



Barwon
Health

Infection Prevention and Control

Penny Radalj, IPCC
Barwon South West Public Health Unit

Preparedness

- Face masks – particularly when community transmission is high
- Vaccination – COVID-19 and influenza
- Ventilation
- Testing
- Isolation
- Treatment with antiviral medication
- Workforce planning
- Logistics - PPE and RAT supplies
- Established IPC processes

Outbreak Management Plans

- Leadership
- Workforce contingencies
- Resource supply – PPE, RATs, antivirals
- Clinical care of unwell people
- Communications
- Supporting safe visiting
- Recovery

Protecting residents, staff and visitors

- Ask visitors to wear a mask indoors
- Encourage visits outside or in well ventilated areas (open windows if you can) and be mindful of physical distancing
- Advise visitors and staff to stay home if they feel unwell or test positive to COVID-19, and to make another time for their visit
- Have hand hygiene stations at entry and other easily accessible points for visitors and staff
- Promote being up to date with COVID-19 and influenza vaccinations.

Vaccination

- COVID-19 – 6 months from previous booster or 6 months post COVID-19 infection
 - Recommended ≥ 65 yrs and ≥ 18 yrs and at risk
 - Available ≥ 18 yrs and at risk children 5 – 17 yrs.
- Influenza annually
- COVID-19 and influenza can be given at the same time.

COVID-19 Testing

- Anyone who is symptomatic should isolate and be tested
 - RA positive, no further testing
 - RA negative, arrange for a multiplex respiratory PCR
- Consider RAT of staff and visitors
 - Staff twice weekly
 - Visitors on entry
- Increase testing of staff and visitors during an outbreak

Response

- Follow care home's plan for when a resident tests positive
- Implement IPC measures
- GP access and treatment
- Communicate with residents, staff and visitors
- Easy access to PPE and testing

Reporting

- COVID-19
 - Home operators - report a residents positive rapid antigen test (RAT)
 - Staff - self-report a positive RAT
- COVID-19, influenza and RSV outbreak
 - Email the PHU on PHU@barwonhealth.org.au
- All COVID-19 related deaths

Antivirals

- Prescribed by GP if person with COVID-19/influenza is eligible
- Influenza – within 48 hours of symptoms
- COVID-19 – within 5 days of symptoms
- ↓ risk of severe illness

Visitors

- Plan for visitor:
 - IPC education
 - Partner in care

Staff

- Not to attend the facility > 7 days after testing positive for COVID-19
- Surge staffing plans

Recovery

- Review ARI management processes
 - identify any areas for improvement
- Support recovery of any residents who have declined in health
- Return to “normal”

Public Health Unit Support

- Support available through the PHU
 - Preparedness
 - Review outbreak management plans
 - Practice outbreak response
 - Provide advice
 - During an outbreak
 - Phone and onsite support and advice
 - Any communicable disease – ARI, gastro, scabies
 - Education

Resources

- phu@barwonhealth.org.au
- [Department of Health IPC and COVID-19 resources](#)
- [Infection prevention and control – eLearning](#)
- [COVID-19 Self Assessment Tool for residential community and disability services](#)