

Checklist for Influenza Outbreaks in Long Term Care

Recognition, Reporting & Testing

- Upon suspicion of an influenza outbreak, notify Maine CDC by calling 1-800-821-5821
- Obtain an outbreak number from Field Epidemiologists for identification purposes: # _____
- Maintain a line listing of symptomatic residents and staff
- Collect and submit specimens from affected residents and staff as soon as an outbreak is suspected.
- Follow HETL guidelines for specimen collection, handling, and transport; label specimens with outbreak #
- Notify facility medical director that an influenza outbreak is suspected

Control Measures for Facility

Infection Control:

- Re-offer vaccine to all unvaccinated staff and residents
- Institute droplet precautions for symptomatic residents
- Cohort ill residents as much as possible and suspend group activities
- Minimize resident and staff movement between affected and unaffected units/wards
- Enforce strict hand hygiene for all facility staff
- Supplement hand washing with soap and water with ethanol or alcohol-based hand sanitizers
- Begin treatment doses of antivirals to all symptomatic residents and staff, and begin prophylactic doses of antivirals to all residents and unvaccinated staff (within 48 hours)

Environmental Controls:

- Clean all high traffic areas and high touch items (i.e. faucets, door handles, and toilet or bath rails)
- Use EPA-registered disinfectants or detergents/disinfectants approved for use against influenza for routine cleaning and disinfection

Administrative Controls:

- Exclude ill staff from work for at least 24 hrs after symptoms have resolved without the use of anti-pyretics
- Suspend group activities as much as possible until after the outbreak is contained
- Post signage about the outbreak and proper hand hygiene
- Limit new admissions to a non-infected wing, or close to new admissions altogether

Recommendations for Residents & Visitors

- Encourage ill residents to stay in their room/apartment for at least 24 hours after symptoms resolve without the use of anti-pyretics
- Promote good hand hygiene for residents: after using the toilet, having contact with an ill individual, and before preparing food, eating or drinking
- Consider restricting visitation until the outbreak has subsided

Internal and External Communications

- Identify a single point of contact for internal communications
- Identify a single point of contact for external communications
- Notify staff of outbreak and control measures and conduct enhanced surveillance for ill staff
- Notify residents/guardians of outbreak and control measures and request ill residents report to nursing staff
- Consider a final communication to staff, residents, and guardians when the outbreak has resolved