

# Outbreak Management-Long Term Care

## What is an Outbreak?

- An outbreak means that we have at least 2 residents that have become ill with either respiratory symptoms (cough, nasal congestion, runny nose, fever) or gastrointestinal symptoms (vomiting, diarrhea) within 24 hours.
- Sometimes this means we actually have an influenza Outbreak (identified by a positive swab result)

## Who decides if our home goes under Outbreak?

- The Medical Officer of Health at Public Health declares outbreaks for all nursing homes in Ontario.
- The Medical Officer of Health also determines when the outbreak is over.

## How Does the Virus/Germs Spread?

- Coughing, Sneezing, germs on hands that are not clean (poor hand hygiene)
- By touching a surface that has germs on it, not washing your hands, then touching another clean area.

## What do we do when someone gets sick?

- **Isolate the ill resident...**this means that we put signage up on their door telling everyone what type of personal protective equipment to put on before going in the room.
- The personal protective equipment cart is set up outside their room.
- Feed residents in their room or with other ill residents in a designated spot.
- Try to keep 1 staff member per shift to care for all ill residents
- We increase housekeeping protocols.



## Why do we Isolate?

- We isolate to prevent the germs/virus from spreading to other “well residents, staff and visitors”.
- We are trying to contain the illness.

## Rules for Isolation...To Prevent the Spread

- Personal protective equipment ***must only be worn in the resident’s room*** and removed in the resident’s room prior to leaving it since ***the gown and mask are contaminated.***
- Personal Protective Equipment protects the individual that is not ill (staff performing care, family that is visiting so that germs are not brought outside of the room or brought home to your family.
- Wash hands with hand sanitizer before going into the resident room and immediately upon leaving the room.
- Wash hands when entering the home.
- Ill residents do not eat with the well residents.
- All visitors should check in at the nurse’s station before visiting.



**“HANDWASHING IS THE SINGLE MOST  
EFFECTIVE WAY TO PREVENT THE  
SPREAD OF INFECTION”**