



# PREVENT THE SPREAD OF INFECTION

## A Guide for Residents & Families

### INFECTION OUTBREAKS

There are several different causes of outbreaks:

- Respiratory Illnesses (i.e. influenza or COVID)
- Gastrointestinal Illnesses that cause diarrhea and vomiting
- Antibiotic Resistant Organisms
- Others

**Please do not visit our sites if you have signs and symptoms of an illness that could spread to others.**

Examples of illnesses include: fever, cough, sore throat, diarrhea, and vomiting.

These kinds of infections can easily spread in continuing care settings. If there is an outbreak of illness in the Manor; you may encounter some of the following precautions as a means to prevent further spread:

- Visiting may be restricted
- Residents who are remaining in their room may have extra precautions for those entering such as wearing gowns, gloves, masks and eye protection
- Group, social and rehabilitation activities may be cancelled
- Enhance in Manor cleaning and disinfecting routines

### What are Respiratory Illnesses?

Respiratory illnesses manifest with symptoms including fever, body aches, dry cough, sore throat, and fatigue. These conditions can lead to severe illness and even death, particularly among the elderly and individuals with pre-existing health risks. Additionally, respiratory illnesses are highly contagious, primarily transmitted through respiratory droplets from person to person.

### How to Avoid Respiratory Illnesses

Antibiotics are not effective for the flu. Antibiotics are used to treat bacterial infections and the flu is a viral infection.

Make responsible choices:

- Get your annual vaccines. If you are unsure about how to get them, speak with your nurse.
- If you are exhibiting symptoms, do not visit our sites and we recommend seeing a physician

**...and don't forget,  
always wash your hands!**

## What are gastrointestinal (GI) illnesses?

A gastrointestinal (GI) illness is an ailment that affects the digestive system, which includes the throat, stomach, and intestines. GI illnesses can be short-term or chronic, and can range from mild to serious.

## What are Antibiotic Resistance Organisms (ARO)?

Some bacterial (germs) infections can no longer be treated with the common antibiotics. These are called Antibiotic Resistant Organisms. They do not always cause illness and you may not be aware of who is carrying them. They are becoming more common.

### How can you help manage ARO?

Antibiotic resistance is managed differently in continuing care and community than in hospitals.

- Clean surfaces according to site procedures
- Don't insist on antibiotics for yourself or family members – let the Physician make this decision
- Do not take antibiotics prescribed for someone else
- Change gloves and wash hands between residents and activities
- Perform hand hygiene frequently
- Take antibiotics as instructed by the Physician or Pharmacist

## HAND HYGIENE

Staying healthy starts with good hygiene. **Hand sanitizer** is an easy, convenient way to keep your hands clean. Use it during the following situations:

- After contact with frequently touched surfaces and objects
- After coughing, sneezing or blowing your nose
- Before handling or eating food
- Before touching your eyes, nose or mouth
- Before and after caring for someone who's sick

However, do make sure that you **wash your hands** using soap and water during the following situations:

- If your hands feel and/or look dirty
- After touching a used mask
- After using the toilet
- Before and after visiting or caring for someone who's vulnerable to infection
- Contact with any diarrhea or vomit

### References and Resources

- Calgary Health Region, Care in the Community Infection Prevention and Control Committee brochure
- Health Canada Infection Prevention and Control Guidelines