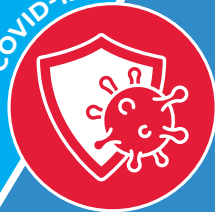


PATIENT SAFETY



COVID-19



COVID-19 Infection Prevention Practices

DECISION TOOL

This resource is intended to assist in making COVID-19 infection prevention and control (IPC)-related decisions in your facility. The highest level of recommended IPC practices are listed below and reflects the current Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) [guidance](#) as of this publication. Facilities are encouraged to use their discretion and any additional information from local/state health departments and regulatory entities when considering COVID-19 IPC implementation. Also, facilities are encouraged to stay up-to-date on current COVID-19 guidance from the CDC and Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS).

When modifying IPC policies to reflect local community transmission, please consider the following:

1. **[CDC Transmission Levels](#)** - This metric (also known as community transmission) is used to guide select IPC practices in health care settings to allow for earlier intervention before there is a strain on the health care system and to protect the individuals receiving care in these settings. Use the county transmission level (high, substantial, moderate or low) to determine the level of SARS-CoV-2 infections in your community and the risk to your facility. Implement the recommended practices listed below based on your local transmission level.
2. **[Interim Infection Prevention and Control Recommendations for Healthcare Personnel During the Coronavirus Disease 2019 \(COVID-19\) Pandemic](#)** - This guidance applies to all U.S. health care settings, including nursing homes and home health. Also, note that vaccination status no longer informs COVID-19-specific IPC interventions (i.e., source control, testing, post-exposure recommendations)
3. **Your Facility Data** – Consider the status of the IPC program and the impact of current interventions, like hand hygiene compliance rates, cleaning and disinfection practices, vaccination rates (COVID-19, Influenza, Pneumococcal), safe cohorting plans, emergency/outbreak plans, etc. If the facility has a history of a COVID-19 outbreak, consider how previous outbreaks developed and were controlled. If an outbreak occurs, the highest levels of precautions should be immediately implemented until the outbreak is controlled and transmission rates in the county fall.
4. **Your Facility COVID-19 Plan updates/changes** - Document decisions made, including supporting data and information discussed in considerations 1. and 2. above, using the Situation, Background, Assessment and Recommendation (SBAR) format (See page 3), including date and responsible parties.

TRANSMISSION LEVEL**RECOMMENDED PRACTICES:****HIGH**

- Universal source control using NIOSH Approved N-95 or higher respirator in all areas of the facility where resident encounters could occur
- Eye protection in all areas where resident encounters could occur
- Optimize indoor air quality by limiting crowding in communal spaces, and consulting with facility engineers to improve ventilation
- Perform SARS-CoV-2 Testing for suspected cases and close contacts
- Consider screening testing to identify asymptomatic infections
- Establish process to identify and manage individuals with suspected or confirmed SARS-CoV-2 Infection
- Encourage everyone to practice infection prevention behaviors (i.e. hand hygiene, respiratory etiquette/cover your cough, avoiding sick people, reporting symptoms) and to remain up to date with all vaccine doses
- Maintain infection prevention and control practices (i.e. hand hygiene, cleaning and disinfection, standard precautions)
- Implement facility wide screening testing if newly identified COVID-19 case in resident or staff

SUBSTANTIAL

- Universal source control recommended for those who have had recent exposure to COVID-19, respiratory-infection symptoms (i.e. cough, runny nose, congestion, sore throat), reside or work in an area with active outbreak or based on personal preference
- Establish process to identify and manage individuals with suspected or confirmed SARS-CoV-2 Infection
- Consider screening testing to identify asymptomatic infections
- Encourage everyone to practice infection prevention behaviors (i.e. hand hygiene, respiratory etiquette/cover your cough, avoiding sick people, reporting symptoms) and to remain up to date with all vaccine doses
- Establish process to identify and manage individuals with suspected or confirmed SARS-CoV-2 Infection
- Optimize indoor air quality by limiting crowding in communal spaces, and consulting with facility engineers to improve ventilation
- Maintain infection prevention and control practices (i.e. hand hygiene, cleaning and disinfection, standard precautions)
- Implement facility wide screening testing if newly identified COVID-19 case in resident or staff

MODERATE

- Encourage everyone to practice infection prevention behaviors (i.e. hand hygiene, respiratory etiquette/cover your cough, avoiding sick people, reporting symptoms) and to remain up to date with all vaccine doses
- Establish process to identify and manage individuals with suspected or confirmed SARS-CoV-2 Infection
- Universal source control recommended for those who have had recent exposure to COVID-19, respiratory-infection symptoms (i.e. cough, runny nose, congestion, sore throat), reside or work in an area with active outbreak, or based on personal preference
- Optimize indoor air quality by limiting crowding in communal spaces, and consulting with facility engineers to improve ventilation
- Maintain infection prevention and control practices (i.e. hand hygiene, cleaning and disinfection, standard precautions)
- Implement facility wide screening testing if newly identified COVID-19 case in resident or staff

LOW

- Encourage everyone to practice infection prevention behaviors (i.e. hand hygiene, respiratory etiquette/cover your cough, avoiding sick people, reporting symptoms) and to remain up to date with all vaccine doses
- Establish process to identify and manage individuals with suspected or confirmed SARS-CoV-2 Infection
- Universal source control recommended for those who have had recent exposure to COVID-19, respiratory-infection symptoms (i.e. cough, runny nose, congestion, sore throat), reside or work in an area with active outbreak, or based on personal preference
- Optimize indoor air quality by limiting crowding in communal spaces, and consulting with facility engineers to improve ventilation
- Maintain infection prevention and control practices (i.e. hand hygiene, cleaning and disinfection, standard precautions)
- Implement facility wide screening testing if newly identified COVID-19 case in resident or staff

SBAR Template

Date:

Team Members:

S

Situation:

- Reviewing COVID IPC strategies
- New COVID-19 case identified (outbreak)
- Updating COVID-19 IPC policy
- Increase or decrease in community transmission levels
- Increase or decrease in facility influenza-like illness (ILI) cases

B

Background:

(Things to consider – community transmission levels, vaccination rates, cases of influenza-like illness, outbreak status, etc.)

- CDC Transmission Level is currently _____
- Newly COVID-19 case identified on _____
- Number of residents with influenza-like illness (ILI): _____
- Number of staff with influenza-like illness (ILI): _____
- Current Vaccination rates: _____
- Last known COVID outbreak: _____

A

Assessment:

- Current compliance with IPC practices (HH rates, cleaning/disinfection, transmission-based precautions, etc)
- Number of suspected cases (COVID-19, influenza-like illness, RSV, etc.):
- Number of contacts/exposed residents or staff:

R

Recommendation:

(Practices to adjust: screening testing, personal protective equipment (PPE) requirements, cohorting, visitation, admissions testing, clinical symptom monitoring, etc.)

In addition to the recommendations provided in the [COVID-19 Infection Prevention Practices Decision Tool](#) consider the following:

- Update visitation policy
- Cohort residents
- Communicate with state/local public health authorities

REFERENCES:

- a. [Interim Final Rule \(IFC\), CMS-3401-IFC, Additional Policy and Regulatory Revisions in Response to the COVID-19 Public Health Emergency related to Long-Term Care \(LTC\) Facility Testing Requirements](#)
- b. [Interim Infection Prevention and Control Recommendations for Healthcare Personnel During the Coronavirus Disease 2019 \(COVID-19\) Pandemic](#)