

GUIDANCE FOR AGED RESIDENTIAL CARE

INFLUENZA-LIKE ILLNESS AND RSV

9 July 2021

We recognise and thank you for the work that you are doing and we appreciate your commitment and professionalism in these challenging times.

This information sheet provides ARC facilities with important information about the high incidence of RSV in the community.

MANAGEMENT OF RESIDENTS WITH INFLUENZA-LIKE SYMPTOMS:

At this time of year influenza-like illnesses including respiratory syncytial virus (RSV) are common in the community and those illnesses can be easily spread in aged residential care facilities. Adults and older children get milder RSV illness but can pass it on to babies and older people who are more vulnerable to being adversely affected by RSV.

We strongly recommend that people maintain good hand hygiene, stay home if they have any symptoms of a respiratory tract illness.

Respiratory viruses cause the following symptoms: fever (temperature $\geq 38^{\circ}\text{C}$ or feeling hot, sweaty, and chills), cough, sore throat, runny or stuffy nose, body aches, headache and fatigue/ tiredness, and sometimes diarrhoea and vomiting.

CONTROLLING RSV AT AN AGED RESIDENTIAL CARE FACILITY

Usual infection control policies and procedures will help to control the spread of influenza-like illnesses and RSV in Aged Residential Care facilities.

Staff need to be vigilant for respiratory infections in residents. Residents with respiratory symptoms need to be isolated and droplet precautions applied. Report outbreaks of respiratory infections to Regional Public Health.

Good hand hygiene and surface cleaning is always important to limit transmission.

Staff who have respiratory symptoms should not be at work, and must comply with the facility policy for testing.

VISITOR POLICY

We would encourage facilities to do the following:

- restrict visitors who may have influenza-like symptoms from visiting
- restrict children 12 years old and under from visiting
- facilities may also want to consider limiting visitor numbers in general.

We have developed a poster for you to use if you wish – see attached.

The following RPH website has further useful information for ARCs to limit the spread of influenza-like illness and RSV at their facilities:

<https://www.rph.org.nz/public-health-topics/illness-and-disease/influenza/long-term-care-facilities/>