

Information for Families and Visitors During An Outbreak

What is an Outbreak? An outbreak is the spread of the same illness (e.g. influenza or norovirus) among a group of people living or working in the same place at the same time.

Outbreaks of illness in health care facilities can be very stressful for clients, staff, visitors and family members. However, for clients, outbreaks can be more than just stressful, they can be life-threatening. For the health and well-being of all it is important to control and stop outbreaks as quickly as possible. Please follow these steps to help stop the spread of illness.

Check-In At The Nursing Station

Control measures may change several times during an outbreak. Staff at the nursing station will provide you with information on control measures that are being used at the time, and help answer your questions.

Keep Your Hands Clean

Wash hands using soap and water or use an alcohol-based hand rub:

- Immediately when you enter the facility and as you leave.
- Before entering and as you leave a client's room.
- Before and after feeding or providing care to a client.
- Before eating.
- After using the washroom.

Do Not Visit If You Are Ill

Visiting a client when you are not feeling well puts **everyone** in the facility at risk. Keep infants and children at home if they are not feeling well. Do not visit if you have a cold or any of the following symptoms:

- Fever, cough, runny nose, sneezing, stuffy nose, sore throat, or a new rash not yet diagnosed.
- Diarrhea, upset stomach, vomiting or nausea.



If A Client Is Ill, Visit In Their Room Only

- Ill clients should remain in their rooms. Avoid taking an ill client to a common area during your visit
- When visiting any client, follow the facility's infection prevention and control instructions.

Do Not Visit More Than One Client Within The Facility

- After visiting, leave the facility immediately.
- To protect yourself, avoid common areas (e.g. dining room).

Get Your Flu Shot (Influenza Vaccine)

- Influenza can cause serious complications such as pneumonia or death for the elderly.
- You can pass influenza to others before you start to show any symptoms. To protect yourself and your family, get your flu shot.

Follow The Facility's Infection Prevention And Control Instructions

- Follow instructions for precautions or personal protective equipment (e.g. gloves, masks, eye protection or gowns), if required.
- Participation in control measures is required by everyone to assist in containing an outbreak.