

# **INFECTION PREVENTION & CONTROL RESOURCES FOR YORK REGION LONG-TERM CARE HOMES**

**January 2019**

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## Introduction

The *Long-Term Care Home Act, 2007* requires every licensed long-term care home in Ontario to have an infection prevention and control program in place that meets the requirements stated in *Ontario Regulation 79/10* (the Regulation). A comprehensive infection prevention and control program that is properly implemented can help prevent the transmission and spread of illness in the long-term care home (LTCH).

This resource package contains information and resources to assist York Region LTCHs in meeting these requirements.

## Public Health Inspections

Public Health Inspectors conduct food safety inspections and an annual infection prevention and control audit in long-term care homes and if applicable, annual inspections of pools and personal service settings such as hair salons. Public Health Inspectors also conduct inspections when an outbreak has been declared in a facility, as well as investigate complaints that could be related to a health hazard. The focus of an inspection can include any of the following areas:

- Cleaning and disinfection practices
- General maintenance and sanitation
- Hand hygiene, routine practices & additional precautions (including use of personal protective equipment)
- Outbreak response and implementation of control measures
- Precautions taken during construction and renovation
- Food safety, water safety and personal services safety

To contact your area Public Health Inspector, call Health Connection at 1-800-361-5653 or email [health.inspectors@york.ca](mailto:health.inspectors@york.ca)

### Public Health

1-800-361-5653  
TTY 1-866-512-6228  
york.ca



## Policy Review

Public Health liaisons will coordinate the review of outbreak and general infection prevention and control policies with LTCHs every two years. The first review was conducted in the fall of 2016 and extended into 2017. This requirement is mandated in the [Institutional/Facility Outbreak Prevention and Control Protocol, MOHLTC, January 2018](#).

## Outbreak Management

### When to Suspect an Outbreak

**Suspect respiratory infection outbreak:** Two cases of acute respiratory tract illness occurring within 48 hours in a geographic area (e.g., unit, floor) **OR** more than one unit having a case of acute respiratory illness within 48 hours **OR** one laboratory-confirmed case of influenza.

**Suspect enteric infection outbreak:** when two residents/staff present with similar enteric symptoms in a relatively short period of time (e.g., 24-48 hours).

### Reporting a Suspected Outbreak

To report a suspected outbreak, please call York Region Community and Health Services, **Infectious Disease and Control Division:**

- Weekdays during business hours (Monday-Friday, 8:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m.):  
905-830-4444, ext.73588
- After business hours on weekdays & on weekends (including statutory holidays):  
905-953-6478

### Outbreak Guidelines & Resources by York Region Public Health

Visit [www.york.ca/infectionprevention](http://www.york.ca/infectionprevention) and click on “Infectious Diseases and Outbreak Management”

- Outbreak STOP sign for facility entrance
- Additional precautions signs: contact, droplet, contact/droplet, airborne
- Personal protective equipment poster
- Proper cleaning and disinfection practices poster
- Outbreak control measures checklist
- Daily cleaning checklist for ill resident rooms during an outbreak
- Enteric outbreak control measures – information package for institutions, January 2014
- Respiratory outbreak control measures - information package for institutions, January 2014
- Line lists – enteric and respiratory (residents and staff)
- General test requisition – how to complete this form for outbreak specimens
- Influenza PowerPoint presentation
- Reportable diseases list

Please fax line lists daily to the Infectious Diseases Control Division (IDCD) at:  
905-660-4889/1 or 1-844-248-4223

Additional resources are available on the **Ministry of Health & Long-Term Care** website ([www.health.gov.on.ca](http://www.health.gov.on.ca)):

- Control of Respiratory Infection Outbreaks in Long-Term Care Homes, 2018
- Recommendations for the Control of Gastroenteritis Outbreaks in Long-Term Care Homes, March 2018

## Education and Training

In accordance with the Regulation, long-term care home licensees are required to provide education and training for residents, their substitute decision-maker(s), staff and volunteers on how to prevent transmission and spread of illness. Resources are available on the York Region website to help long-term care homes achieve this requirement. Visit [www.york.ca/infectionprevention](http://www.york.ca/infectionprevention) and click on “Infection Prevention Education”, then choose “Infection Prevention Resources.”

- Correct hand washing procedures sign
- How to correctly use hand sanitizer sign
- Proper cleaning & disinfecting practices poster
- Public Health staff are available to provide education sessions on various infection prevention and control topics for groups of 10 or more (including antibiotic resistant organisms (AROs), routine practices & additional precautions). To book a session please call Health Connection at 1-800-361-5653 or email [health.inspectors@york.ca](mailto:health.inspectors@york.ca)

Additional resources are available on the **Public Health Ontario** website ([www.publichealthontario.ca](http://www.publichealthontario.ca))

- PIDAC Documents\*

Public Health Ontario (PHO) best practice documents are intended for use by health care workers in hospitals, long-term care facilities and community-based health care organizations. Below are the suggested documents you should be familiar with.

