

IPC Lead Roles and Responsibilities

Background

The Australian Government Department of Health and Aged Care requires all aged care facilities to appoint a clinical staff member (RN/EN) at each residence as an Infection Prevention and Control (IPC) lead. The IPC Champion will work in collaboration with the IPC Lead and report on IPC practices within the residence by applying information learned from the Infection Prevention and Control in Aged Care Settings short course.

Roles and Responsibilities

The IPC Champion will work in collaboration with the IPC Lead to perform functions which will include:

1. Ensure the Infection Prevention and Control Plan is met
2. Provide support to all staff in relation to infection prevention and control within the residence
3. Have a clear and strong knowledge of Aged Care Quality Standard 3 (3)(g) and Standard 8 (3) (d) and (e) and how to apply these within the residence
4. Conduct routine rounds at the residence to oversee and assess compliance with standard infection prevention and control practices and any transmission-based precautions that may be in place
5. Identify gaps and support the implementation of actions where appropriate in collaboration with the IPC Lead, Residence Manager and Clinical Care Coordinator
6. Initiates and maintains communication with staff, sharing information, and providing feedback in real time to aid with staff understanding of the principles of infection prevention and control including standard and transmission-based precautions
7. Provide clear communication of observations to the IPC Lead, Management team, and central office Infection Control team
8. Participate in continuous improvement activities of the home starting with the hand hygiene campaign
9. Attend monthly IPC leads committee meetings in the absence of the IPC lead, and participate in group workshops as needed
10. Provide education for onboarding staff during orientation, annual updates, and as needed at other times during the year as directed by the IPC Lead, Residence Manager and CCC.

Requirements of the IPC Champion Role

1. Provide support regarding the assessment, planning, implementation, documentation, and evaluation of transmission precautions of infectious clients, carriers of multi-resistant organisms or those in isolation.
2. Plan and promote activities for infection prevention and control events. The three identified events throughout the year are international hand hygiene day (5th May), National Antimicrobial Prescribing Survey NAPS (July), and International Infection Prevention week (October).
3. Provide support, training, and assessment, of the requirements for standard and transmission-based precautions including but not limited to:
 - a. Appropriate signage including respiratory etiquette, social distancing, personal protective equipment (PPE)
 - b. Adequate hand hygiene resources including product placement and signage.
4. Oversee and participate in the evidence-based audit program including review of audit findings and creation of action plans in response to findings.
 - a. Assist with rolling out action plans or change processes in accordance with audit outcomes as delegated.

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5. Participate in the identification of residents with infection in a timely manner.
6. Participate in collaboration with the IPC team in the evaluation of the targeted surveillance program findings and any targeted strategies to reduce the risk of resident infections at the residence.
7. Assist the IPC Lead and residence Management team with outbreak preparedness including PPE supplies (gowns, gloves, masks, visors), alcohol based hand rub, waste disposal containers, suitable trolleys/brackets for placement of PPE outside isolation rooms, air purifier availability, signage for isolation purposes including donning and doffing posters, appropriate transmission-based precautions posters, hand hygiene posters, N95 fit checking posters, along with signage for residents and visitors including outbreak signage for the homes main entrance and cough etiquette signs throughout the residence.
8. Maintain a suite of Infection Control Factsheets for distribution when residents require isolation (i.e., viral gastroenteritis, influenza, Covid-19) for staff, residents, and visitors.
9. Assist in outbreaks to ensure compliance with standard and transmission-based precautions, monitoring of all residents for symptoms during an outbreak, cleaning and disinfection requirements are being met, and participate in Site Emergency Response Team (SERT) meetings.
10. Participate in the antimicrobial stewardship program as delegated by the IPC Lead in collaboration with the residence Management team.

Workplace Health and Safety

1. Assist, coordinate (as delegated), demonstrate, and promote correct hand hygiene practices and use of PPE and monitors Team Members (and others) compliance with requirements.
 - a. Where non-compliance is observed, escalate to the Management team.
2. Support the respiratory protection program (RPP) including N95 mask fit check program.
3. Support the vaccination campaigns and help promote the importance and safety of vaccination programs including relevant educational materials.
4. Collaborate with the property team to ensure a preventative maintenance program is in place including air conditioning and plumbing, and there is a safe water management plan and response to water-borne illness.

Education and Training

1. Share information learnt from professional development activities.
2. Assist the IPC lead for the ongoing infection prevention and control training programs including:
 - a. Orientation
 - b. PPE donning and doffing annual competencies.
 - c. Hand hygiene training and annual competencies
 - d. N95 fit checking
 - e. Interactive small group exercises in outbreak management.

Meetings

1. Attend monthly IPC Lead Committee meetings in absence of the IPC Lead
2. Review minutes from each IPC Lead Committee
3. Periodical attendance at Resident Meetings, Staff Meetings, Daily Residence Meetings, and SERT meetings providing this does not impact staffing in the direct care role and as delegated by the IPC lead or Management team.
4. Meet regularly with the IPC Lead or RM and CCC to review activities, progress, and discuss any infection prevention and control issues identified in the course of the work.