**Infection Control**

**Scope**

This document applies to all staff and Customers

#### Purpose

These procedures and guidelines provide clear guidance for all staff working in Community Services, including agency staff and volunteers, to prevent the spread of infection and manage episodes of infection or an outbreak of a communicable disease. It also gives clear instructions regarding recording and reporting procedures.

**Principles and Standards**

1. The principles of good practice contained within the guidance document ‘Infection Control Guidance for Domiciliary care’ must be followed at all times to ensure good practice.
2. Although the guidance was written specifically for care homes the information is relevant to all aspects of community services including staff, day services, home care, libraries, housing etc
3. A copy of this guidance must be available to all staff in an accessible format.
4. All staff providing direct personal care and other staff as nominated by the Manager must undertake infection control training including good hand washing practice (see hand hygiene guidelines, attached) .
5. The Service Manager & or the customer must make available appropriate personal protective equipment (PPE) such as plastic aprons, gloves, masks to prevent the spread of infection. Alcohol rub must also be provided to staff working in provider services as an added precaution.
6. The Service Manager or the customer must make available appropriate methods of disposing of PPE to ensure compliance with H&S legislation
7. The health and wellbeing of both customers and staff is paramount and any concerns about infections must be reported to the duty manager immediately.

**Staff Roles and Responsibilities**

**Procedures – step by step guide**

What to do in the event of a suspected viral outbreak

1. My Support and Care services (West Country) Ltd acknowledges that the people using our services are vulnerable and may be more susceptible to infections.
2. All staff have a duty to inform their line manager if they have a viral infection or are experiencing diarrhoea / vomiting so that they can be sent home to prevent the spread of infection. This is particularly important for staff involved in food preparation.
3. When 4 or more customers and / or staff are suffering from the same symptoms of diarrhoea and / or vomiting within a 2 – 3 day period the delegated staff member must inform the following people immediately and seek advice (as appropriate to service):
	* The Service Manager
	* The Health Protection Unit
	* The Service / Locality Manager
	* Public Protection Unit Mid Devon
	* G.P.
	* CQC
4. The method for reporting the incident is by the Service Manager , or delegated staff member completing the form at Appendix 1 of the ‘Infection Control Guidance for Care Homes’ and faxing this to both the HPU and Devon Public Protection.
5. If the incident occurs out of hours then the HPU must be contacted first using the out of hour’s number.
6. Public Protection and / or the HPU will give advice regarding the steps that must be taken from this point forward.
7. All staff must co-operate with Public Protection and the HPU and provide all information required
8. It is imperative that any forms required by Public Protection are completed and returned within the timescale specified. This may require staff to be contacted at home and forms taken to them for completion.
9. As soon as the critical period has passed and there are no further cases of infection the Service Manager should review hygiene practices to ascertain whether these could be improved.

**Other steps to consider to prevent the spread of infection**

* + Ensure that the ‘Infection Control Guidance for Home Care’ is used as a resource for implementing good hygiene practices
	+ Viral infections such as the Norwalk Virus are easily spread in droplet form from social interaction
	+ Families of service users who receive Home care who are experiencing symptoms should be asked to postpone visiting
	+ Cancel social events as a precaution
	+ Additional cleaning regimes to be implemented as appropriate
	+ Soft furnishings and carpets should be steam cleaned – heat will destroy the virus but it can survive for days in a carpet
	+ All spillages must be cleaned immediately using products designed for this purpose. The surrounding area must be made safe to prevent further spread of infection until it is decontaminated and dried
	+ Provide alcohol hand gel for visitors to use as a precautionary measure in provider services, as appropriate
	+ Ensure that all health professionals visiting service users carry out good hygiene procedures before, during and after visits
	+ Dispose of all infected materials (dressings etc) in appropriate bins (not waste bins)
	+ Notify visitors of any outbreaks.

##  Policy on HBV – Information and Vaccination

1. ***My Support and Care service (West Country) Ltd recommends that all staff working directly with service users in social care settings are vaccinated against HBV (Hepatitis B vaccination)***
2. ***In the first instance staff should request vaccination from their GP***
3. ***Most surgeries will provide this free of charge (some ask for your I.D. badge to be shown as proof of job / place of work) but if your GP informs you that you will be charged do not go ahead***
4. ***For the latter cases please report this to your manager***
5. ***The vaccine is safe and effective – and there is no risk of HIV or HBV from the vaccine. A series of 3 injections in the arm are given over a course of 6 months, followed by periodic blood tests and booster shots as needed. A booster is usually recommended after 5 years***

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