also be cancelled or postponed.
- ✓ For ILI outbreak investigations, Public Health will advise when similar restrictions are to be implemented.
- ✓ Consult Public Health with any questions about group/social activities during outbreaks.

Communication:

- ✓ Use outbreak signage to notify and inform staff and visitors that an outbreak is being investigated in the facility.
- ✓ Encourage visitors to postpone visiting if possible. Visitors who choose to visit should be advised of potential risk of exposure, and to practice good hand hygiene, visit one (1) client/resident only and exit the site immediately after their visit.
- ✓ Ensure individuals visiting ill clients/residents are wearing appropriate personal protective equipment (PPE). Demonstrate for visitors how to utilize PPE appropriately.

“Guidelines for Outbreak Prevention, Control and Management in Supportive Living and Home Living Site”, Alberta Health Services. <https://www.albertahealthservices.ca/assets/healthinfo/hi-dis-flu-care-and-treat-guidelines.pdf> *see electronic IPC manual or external website to consult with IPC for Acute Care/AHS Continuing Care facility sites as necessary <http://www.albertahealthservices.ca/info/Page6421.aspx>