

Infection Control

Flu (Influenza)

Flu is an infectious respiratory illness caused by the influenza virus. Flu can occur throughout the year but usually peaks in winter. Flu usually spreads from person-to-person by droplets when people with flu, cough, sneeze or talk. People 65 years or older or those who have a long term medical condition, are advised to obtain the flu vaccine. (HPSC 2012)

Cough & Sneezing Etiquette

Avoid sneezing or coughing onto your hands:

- Always carry disposable tissues
 - If coughing or sneezing, turn away from others
 - Cover your nose and mouth with clean tissues
 - Dispose of used tissues into a bin immediately
 - Clean your hands thoroughly with soap and water or alcohol hand rub
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Infection Control

The prevention and control of Healthcare Associated Infections in CareChoice is managed according to national policies and procedures and is in line with current legislation and evidence-based best practice.

What is a Healthcare Acquired infection (HCAI)?

A healthcare-associated infection is an infection that is acquired after contact with the healthcare services. This is most frequently after treatment in a hospital, but can also happen after treatment in outpatient clinics, nursing homes and other healthcare settings (HPSC, 2009).

What causes an infection?

Infections are caused by germs such as bacteria, fungi or viruses entering the body. They can be minor and stay in one area, like a boil, or their effects can be felt throughout the body, like flu. Often, infections are easily dealt with, but sometimes they can cause serious problems.





Standard Precautions

Standard Precautions are a set of protective measures designed to prevent contact with blood and body fluids of any other person. (HPSC)

Standard Precautions include the following:

- Hand hygiene
 - Sneezing and cough etiquette
 - Resident vaccination
 - Staff health, hygiene and staff vaccination
 - When to wear gloves, aprons and masks/goggles
 - Cleaning of the environment & equipment
 - Appropriate cleaning of laundry
 - Dealing with body fluids safely
 - Care with needles (sharps) and needlestick injury
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Hand Hygiene

Hands are one of the most common ways in which infection can be spread. Just because hands look clean, we can't assume that they are clean.

How do I wash my hands?

- Wet your hands under warm running water
- Apply liquid soap into a cupped hand and rub palms together to work up a lather
- Wash all hand surfaces several times, remembering palms, back of hands, finger tips, between fingers and thumbs and wrists
- Remember to wash and rinse under rings, if worn
- Rinse your hands under running water
- Pat hands dry with good quality paper towels that are soft and absorbent
- Don't forget to dry under your ring
- It will take 40-60 seconds to wash and dry your hands

Alcohol Hand Rubs

- Alcohol hand rubs are sometimes recommended for use
- They are only effective if hands look clean. Alcohol hand rubs are not effective against all germs for example, with *Clostridium difficile* diarrhoea, and some are not effective against Norovirus (the winter vomiting bug). (HPSC)

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