\*These documents are updated regularly. For the most current version visit the PHO website.

- Best Practices for Hand Hygiene In All Health Care Settings, 4<sup>th</sup> Edition, April 2014
- Surveillance of Health Care-associated Infections, July 2014
- Best Practices for Environmental Cleaning for Prevention and Control of Infections, April 2018
- Infection Prevention and Control Programs in Ontario, May 2012
- Routine Practices and Additional Precautions, November 2012
  - Additional precautions signage and lanyard cards
  - Annex A: Screening, Testing and Surveillance for Antibiotic-Resistant Organisms (AROs), February 2013
  - Annex B: Prevention of Transmission of Acute Respiratory Infection, March 2013
  - Annex C: Testing, Surveillance and Management of *Clostridium Difficile*, January 2013
- Just Clean Your Hands (JCYH) Program

This PHO program was developed to help reduce health care-associated infections and the spread of infection by providing focused education and tools for promotion, evaluation and auditing to health care providers. [More program information, resources and videos.](#)

- Environmental Cleaning Toolkit  
This toolkit supports the PIDAC best practices document ‘Environmental Cleaning for Prevention and Control of Infections’ and is designed as a support tool for environmental services managers and infection control professionals in providing training to staff on effective procedures for environmental cleaning. [Access this toolkit](#)

## Influenza

Encourage staff, residents and visitors to protect themselves by learning about the spread of influenza and the importance of getting an annual flu shot. Visit <http://www.york.ca/flu> for more information on:

- Where to get a flu shot
- Influenza vaccine
- Information about the flu

Additional resources are available on:

**York Region Public Health** website ([www.york.ca/infectionprevention](http://www.york.ca/infectionprevention))

- Influenza Presentation  
This presentation is updated annually and provides an overview of influenza related to the disease, vaccine and outbreak control measures. The presentation is appropriate for staff working in LTCHs. The presentation can be viewed on-line and run as a slide show as it is narrated (approximately 25 minutes long) or can be printed to share as a resource for staff.

**Ministry of Health & Long-Term Care** website ([www.health.gov.on.ca](http://www.health.gov.on.ca))

- Let's Get Fluless  
<http://www.health.gov.on.ca/en/pro/programs/publichealth/flu/healthcareworkers.aspx>  
This campaign was designed to encourage increased flu shot uptake among health care workers in hospitals and long-term care facilities in Ontario. Access, download and print promotional materials from the website above such as posters, Flu Facts, Q&A sheet. Some resources can be customized to your setting before printing.

**Public Health Ontario** website ([www.publichealthontario.ca](http://www.publichealthontario.ca))

- Ontario Respiratory Pathogen Bulletin  
Posted every Friday during influenza season (November to May), these weekly reports include information on influenza activity in Ontario, case counts for new and total influenza cases (broken down by health unit), information on institutional outbreaks, dominant circulating respiratory viruses, archived bulletins and reports. Access these bulletins by clicking on ‘Browse By Topic’ at the top of the page, then click on ‘A-Z’ then choose ‘I’ then choose ‘Influenza bulletins.’

## Tuberculosis Screening

Please visit [www.york.ca](http://www.york.ca) (click on ‘Health’ at the top of the page, then ‘Infectious Diseases and Prevention’ from the drop-down list, then ‘Tuberculosis’) for resources and to explore services that York

Region's TB Program offers. You can also call our TB Information Line at 1-877-464-9675, ext. 76000. Some resources that can be accessed on our website include:

- Active TB screening checklist for clinicians
- Recommendations for tuberculosis (TB) screening in long-term care homes
- Tuberculosis (TB) screening in long-term care homes – frequently asked questions
- Canadian Tuberculosis Standards, 7th Edition; Chapter 15: Prevention and Control of Tuberculosis Transmission in Health Care and Other Settings, Public Health Agency of Canada (February 2014)

<https://www.canada.ca/en/public-health/services/infectious-diseases/canadian-tuberculosis-standards-7th-edition.html>

## Vaccine Information & UIIP

### Vaccine Information

For information on vaccine: ordering; storage and handling; wastage and returns; vaccine immunization schedules; community immunization clinics; reporting an adverse event following immunization (AEFI); and recalls please visit [Vaccination Information for Health Care Professionals](#)

### UIIP

Organizations interested in participating in Ontario's Universal Influenza Immunization Program (UIIP) are required to complete an annual application process for approval to receive and administer publicly funded influenza vaccine. Applications need to be submitted prior to flu season and the deadline is typically by the end of June.

