

GUIDELINE: Infection Prevention & Control

Infection prevention and control programs and practices ensure the safety, security, and comfort of residents, staff, and visitors to the retirement home. The *Retirement Homes Act, 2010* (the Act) and Ontario Regulation 166/11 (the Regulation) requires homes to have an infection prevention and control (IPAC) program.

The following section provides an explanation of the regulations pertaining specifically to infection prevention and control to assist operators in developing complaint programs.

Some additional information to support licensees is provided in *italic font*. Licensees may also find the information provided in the “Resources” section helpful.

Written Protocols and Procedures

Licensees are required to:

- Consult at least once each year with a local medical officer of health, or designate, about how to reduce infectious disease outbreaks in the home *Reg s 27(2)*
- Keep a written record of the consultation that includes the date of the consultation, what was discussed and any recommendations made by the officer or designate *Reg s 27(3)*
- Establish a written surveillance protocol in consultation with the officer or designate that sets out how the home will identify, document and monitor residents who report symptoms of respiratory or gastrointestinal illness *Reg s 27(4)*
- Establish written procedures to ensure that:
 - infectious disease outbreaks are reported to the officer or designate so that the officer or designate can provide assistance and consultation to the home as appropriate
 - any increases in the number of residents with symptoms are reported to the officer or designate immediately, and the home consults with the officer or designate about the increase *Reg s 27(5)*

Licensees can demonstrate that they have consulted with the officer or designate by keeping a detailed record of any meetings and copies of correspondence between the licensee and the officer or designate. Participation in group seminars organized by public health units may be part of the licensee’s overall consultation with the officer or designate, but are not a substitute for the consultation requirement.

Screening

Licensees are required to:

- Screen residents for tuberculosis within 14 days of moving into the home (not required if the resident was screened 90 days before moving into the home and the results are available to the home) *Reg s 27(8)(b)*

Any resident who stays in the home for more than 14 days needs to be screened for tuberculosis, even if their stay is temporary.

- Screen staff for tuberculosis and all other infectious diseases (evidence-based practices or, if there are no such practices, prevailing practices will indicate which infectious diseases the licensee should screen for, and the screening practices that should be used)

Reg s 27(8)(c) & (d)

Local public health units can provide licensees with information about the applicable evidence-based or prevailing practices that have been adopted in the licensee's region.

Local public health units can assist licensees to determine the appropriate screening practices for volunteers. The Act does not require screening of volunteers working in the home. Information provided in the 'Resources' section of this guideline may also be helpful.

- Keep a written record (meeting the requirements of the home's records policy) of all IPAC screening completed by the home

Reg s 55(5)(f)

Education and Training

Licensees are required to:

- Ensure that all residents and their substitute decision-maker(s) receive information about how to reduce infectious disease outbreaks (includes the need for and method of proper hand hygiene and the need for and process of reporting infectious illness)
 - Licensees are also required to include this information in the package of information that the home gives to residents and their substitute decision-maker(s) before the resident begins living in the home
- Provide information to residents, staff and volunteers about the advantages of an annual flu vaccine and where the vaccine is available

Reg s 27(6)

Reg s 10(e)

Reg s 27(8)(a)

Information for residents may be included in the resident information package.

- Train staff on the home's IPAC program before they begin to work in the home and on an ongoing basis (at least once each year)
- Train staff about how to reduce infectious disease transmission including:
 - a) the need for and method of proper hand hygiene
 - b) how to prevent cross contamination (includes proper handling of soiled linens, protection of uniforms and separation of clean and dirty items)
 - c) the need for and process of reporting, providing surveillance of, and documenting infectious illness
- Train volunteers on applying the home's IPAC program
- Keep a written record (meeting the requirements of the home's records policy) of all IPAC training provided by the home

Act s 65(2) & (4)

Reg s 14(2)

Reg s 27(9)

Act s 66

Reg s 55(5)(c) & (d)

For example, the IPAC training completed by each staff member or volunteer could be recorded in their personal files, and/or in a staff training log.

Hand Sanitizer

- Licensees are required to provide waterless, alcohol-based hand sanitizers (or another form of hand sanitation that provides the same protection against infectious disease transmission) in common areas such as dining areas and hallways, for both residents and staff

Reg s 27(7)

RHRA guidelines are not a substitute for the specific provisions of the Act and Regulations. Licensees are encouraged to read the following sections of the Act and Regulation which relate to IPAC:

	Act	Regulation
Infection prevention and control	60(4)	27
Records		55(5)
Training	65 & 66	
Information package	54(1)	10(e)

For More Information Contact the RHRA:

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IPAC Resources

The following resources provide general information to assist licensees to meet requirements and to learn more about IPAC.

These resources are provided without endorsement or warranty. The RHRA does not guarantee the accuracy or currency of the information provided. The RHRA recommends licensees contact their local public health units for answers to specific questions about the resources or for more information about IPAC.

Public Health Ontario's IPAC Team:

<http://bit.ly/1dvpsVC>

Ontario's Regional Infection Control Network:

<http://bit.ly/1dvq6CM>

Staff Training Resources:

Public Health Ontario offers an IPAC Core Competencies course for health care administrators and providers, which can be completed online, free of charge:

<http://bit.ly/1otX5cb>

For additional resources see the "Surveillance and Outbreak Management" section below.

Influenza:

Ministry of Health and Long-Term Care
Influenza Information for health care providers and the public: <http://bit.ly/1hPeAnb>

- Find a Flu Shot Clinic: <http://bit.ly/1hPeAnb>
- Set up a flu shot clinic in your workplace: <http://bit.ly/1hPUgI5>
- Influenza vaccination Info-graphic: <http://bit.ly/1mYPua8>

- Immunization Poster 1:
<http://bit.ly/1ccXHTm>

- Immunization Poster 2:
<http://bit.ly/1gcx10P>

The "Just Clean Your Hands" campaign:

<http://bit.ly/1ccT4sC>

- Educational resources, brochures and posters for residents and their visitors:
<http://bit.ly/1qbm47M>

- Educational resources for staff:
<http://bit.ly/1qbm47M>