

Gastrointestinal Illness - IPAC Key Messages

Updated:

General Updates

- There are GI cases on units
- Increase screening of all clients to twice daily on the affected unit until 4 days (96 hours) from last client symptom resolution
- Record symptoms using the [Bristol stool chart](#) on the paper line list
- Ensure outbreak signage on entrance to unit
- Ensure [Contact Plus](#) (and [Droplet](#) if vomiting) precautions signage is appropriately posted
- Hand hygiene using soap and water is the preferred method when caring for clients with gastrointestinal illness. When a hand hygiene sink not available at point of care, use ABHR followed by soap and water hand washing at the next available sink.
- Encourage staff to self-monitor for symptoms and stay home when symptomatic.
- Dedicate shared equipment when possible and clean and disinfect all shared equipment between use
- For clients using commodes/bed pans, consider using disposable hygienic products.

Precautions for Symptomatic Clients

- Place suspected and laboratory confirmed clients on [Contact Plus](#) (and [Droplet](#) if vomiting) precautions until 48 hours after resolution of symptoms.
- When clients are ready to come off precautions coordinate an additional precautions clean of the room when the client is not in the room.

Visitors

- Visitation permitted at the discretion of the MHO and the circumstances of the outbreak (OB).
- When visiting symptomatic clients, visitors are accepting of this risk, visitors can only visit the one client, and cannot go into other areas such as common areas and must comply with donning and doffing

Group Activities

At the discretion of the MHO group activities are suspended or decreased/modified
Incorporate hand hygiene for clients before and after the activity

Close Contacts

- In room dining for close contact clients for **48 hours** from date of exposure.
 - Close contacts are roommates, tablemates and are those that share a washroom

Lab specimens

- Send specimens from symptomatic residents to BCCDC when outbreak definition met using the BCCDC requisition. Obtain MYSIS # and outbreak ID from CD EHO Monday- Friday and from ICP weekends and stats.
- Specimens collected prior to meeting outbreak definition can be stored in a specimen refrigerator, at 4°C for up to 3 days.

Meal Tray Delivery/Pick up

- PPE is not required when delivering meals to clients that are not on precautions
- Deliver meals to clients not on precautions first
- PPE is required for staff entering rooms of clients on precautions
 - Change gloves, gown and mask when going between clients
- Picking up meal tray, trays can be placed on utility tables to facilitate pick up
 - Clean utility tables after removing tray (as it came from an affected room)

Break Room Etiquette

- Take breaks on unit where possible
 - ABHR and Cleaning/Disinfecting wipes are available in the break space
 - Staff to perform Hand hygiene prior to eating
 - Staff to clean and disinfect eating space before and after their break

Wandering Clients on Precautions

- Staff to:
 - use a point of care risk assessment to determine the need for PPE when redirecting the client
 - encourage clients to perform hand hygiene
 - staff to perform hand hygiene before and after contact with the client
 - clean and disinfect any surfaces touched by the client

Cleaning and Disinfection /PPE carts

- Regularly clean and disinfect PPE carts and utility tables twice daily
- Assign staff to restock q shift

Laundry/Garbage Pick Up

- On leaving the room prior to doffing PPE staff to tie and place the laundry and or garbage bag at the entrance to the door
 - Ensure bags are not touching PPE cart or utility table (if used)
- Staff collecting bags from outside rooms can don a new gown and gloves and collect the bags
 - Once all the bags are collected, doff PPE and clean and disinfect high touch surfaces of the laundry cart

If you have any questions, please reach out to leadership.