

Infection Prevention Team Newsletter November 2025

🎵 It's beginning to look a lot like Christmas...

Christmas Decorations look lovely and brighten up care settings during the festive period. However, they do bring an increased risk of infections spreading. Reusable decorations must be cleaned before use and again before storing for the following year. Be mindful that if something cannot be cleaned effectively, it should not be used. Loose glitter, glitter baubles, tinsel, etc. are problematic for this reason. In the event of an outbreak of infection, you would be required to dispose anything not fully washable.

🎵 Blue Christmas...

*Have they **ALL** got chest infections?... Think Covid and Flu!* We commonly discover outbreaks of covid and influenza when someone is admitted to hospital only to be told there's multiple service users currently on antibiotics for chest infections. Chest infections and pneumonia can be a complication of flu and covid so if you have multiple service users with respiratory infections, please 'think flu' (or covid). LFT tests should be on hand for testing vulnerable residents. If these are negative then let us know as quickly as possible so that flu testing can be arranged via UKHSA if appropriate. Antiviral medications work best if taken within 48 hours of symptom onset so prompt reporting and testing is essential. Report all outbreaks at IPC@westmorlandandfurness.gov.uk

LFD stock levels. Check dates on existing stock and make sure you have ordered sufficient LFDs for those residents eligible for testing and treatment in plenty of time before the Christmas period. Here is the link to participating pharmacies: [NHS participating pharmacies for free LFD tests](#)

🎵 All I Want for Christmas Is You...

CHECK PPE stock levels and expiry dates on PPE and alcohol gel in plenty of time to order more stock if needed before Christmas. Be aware that out-of-date equipment is considered unsafe for use. For the sake of those in your care and yourselves, don't risk it. In the event of an outbreak of Acute Respiratory Infection (covid and Flu) PPE (gloves, aprons, masks and eye protection) is still required. See this table for guidance: [PPE Requirements poster ARI](#)

We are always here to help- email us at IPC@westmorlandandfurness.gov.uk