



# SAN MATEO COUNTY HEALTH SYSTEM

## Acute Respiratory Illness Recommendations Checklist

### **General Infection Control and Prevention Recommendations:**

- Post signs prominently at facility entrance and on affected units discouraging visitation and volunteers.
- Post signs/posters regarding recommendations for hand washing, respiratory hygiene and cough etiquette.
- Hand washing facilities including running water and liquid hand soap should be readily available; alcohol based hand sanitizers may be used if hands are not visibly soiled.
- In addition to Standard Precautions, Droplet Precautions must be implemented:
  - Wear a surgical mask when within 3 feet of ill residents/patients.
  - Place a mask over the ill resident/patient nose and mouth when leaving the room if transport or movement of the resident/patient is needed. The resident/patient hands should be sanitized prior to them leaving the room.
  - Wear gloves when contact with respiratory secretions is anticipated. Change gloves between contacts with roommates.
  - Wear a gown if soiling of clothes with respiratory secretions is anticipated.
- Personal items such as water pitchers, cups, toothbrushes, etc. should be labeled w/ the resident/patient name, and not left in common areas.
- Increase the frequency of routine ward cleaning. Particular attention should be given to cleaning objects that are handled frequently, such as faucet and door handles, doors, toilet or bath rails, bedrails, over-bed tables, nursing station counters, elevators and hallway banisters.
- Linens, eating utensils and dishes used by those who are sick do not need to be cleaned separately, but they should not be shared without thorough washing. Linens should be washed in hot water using laundry soap and tumbled dry on a hot setting. Individuals should wash their hands with soap and water immediately after handling dirty laundry.
- Fax line list of ill residents/patients and staff to the Health Department by 11:00 am daily at (650) 573-2919 or e-mail nameofinvestigator@co.sanmateo.ca.us. Notify the Health Department of residents who require hospitalization or who die during the outbreak.
- Consult with the Health Department about laboratory testing.
- Consider use of antiviral medications to minimize the effects of infection by influenza virus.

### **Infection Control Precautions for Residents:**

- Instruct residents/patients regarding 'respiratory etiquette'
  - Cover their nose and mouth when coughing or sneezing with a tissue or their sleeve.
  - How to properly use and dispose of masks.
  - Reinforce importance of hand washing; consider providing resident/patient with an alcohol-based hand rub.
  - Counsel resident/patient about the possibility of themselves or staff being required to wear a mask to limit the spread of respiratory illness.
  
- Residents who develop symptoms of influenza should be immediately separated from the general population and kept away from well residents until at least 7 days after symptoms began, or 24 hours after symptoms resolve, whichever is longer.
  
- Confine symptomatic residents and their exposed roommates, if applicable, to their room, restrict them from group activities, and serve meals in their room for the duration of illness.
  
- If individual rooms for persons with influenza like illness are not feasible, consider using a large room, specifically for ill persons with beds at least 6 feet apart and, if possible, with temporary barriers between beds and nearby bathroom facilities separate from bathrooms used by healthy residents.
  
- Cancel or postpone group activities facility-wide until ill individuals are asymptomatic for        days after onset of symptoms.
  
- Minimize movement of residents between units whether the unit is affected or not.
  
- Consider restricting the admission/readmission of new/returning residents/patients; if admissions are necessary, admit to units with asymptomatic residents. Notify the Health Department of the admissions while facility is on outbreak status.
  
- When a resident is transferred to another facility for medical care:
  - Notify the receiving facility about this outbreak (including transportation drivers, ambulance personnel, dialysis centers, medical/eye/dental visits, Physical Therapy, etc.).
  - If prophylaxis has been ordered for your facility, residents/patients who have confirmed or suspected influenza must be started on anti-viral medication before they can return to your facility.
  - Residents/patients with a non-influenza medical emergency may only be readmitted after clearance by Public Health.
  
- Residents and staff are not to share any food items, including cookies, boxes or bowls of candies, medicinal applesauce, communal water fountains, etc.

### **Staff and Health Care Worker Infection Control Precautions:**

- Offer influenza vaccine to all unvaccinated staff.

- If prophylaxis has been ordered for your facility, staff should be offered an antiviral medication.
- Staff should wear gloves when contact with the resident or contaminated surfaces/objects is anticipated.
- Maintain the same staff to resident/patient assignment, if possible.
- Limit staff movement between affected and unaffected units. This includes 'floating' and temporary staff.
- Exclude non-essential personnel from affected units.
- Request that symptomatic staff and visitors stay home or avoid visitation for a **minimum of            days** from the time of onset of symptoms or until asymptomatic.
- Fax daily line listing of ill staff to Health Department daily (650) 573-2919 or e-mail at [nameofinvestigator@co.sanmateo.ca.us](mailto:nameofinvestigator@co.sanmateo.ca.us)

**Additional Recommendations:**