



# RECOGNISING AND MANAGING INFLUENZA IN HOME CARE

Activity	What to do
Influenza suspected	<p><b>Signs and symptoms:</b> Fever/chills, cough, muscle and joint pain, runny nose, tiredness/exhaustion, headache, sore throat, loss of appetite, onset or increase of confusion, shortness of breath, increasing Chronic Obstructive Airways Disease symptoms</p>
Implement infection control practice	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Increase hygiene measures</li> <li>• Use Personal Protective Equipment (ie. mask and gloves)</li> <li>• Notify your employer of any clients with influenza-like symptoms</li> </ul>
Protection of care workers' health	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Personal hygiene – wear gloves, mask, ensure good hand washing</li> <li>• Care workers are advised to seek medical advice regarding immunisation if not vaccinated, and the use of anti viral medication</li> </ul>
Notify	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Notify your employer of clients with influenza</li> <li>• With client's permission, notify their relatives or representatives of their condition if they haven't. Suggest they inform other community visitors</li> <li>• Encourage client to notify their GP, or, notify their GP at your client's request</li> </ul>
Environment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Enhance cleaning measures, especially of frequently touched surfaces, with a neutral detergent such as dishwashing detergent</li> <li>• Regularly clean your work case or bag and other items carried in it</li> <li>• Correctly dispose of all tissues, clinical waste, and sharps</li> </ul>
Document	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Details of each of your clients exhibiting influenza symptoms</li> <li>• Onset date of influenza-like illness</li> <li>• Symptoms – any three of: fever, cough, muscle and joint pain, tiredness/exhaustion</li> <li>• Contacts – identify possible 'at risk' groups (eg. other community helpers, visitors)</li> </ul>
Manage clients who are ill	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Encourage your client to rest and adhere to treatment</li> <li>• Recommend client limits their group activities and stays at home until they are better</li> <li>• Encourage client to seek medical advice if they continue to be unwell</li> </ul>
Restrict contact	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• If a care worker exhibits symptoms they should be encouraged to stay away from work and not to return until free from symptoms or advised by a doctor</li> <li>• If a care worker has recently been exposed to a client with influenza, their employer may limit their contact with other clients</li> </ul>

**WASH AND DRY HANDS BEFORE AND AFTER CONTACT WITH AFFECTED CLIENTS**

[www.health.gov.au](http://www.health.gov.au)

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