# **Recognising and managing gastroenteritis**

## **Activity and what to do**

### **Gastroenteritis suspected?**

* A gastroenteritis outbreak is defined as 2 or more cases of vomiting or diarrhoea over a 24 hour period
* Inform your Senior Nursing staff on duty

### **Nominate an Outbreak Coordinator**

* Name:
* Phone:
* Pager:

### **Implement infection control precautions immediately**

* Seek advice of an expert in infection control—internal or external (your PHU may be able to advise)
* Increase hygiene measures: especially hand hygiene and environmental cleaning
* Isolate infected residents if possible
* Notify families and other residents

### **Restrict contact and prevent spread**

* Strict hygiene measures, eg. hand hygiene, PPE
* Isolate or cohort residents if possible
* Limit staff and visitor movement into restricted area
* Infected staff off work
* Suspend all group activities

### **Notify**

* Your State/Territory Population Health Department
* Your State/Territory office of Commonwealth Department of Health
* Resident's GP, all staff, all visiting GPs, allied health workers, volunteers, or anyone in contact with your facility

### **Collect specimens**

* Observe standard infection control practices and wear personal protective equipment, eg. gloves, gown, mask
* Collect faecal or vomit specimens in specimen jars (faecal specimens preferable)
* Label specimens & complete pathology request form
* Store specimens in refrigerator—not in a food fridge!—until collected by pathology lab.

### **Document**

* List cases—update daily:
  + Details of residents, staff with symptoms
  + Onset date of symptoms of gastroenteritis for each
  + Their contacts—to identify at risk groups

### **Complete your legislative requirements**

* Refer to your State/Territory public health legislation for your on-going responsibilities and reporting requirements for the duration of the outbreak

### **Wash and dry hands before & after contact with affected residents**

* Further copies of this poster are available from National Mailing and Marketing at [health@nationalmailing.com.au](mailto:health@nationalmailing.com.au)