Appendix 5.4  Outbreak infection control checklist

1. Inform
   - Report outbreak to PHU and Department of Health and Ageing.
   - Inform staff, residents and visitors of the outbreak.
   - Provide handouts about gastroenteritis.
   - Put up advisory notices.
   - Advise visitors not to attend (especially young children, the immuno-compromised or any with gastroenteritis symptoms).
   - Ask visitors to report any symptoms to staff.
   - Advise visiting general practitioners and other health staff.

2. Handwashing
   - Ensure that all residents have their hands washed after going to the toilet, before meals and after any episode of diarrhoea or vomiting.
   - Ensure all staff and visitors wash their hands before and after all resident contact.
   - Ensure sufficient soap and/or alcohol-based hand rubs or gels, and hand-drying facilities are available.

3. Additional infection control measures
   - Train staff in additional contact precautions.
   - Provide sufficient gloves, gowns, aprons, masks, goggles, face shields and ensure that they are easily accessible.
   - Ensure cleaning and other relevant staff members are aware of the correct cleaning procedures and the importance of handwashing.
   - Ensure catering staff members are aware of the precautions required in food service area and the importance of handwashing.

4. Cohorting
   - Allocate dedicated staff to care for unwell residents.
   - Separate well residents from unwell residents for at least 72 hours after resolution of symptoms (cohort nursing; avoid moving residents around during an outbreak).
   - Allocate dedicated staff to clean affected areas.
   - Do not allocate catering staff members to care for infected residents or to clean affected areas.
5. **Restrict movements**
   - Close off dining room and common areas.
   - Suspend communal activities, excursion, visiting programs to the facility.

6. **Exclude sick staff**
   - Exclude staff with gastroenteritis for at least 48 hours after resolution of symptoms.

7. **Cleaning**
   - Implement additional cleaning procedures, including: increased cleaning requirements; correct use of sodium hypochlorite; cleaning of body fluid spills.
   - Instruct cleaning and other relevant staff about correct cleaning procedures and the importance of handwashing.
   - Ensure catering staff are aware of the precautions required in food service area and the importance of handwashing.

8. **Linen**
   - Instruct staff about precautions required when handling soiled linen.
   - Ensure adequate numbers of linen containers and leak proof bags.
   - Ensure laundry staff are aware of the correct laundering procedures and the importance of handwashing.

9. **Transfers**
   - Avoid transferring residents to other institutions while the outbreak is in progress; if a transfer is necessary, ensure receiving institution is notified of the outbreak.
   - Restrict admissions of new residents until outbreak is over.

10. **Reporting, pathology testing**
    - Report outbreak to Public Health Unit (PHU) promptly; follow PHU advice.
    - Update PHU (Daily Line-Listing) regularly and if there are any ‘sentinel events’ (see Figure 4 in these Guidelines).
    - Ensure laboratory testing has been organised.