

**BRAIN BOOSTER**

**BY FUSION**

**INFECTION CONTROL IN  
CARE HOMES**

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## INFECTION CONTROL IN CARE HOMES



Infection control in care homes is critical in protecting vulnerable residents - many of whom are elderly or living with chronic health conditions - from infections that can spread rapidly in communal living environments.

Effective infection prevention and control (IPC) practices reduce outbreaks of illnesses such as influenza, COVID-19, Norovirus, MRSA, and C. difficile.



# 1 Key Principles



- **Standard precautions:** Treat all residents, staff, and visitors as potential carriers of infection.
- **Transmission-based precautions:** Additional measures for residents with known or suspected infectious diseases (e.g., isolation for respiratory illnesses).
- **Education and training:** Continuous staff training on hygiene, outbreak recognition, and reporting procedures.

# 2 Core Infection Control Measures

## ➤ Hand Hygiene

- Frequent handwashing with soap and water (at least 20 seconds).
- Use of alcohol-based hand sanitizers where appropriate.
- Encouragement of residents (where possible) and visitors to practice good hand hygiene.



## ➤ Personal Protective Equipment (PPE)

- Gloves, masks, aprons, and eye protection as required.
- Proper donning and doffing techniques to prevent contamination.

# Core Infection Control Measures

## ► Cleaning and Disinfection

- Regular cleaning of high-touch surfaces (door handles, light switches, handrails).
- Use of approved disinfectants, especially during outbreaks.
- Safe handling and disposal of waste and sharps.



## ► Vaccination

- Resident and staff immunisation programs (e.g., flu, COVID-19, pneumococcal vaccines).
- Encourage boosters as per local health authority guidelines.

NEXT →

# Core Infection Control Measures

## ➤ Resident Management

- Early identification and isolation of symptomatic individuals.
- Cohorting infected residents if single rooms are not available.
- Limiting movement of residents during outbreaks.



## ➤ Environmental Controls

- Adequate ventilation in rooms and communal areas.
- Proper laundry handling: hot water cycles and appropriate detergents.
- Safe food handling and storage.

**NEXT** ➔

# Core Infection Control Measures

## ➤ Staff Practices



- Staff health screening and exclusion if symptomatic (e.g., diarrhoea, vomiting, fever).
- Consistent staffing to reduce cross-contamination between units.

# 3 Outbreak Management



- Immediate reporting to public health authorities.
- Incident response team within the care home.
- Temporary suspension of group activities and non-essential visits.
- Enhanced cleaning and PPE protocols.
- Communication with families and visitors.

## 4 Policies & Documentation

- Infection Control Policy and Risk Assessments. Making sure they are up to date and reflect current guidelines.
- Regular audits of cleaning, hand hygiene, and PPE compliance.
- Record keeping for training, vaccinations, and outbreak reports.



# 5 Common Challenges

- Limited staffing during outbreaks.
- Balancing infection control with residents' social and emotional well-being.
- Residents with dementia who may not comply with hygiene measures. How can they be supported to remain safe?

## ✓ Best Practice Tips

- Foster a “clean culture”: staff lead by example.
- Regular refresher training and surprise audits.
- Use signage and reminders for hand hygiene and PPE.
- Encourage family/visitor involvement in hygiene measures.

## ✓ Healthy Habits

- Drink plenty of fluids and eat well to support your immune system.

By working together, care homes can reduce the risk of outbreaks and keep everyone safe.