

## Infection Prevention and Control (IPC) in Adult Social Care

### Preparing for winter

As the cold season approaches, it's important to stay ahead of common winter-related health issues like colds, flu, and respiratory infections. With lower temperatures and increased indoor activities, the risk of illness can rise, particularly among vulnerable populations such as the elderly, children, and those with chronic conditions. This update provides essential guidelines to help Adult Social Care providers prepare for the cold season by emphasising prevention strategies, recognising early symptoms, and knowing when to seek medical care.



By taking proactive steps, such as getting vaccinated, practicing good hygiene, and boosting immunity through proper nutrition, we can reduce the burden of cold-season illnesses and maintain overall well-being during the colder months.

### Respiratory syncytial virus (RSV)

RSV is a common virus that usually causes mild, cold-like symptoms but can lead to serious respiratory illness in older adults and individuals with compromised immune systems. In adult social care settings, the confined environment and close contact among residents and staff can facilitate the rapid spread of RSV and other Acute Respiratory Infections.

The [latest guidance](#) for adult social care, outlines effective control measures which can significantly reduce infection rates, improve health outcomes, and ease the strain on healthcare services.

### Eligibility for the RSV vaccination

Everyone turning 75 years old on or after the 1 September 2024 will be offered a single dose of RSV vaccine. You can still get the vaccine up to the day before you turn 80. For the first year of the programme, the vaccine will also be offered to those who are already aged 75 to 79 years on 1 September 2024 as part of a catch-up programme.

If you are not yet 75 the NHS will invite you for vaccination once you turn 75.

## Flu Vaccine

Flu vaccination is the most important defence against severe outcomes caused by the flu virus and reduces the risk of co-infection with COVID-19 and flu. People who are at higher risk of flu-associated serious illness and death, including older people and those in clinical risk groups, continue to be prioritised in seasonal campaigns for vaccination. Frontline social care workers, including both clinical and non-clinical staff who have contact with people with care and support needs, should also be made aware of the flu vaccination offer, when available, by their employer.

## COVID-19 vaccine and COVID-19 testing eligibility

The COVID-19 vaccine is recommended for people at increased risk from COVID-19. This includes people aged 65 or over and those living in a care home.

People who are eligible for COVID-19 treatment are also eligible for free COVID-19 tests if deemed high risk of becoming seriously ill from COVID-19. People in the high-risk category include:

- **Residents in a care home and are aged 70 years or over**
- Aged 85 years or over

For the full list of people considered to be high risk [click here](#).

You can get free COVID-19 rapid lateral flow tests from a pharmacy which offers this service. Care homes are advised to ensure that all of their eligible residents have at least 3 lateral flow tests readily available. To find a pharmacy near you, [click here](#).

## Staff Vaccination

There are a number of ways staff can also access the COVID-19 and Flu vaccine. For more details, see the attached infographic at the end of this update.



## Acute Respiratory Illness (ARI) – What constitutes an outbreak?

- 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.

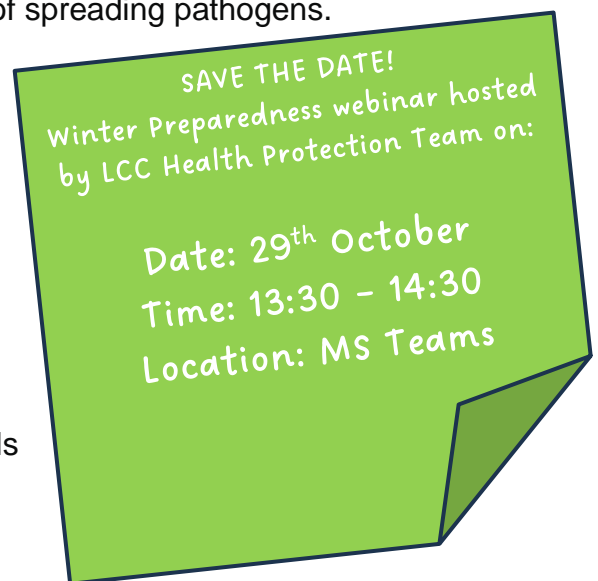
Outbreak testing using PCR's ***may be*** advised following further discussions with the UKHSA East Midlands HPT based upon the risk assessment findings. Care homes should make sure they have access to COVID-19 rapid lateral flow tests for eligible residents particularly when an outbreak may be suspected.

## 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



For advice relating to the management of Acute Respiratory Infections in Care Home settings, please contact the [healthprotectionteam@lincolnshire.gov.uk](mailto:healthprotectionteam@lincolnshire.gov.uk).



**NHS**



# Are you a health or social care worker? You are eligible for Covid and Flu Vaccinations this Autumn/Winter '24



Use the National Booking Service (search NBS covid booking) to access an appointment at a vaccination site near you or scan here:



If a convenient appointment is not available, please keep checking as sites only show if they have appointments available at the time of your search.

Remember to take your employer ID badge with you.

If you work in a **care home** you may also be offered a vaccination at your place of work when the GP Practice Team or LCHS's Vaccination & Rapid Response Team visit to vaccinate your residents.

If you work **at a hospital site** you can also access clinics in the Occupational Health Dept.

For **Pilgrim & Grantham** please scan here for details:

<https://ulhttpilgrimhospital.nhsbookings.com/v2/#book/service/14/count/1/provider/any/>



Scan here for **Lincoln County** details.

<https://ulhttpilgrimhospital.nhsbookings.com/v2/#book/service/14/count/1/provider/any/>



If you **care for people in their own home**, a **care home** or are **eligible and employed by Lincolnshire County Council** you can also access clinics at these sites:

- Mon 4th Nov - Horncastle Holmeleigh
- Tues 5th Nov - Market Rasen Children's Centre
- Weds 6th Nov - Sleaford Area Office
- Thurs 7th Nov - Keily House, Louth
- 8th Nov - Norfolk Lodge Children's Centre, Boston
- Mon 11th Nov - Roseberry House, Skegness (Tennyson)
- Tues 12th Nov - Spalding The Vista
- Weds 13th Nov - Stamford Area Office
- Thurs 14th Nov - Market Arcade Children's Centre, Gainsborough
- Fri 15th Nov - Swingbridge Children's Centre, Grantham
- Mon 18th Nov - County Offices, Lincoln
- Weds 20th Nov - Lexicon House, North Hykeham

To book an appointment please call **01522 301980 10am -4pm Monday to Friday** (if the line is busy please leave a voicemail and the team will call you back)

