

Infection Prevention and Control (IPC) in Adult Social Care: Acute Respiratory Infection (ARI)

On the 25th March, UKHSA and the Department of Health and Social Care published updated guidance in relation [Infection Prevention and Control in Adult Social Care and the management of Acute Respiratory Infections](#). The changes within the guidance are effective from the 1st of April 2024. A summary of these changes has been outlined below.

Summary of main changes

- People who are not eligible for COVID-19 treatments are no longer required to test if they develop symptoms of a respiratory infection unless specifically advised to by the HPT or other local partner.
- Residents with symptoms of ARI and who have a high temperature or do not feel well enough to do their usual activities should be supported to stay away from others to protect those who are at high risk of severe outcomes.
- Residents who **are not eligible** for COVID-19 treatments should be supported to stay away from others until they no longer have a high temperature and no longer feel unwell.

Eligibility for COVID-19 Treatment

- People who are at higher risk of severe outcomes from COVID-19 may be eligible for COVID-19 treatments if they become unwell. If someone who is eligible for COVID-19 treatments develops COVID-19 symptoms, they should be tested as soon as possible with an LFD. **Care homes should ensure that LFDs are available for those who are eligible.** These are accessed via your local pharmacy. Providers should ensure that at least 3 tests are available per eligible individual.
- We recommend that all care homes keep an up-to-date list of residents who are eligible for treatment and those who are not.
- If someone who is eligible for treatment tests positive for COVID-19, the care home should organise assessment for treatment. In Lincolnshire, this is via NHS 111.
- Care home residents who test positive for COVID-19 should be supported to stay away from others for a minimum of 5 days after the onset of respiratory symptoms. After 5 days, the resident can return to their normal activities if they feel well enough to do so.

Information regarding people who might be eligible for COVID-19 treatments can be found [here](#) under the section relating to **People at High Risk**.

Multiple residents have symptoms

- An ARI outbreak consists of 2 or more positive or clinically suspected linked cases within the same setting within a 5-day period.
- Cases are less likely to be linked if symptom onset was more than 5 days apart or where the residents had no contact with each other in the last 5 days.
- Care home to undertake a risk assessment to determine if there is an outbreak and if control measures are needed.
- The setting should inform LCC HPT of a suspected outbreak. The HPT are able to support the setting to undertake a risk assessment and will be able to advise if further testing is required and what outbreak control measures are needed.
- Outbreak testing using PCR's may be advised following further discussions with the UKHSA East Midlands HPT based upon the risk assessment findings.



Admissions to care home settings

Admissions from an Acute Hospital	Admissions from a Community Setting
Asymptomatic individuals being discharged from hospital into a care home are no longer advised to be routinely tested with a COVID-19 test before planned discharge.	Individuals admitted from the community or other care settings do not need to be tested for ARI before they are admitted to a care home

Staff testing

Staff who have symptoms of a respiratory infection and who have a high temperature or do not feel well enough to work are advised to stay away from work and try to avoid contact with other people.

They should not return to work until they no longer have a high temperature or until they no longer feel unwell.

Staff members do not need to take a COVID-19 test if they develop symptoms **unless they are eligible for COVID-19 treatments.**

Vaccination

Vaccinations remains one of the most important defences against COVID-19 and Influenza. It is important that all those who are eligible for vaccination, including health and social care workers, take up their offers as soon as they become available.

The JCVI advised that for Spring 2024, that the COVID-19 vaccine should be offered to adults over 75 years and residents in care homes for older adults. Visits to older adult care homes will begin from April 15th, 2024.

Standard Infection Control Precautions

To ensure safety, standard infection control precautions (SICPs) are to be used by all workers for all people whether infection is known to be present or not. SICPs are the basic IPC measures necessary to reduce the risk of spreading pathogens.

These basic IPC measures are:

- hand hygiene
- respiratory and cough hygiene
- PPE
- safe management of care equipment
- safe management of the environment
- management of laundry
- management of blood and body fluid spills
- waste management
- management of exposure



The application of SICPs is determined by assessing risk to and from people. This includes the task, level of interaction, and/or the anticipated level of exposure to blood and/or other body fluids. The Health Protection Team can help you to assess the risk of infection spreading in the event of a suspected outbreak.

For advice relating to the management of Acute Respiratory Infections in Care Home settings, please contact the healthprotectionteam@lincolnshire.gov.uk.