



Checklist for Norovirus Outbreaks in Long Term Care

Date Initiated: _____ Name: _____

Recognition, Reporting & Testing

- Upon suspicion of a norovirus outbreak, notify Maine CDC by calling 1-800-821-5821 or emailing disease.reporting@maine.gov (please no patient information)
- Obtain an outbreak number from Field Epidemiologists for identification purposes: # _____
- Maintain a line listing of symptomatic residents and staff
- Collect and submit 3-5 specimens from affected residents and staff as soon as an outbreak is suspected
- Follow HETL guidelines for specimen collection, handling, and transport; label specimens with Outbreak #
- Outbreak is consider resolved when 96 hours (2 incubation periods) has elapsed from last onset of symptoms

Control Measures for Facility

Infection Control:

- Institute contact precautions for ill residents during outbreak
- Use mask, gloves and gowns while caring for ill residents and cleaning up feces or vomitus
- Use dedicated or disposable equipment for resident care to minimize transmission
- Cohort ill residents as much as possible and suspend group activities
- Minimize resident and staff movement between affected and unaffected units/wards
- Enforce strict hand hygiene for all facility staff
- Wash hands with soap and water after contamination with vomitus or feces
- Supplement hand washing with soap and water with ethanol or alcohol-based hand sanitizers

Environmental Controls:

- Clean all high traffic areas and high touch items (faucets, door handles, and toilet or bath rails)
- Use EPA-registered disinfectants or detergents/disinfectants approved for use against norovirus for routine cleaning and disinfection
- Clean soiled carpets and soft furnishings with hot water and detergent or steam clean as appropriate
- Handle soiled linens carefully using appropriate infection control precautions
- Conduct thorough cleaning of affected personal and communal areas 48 hours after resolution of the last case

Administrative Controls:

- Exclude ill staff from work for at least 48 hours after symptoms have resolved
- Suspend group activities as much as possible until after the outbreak is contained. Consider risks/benefits of limiting dining hall services
- Post signage about the outbreak and proper hand hygiene
- Restrict admissions if outbreak escalates or is prolonged

Recommendations for Residents & Visitors

- Encourage ill residents to stay in their room/apartment if they are sick to minimize contact with unaffected residents for at least 48 hours after symptoms have resolved
- Promote good hand hygiene for residents: after using the toilet, having contact with an ill individual, and before preparing food, eating or drinking
- Encourage ill visitors to wait at least 48 hours after symptoms resolve before visiting residents
- Consider restricting outside visitation until the outbreak has subsided

Internal and External Communications

- Identify a single point of contact for internal communications
- Identify a single point of contact for external communications
- Notify staff of outbreak and control measures and conduct enhanced surveillance for ill staff
- Notify residents/guardians of outbreak and control measures and request ill residents report to nursing staff
- Consider a final communication to staff, residents, and guardians when the outbreak has resolved

Please refer to Maine CDC's Norovirus Outbreak Guidance for Long Term Care for more detail
Available at <http://www.maine.gov/dhhs/norovirus>