

GUIDELINES FOR THE CONTROL OF OUTBREAKS OF GASTROENTERITIS INFECTIONS IN RESIDENTIAL AND NURSING CARE HOMES

INTRODUCTION

An outbreak can be defined as;

An incident in which 2 or more people experiencing a similar illness are linked in time / place. (www.hpa.org.uk)

All symptomatic cases must be notified to the Medical Officer for Environmental Health via Environmental Health Services, Infectious Disease team on 0113 247 6286. (Out of hours Tel 0845 8943884).

One faecal specimen must be collected from all symptomatic cases, even if vomiting only (up to 10 initially). Sample containers and laboratory forms must be completed correctly prior to submitting via GP surgeries.

Display a copy of the notice on page 4 of this document in a prominent position on each entrance door to the premises.

PLEASE ENSURE ALL MEMBERS OF STAFF READ AND UNDERSTAND THIS DOCUMENT

The outbreak will be concluded after 48 hours with no new cases.

CONTAINMENT

Where possible segregate residents with symptoms until they have been 48hrs symptom free.

Avoid transfers/discharge of residents to other health care settings - in emergency, advise receiving hospital and transport of outbreak.

Close the home to admissions and respite care until cleared by the Medical Officer for Environmental Health.

Staff (permanent or temporary) and students must not work at or visit other homes during the outbreak.

Try to organise staff rota to minimise contamination of unaffected areas.

All symptomatic staff must stay off duty until they are 48 hours free of symptoms.

Restrict visitors. Those visitors that do come must be advised of the risks. Any non emergency maintenance should be cancelled.

HYGIENE

Visitors should be encouraged to wash hands on entry to and exit from the premises.

Strict hand washing with liquid soap/drying with disposable paper towels. An alcohol hand gel should be made available to staff and residents for use in addition to washing hands with soap and water. Hot air hand dryers should not be used during outbreak.

Gloves and disposable aprons must be worn by all staff in contact with excreta or vomit and discarded after each episode of use.

Restrict kitchen access to catering staff only. Kitchen staff should not visit other parts of the home.

Staff must eat and drink in designated areas only.

Staff should not wear uniform outside the care home and a clean uniform should be worn each day.

ENVIRONMENT

Vomit and faecal spillage must be covered and enveloped in disposable/absorbent paper towels, sprayed with anti-bacterial/disinfectant spray and placed into clinical waste bag for disposal. If no clinical waste, double bag prior to disposal. Clean the area with hot water and detergent and allow to dry thoroughly.

After removal of any infected material and as part of the routine cleaning operations during the outbreak, kitchen surfaces, toilets, commodes etc should be thoroughly cleaned using detergent and hot water prior to disinfection. Disinfection can be achieved using a 0.1% hypochlorite (bleach) solution. Where hypochlorite/bleach is not available, use anti-bacterial/ disinfection products.

Carpets should be thoroughly cleaned with hot soapy water and a vigorous rubbing motion. Disinfection can be achieved with efficient steam cleaning.

Do not use hypochlorite/bleach on carpets

Solid linen and personal clothing must be placed immediately in an alginate stitched or hot water soluble bag and sealed. This bag should then be placed in a clearly identifiable, impermeable outer bag for storage and transfer to laundry. (The outer bag should be washed at the same time as the contents).

External laundries should be informed of the outbreak.

Any commodes requiring emptying should be covered before being carried to the sluice for emptying. The nearest point for disposal should be used and if there are any en-suite facilities to rooms where commodes are used then it may be better to empty the contents into the en-suite WC.

Commode pots should be cleansed thoroughly with hot soapy water and returned to individual residents rooms. (Ideally commode pots should be marked with room number to ensure they are returned correctly.)

Ensure macerator / bedpan washer is operational. Faults must be dealt with as urgent.

Prior to flushing any toilet the lid should be closed to prevent aerosols being generated into the environment.

Hard surfaced floors should be cleaned daily. Mop heads used for this purpose should be washed, rinsed, disinfected, stored upright to dry and replaced at least weekly.

Colour coded cloths, mops, and buckets must be used.

Increase cleaning to horizontal surfaces, toilets, door handles, hand rails, tap tops and other areas touched frequently.

PREVENTION AND EDUCATION

Review cleaning procedure.

Ensure all toilets are provided with toilet paper, and hand washing facilities with hot water, liquid soap and paper towels.

Educate staff in personal hygiene and safe food handling precautions.

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If you require any further information or assistance please contact:-

**Leeds City Council, Neighbourhoods and Housing Department,
Environmental Health Services.**

Telephone - 0113 247 6286

OUT OF HOURS - Telephone 0845 8943884 and ask for the duty officer to be contacted.

Neighbourhoods and Housing Department
Environmental Health Services
Millshaw Park Way, LS11 0LS

**WOULD ALL
VISITORS TO
THE CENTRE
PLEASE REPORT
TO THE OFFICER
- IN -CHARGE
BEFORE
CONTINUING
WITH THEIR VISIT**

**THANK YOU FOR ASSISTING
WITH THIS INFECTION
CONTROL REQUIREMENT**