

RECOGNISING AND MANAGING GASTROENTERITIS



Australian Government
Department of Health and Ageing

Activity	What to do
Gastroenteritis suspected?	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• 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: Ph: Pager:
Implement infection control precautions immediately	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Seek advice of an expert in infection control – internal or external (your PHU may be able to advise)• Increase hygiene measures: especially hand hygiene & environmental cleaning• Isolate infected residents if possible• Notify families & other residents
Restrict contact & prevent spread	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Strict hygiene measures, eg. hand hygiene, PPE• Isolate or cohort residents if possible• Limit staff & visitor movement into restricted area• Infected staff off work• Suspend all group activities
Notify	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Your State/Territory Population Health Dept• Your State/Territory office of Commonwealth Department of Health and Ageing• Resident's GP, all staff, all visiting GPs, allied health workers, volunteers, or anyone in contact with your facility
Collect specimens	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• 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 – up-date daily: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• 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	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Refer to your State/Territory public health legislation for your on-going responsibilities & reporting requirements for the duration of the outbreak

WASH AND DRY HANDS BEFORE & AFTER CONTACT WITH AFFECTED RESIDENTS

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