Application deadlines, instructions and the required forms are available on the MOHLTC UIIP home page at <http://www.health.gov.on.ca/en/pro/programs/publichealth/flu/uiip/>

If your facility has been approved for the Universal Influenza Immunization Program (UIIP) you would require an annual inspection by public health staff. Please see the [Vaccine Storage and Handling Guidelines](#), May 2013 for guidance on vaccine storage and handling.

## Needle-stick Injury/Blood-borne Exposure

In the event of a needle-stick injury or blood-borne exposure there is no requirement for facilities to notify Public Health.

Public Health can be consulted to help assess risk and provide information on what follow-up should be done if needed. This advice is provided through our Sexual and Blood-borne Infection team (ext. 74214) and can be accessed by calling Health Connection 1-800-361-5653 or emailing [OnDutyPhn@York.ca](mailto:OnDutyPhn@York.ca).

## Food Safety

### YorkSafe Food Handler Certification

In accordance with the Regulation, licensees are required to ensure that whenever food is prepared in the long-term care home, at least one person involved in preparing the food holds a current certificate in food handling.

In addition, York Region has a Mandatory Food Handler Certification bylaw, which will require all high and moderate-risk food premises in the Region to have a certified food handler on site at all times during operations. All high risk food premises, such as long-term care homes, are required to comply with the bylaw by January 2017 and all moderate risk premises by January 2019.

Visit the website ([www.york.ca/foodsafety](http://www.york.ca/foodsafety)) for more details including our online registration process (click on 'Health' at the top of the page, then from the drop-down list click on 'Food Safety – Food Handler Certification').

### Food Recalls

York Region uses the Urgent Public Health Notification System to provide premises including long-term care homes in York Region with urgent health information in a timely manner regarding food recalls, drinking water advisories, health advisories, heat alerts and other important public health issues.

When a food recall is initiated by York Region Public Health, you will receive notification either through email or telephone. We ask that you respond to these notifications through one of the methods as quickly as possible. When you respond to the notification by telephone, you will not be contacted by email. Your response to the questions will help us to determine what actions, if necessary, should be taken and to gauge the effectiveness of the recall.

## Extreme Weather Conditions

Long-term care homes are required to ensure that there are procedures in place for responding to extreme hot and cold weather conditions. York Region Public Health notifies the public and partners about weather conditions that may impact health through public service announcements, webpage updates and social media. Stakeholders whose clientele may be more vulnerable to extreme heat, such as long-term care homes, are also directly notified of extreme heat conditions between May and September.

For additional resources, please visit [www.york.ca/extremeheat](http://www.york.ca/extremeheat) and [www.york.ca/extremecold](http://www.york.ca/extremecold)

## Pets in Facility Settings

Animal visitation programs have been found to benefit people socially, psychologically and physiologically and while important for the health and well-being of those accessing the programs, they may increase the risk of infectious disease transmission for those at greatest health risk which includes the elderly and those who are immunocompromised.

The health risk can be minimized with proper animal handling, appropriate restrictions and cleaning practices. Improper pet care, handling and hand hygiene, including improper disposal of pet waste and improper use of kitchen sinks for animal care, are key risk factors for the majority of pet-associated infections.

Guidelines for Pets in Facilities will be available this fall to educate facility operators on how they can mitigate the risk of transmitting zoonotic microorganisms from animals to residents and will provide guidance on what should be covered in policies related to pets. The following information will be included: choosing appropriate animals; restricting animal access within the facility; incidents with animals and follow-up procedures; caring for and feeding animals; and cleaning animal dwellings and enclosures. Please note that all long-term care homes in Ontario must have a policy respecting pets as per the *Long-Term Care Homes Act, 2007* and *Regulation 79/10, Section 93*.

## YorkSafe

YorkSafe is an inspection reporting program where you can access the most current inspection reports of York Region food establishments, pools, whirlpools, wading pools, splash pads, small drinking water systems, personal service settings and child care settings.

- Visit [www.york.ca](http://www.york.ca) for more information about the YorkSafe program (click on 'Health' at the top of the page, then click on 'Food Safety' from the drop-down list, then 'Inspection Reports')
- Visit [www.york.ca/yorksafes](http://www.york.ca/yorksafes) to look up the most current inspection reports of the York Region establishments listed above.

## Infectious Diseases and Prevention Reports

Public Health monitors infectious diseases and associated risk factors and health behaviours in York Region including the surveillance of reportable diseases, outbreaks, immunization coverage, food safety behaviours and sexual health practices. Infectious diseases and prevention reports can be obtained online. Visit [Health Statistics and Reports](#) for the Reportable Diseases in York Region 2000-2015 Report; Monthly Reportable Diseases Summary and Influenza Surveillance Reports.