

Guidance at a Glance – Influenza

These guidelines support the delivery of care in community and social care settings. This guidance reflects best practice/national guidelines.

Influenza (flu) is a viral infection that affects the respiratory system. It has an incubation period of 1-3 days and is commonly transmitted via droplets or aerosol from coughs and sneezes. People can be infectious one day before symptoms occur.

There are 4 types of seasonal influenza viruses, types A, B, C and D. Influenza A and B viruses circulate and cause seasonal epidemics of disease.

The best way to prevent getting the flu is to have the vaccine. The strains of flu change each year so you should have your seasonal flu vaccination every year to ensure that you stay protected. The vaccine is not a live virus so will not give you the flu. Any symptoms you get after having the vaccine is a positive sign that your immune response is working.

SYMPTOMS INCLUDE:

- Sudden fever
- Dry chesty cough
- Tiredness
- Aching muscle
- Sore throat
- Sneezing
- Difficulty sleeping
- Diarrhoea/upset stomach
- Headache
- Chills
- Limb or joint pain
- Runny or blocked nose
- Loss of appetite

TREATMENT AND PREVENTION

- Anti-viral – in confirmed cases
- Self-care
 - Rest
 - Fluids
 - Paracetamol
- Good hygiene
- Hand washing
- Respiratory etiquette
- Flu vaccine – the best way to prevent you getting the flu. The more people that are vaccinated the bigger impact it will have on protecting those that are vulnerable. This is called herd immunity.



OUTBREAK MANAGEMENT

- Isolate person affected.
- If in outbreak then the home needs to be closed until you are symptom free for 7 days following onset of last case
- Implement IPC precautions
- Hand washing
- PPE
- Inform.
 - Public Health Team at LCC in hours (01522 553729)
 - Public Health England out of hours (03442254524)
 - GP
- Encourage people to remain in room and rest.
- Maintain daily monitoring of people affected.
- Allocate staff to work in areas to care for affected vs. non affected residents
- Staff that are affected to remain at home until fully recovered.

- Public Health England. (2019) . Influenza: immunisation against infectious disease –The Green Book, Chapter 19. Available from: https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/733840/Influenza_green_book_chapter19.pdf [Accessed 30.08.19].
- Lincolnshire County Council (2018) Outbreak management: An Information resource for care homes.