

Appendix 5.4 Outbreak infection control checklist

1. Inform

- Report outbreak to PHU and Department of Health and Ageing.
- Inform staff, residents and visitors of the outbreak.
- Provide handouts about gastroenteritis.
- Put up advisory notices.
- Advise visitors not to attend (especially young children, the immuno-compromised or any with gastroenteritis symptoms).
- Ask visitors to report any symptoms to staff.
- Advise visiting general practitioners and other health staff.

2. Handwashing

- Ensure that all residents have their hands washed after going to the toilet, before meals and after any episode of diarrhoea or vomiting.
- Ensure all staff and visitors wash their hands before and after all resident contact.
- Ensure sufficient soap and/or alcohol-based hand rubs or gels, and hand-drying facilities are available.

3. Additional infection control measures

- Train staff in additional contact precautions.
- Provide sufficient gloves, gowns, aprons, masks, goggles, face shields and ensure that they are easily accessible.
- Ensure cleaning and other relevant staff members are aware of the correct cleaning procedures and the importance of handwashing.
- Ensure catering staff members are aware of the precautions required in food service area and the importance of handwashing.

4. Cohorting

- Allocate dedicated staff to care for unwell residents.
- Separate well residents from unwell residents for at least 72 hours after resolution of symptoms (cohort nursing; avoid moving residents around during an outbreak).
- Allocate dedicated staff to clean affected areas.
- Do not allocate catering staff members to care for infected residents or to clean affected areas.

5. Restrict movements

- Close off dining room and common areas.
- Suspend communal activities, excursion, visiting programs to the facility.

6. Exclude sick staff

- Exclude staff with gastroenteritis for at least 48 hours after resolution of symptoms.

7. Cleaning

- Implement additional cleaning procedures, including: increased cleaning requirements; correct use of sodium hypochlorite; cleaning of body fluid spills.
- Instruct cleaning and other relevant staff about correct cleaning procedures and the importance of handwashing.
- Ensure catering staff are aware of the precautions required in food service area and the importance of handwashing.

8. Linen

- Instruct staff about precautions required when handling soiled linen.
- Ensure adequate numbers of linen containers and leak proof bags.
- Ensure laundry staff are aware of the correct laundering procedures and the importance of handwashing.

9. Transfers

- Avoid transferring residents to other institutions while the outbreak is in progress; if a transfer is necessary, ensure receiving institution is notified of the outbreak.
- Restrict admissions of new residents until outbreak is over.

10. Reporting, pathology testing

- Report outbreak to Public Health Unit (PHU) promptly; follow PHU advice.
- Update PHU (Daily Line-Listing) regularly and if there are any 'sentinel events' (see *Figure 4 in these Guidelines*).
- Ensure laboratory testing has been organised.