

Gastrointestinal outbreaks are a common cause of outbreak between October and April each year. This document will provide guidance on how to respond to this type of illness including infection control measures that are recommended by [The Ministry of Health Guidance Document](#) from February 2025

Case Definition (Criteria)	Notify Public Health when: Two instances of vomiting and/or diarrhea within a 24hr period not attributed to another cause (ex. Medication side effects).			
Declaring an Outbreak	Two or more cases within a 48-hour period (Declared by Public Health).			
Declaring Outbreak Over	Normally: 48hrs from symptom resolution in the last case OR no new cases after one infectious period (dependent on the organism causing the illness (Declared by Public Health).			
Case and Contact Management	People Supported ✓ Take precautions for contact ✓ Isolate for 48hrs after symptoms have resolved ✓ Separate roommates when possible. If not possible, place a physical barrier between them		Employees ