

Infection Prevention Team Newsletter December 2024

Latest bulletins and infection prevention information:

<https://www.infectionpreventioncontrol.co.uk/news/ipc-bulletin-for-care-homes/>

<https://www.infectionpreventioncontrol.co.uk/news/ipc-bulletin-for-domiciliary-care/>

Christmas Decorations look lovely and brighten up care settings during the festive period. However, they do bring an increased risk of infections spreading. Reusable decorations must be cleaned before use and again before storing for the following year. Be mindful that if something cannot be cleaned effectively, it should not be used. Loose glitter, glitter baubles, tinsel, etc. are problematic for this reason. In the event of an outbreak of infection, you would be required to dispose anything not fully washable. See more on this [IPC bulletin for Care Homes Dec 2024](#).

Reporting Outbreaks

Please continue to promptly report infections and outbreaks to us at IPC@westmorlandandfurness.gov.uk. Out of hours such as overnight, weekends and bank holidays, urgent advice can be obtained from UKHSA 0344 225 0562. Otherwise emails sent to the above will be actioned as early as possible on the next working day. We offer advice and guidance on infection prevention and support you through outbreak management.

LFD stock levels

Check dates on existing stock and make sure you have ordered sufficient LFDs for those residents eligible for testing and treatment in plenty of time before the Christmas period. Here is the link to participating pharmacies: [NHS participating pharmacies for free LFD tests](#).

PPE stock levels

Check stock levels and expiry dates on PPE and alcohol gel in plenty of time to order more stock if needed before Christmas. Be aware that out-of-date equipment is considered unsafe for use. For the sake of those in your care and yourselves, don't risk it. In the event of an outbreak of Acute Respiratory Infection (covid and Flu) PPE (gloves, aprons, masks and eye protection) is still required. See this table for guidance: [PPE Requirements poster ARI](#).

Skin care

A warm home environment is cosy but means extra attention is needed around skin and the need for regular moisturisation to prevent dry skin and associated rashes, cracking and other damage which can lead to infections. Keeping nails neatly trimmed and not too long can also prevent accidental scratches and skin damage. This applies to staff as well as residents.

We are always here to help- email us at IPC@westmorlandandfurness.gov.uk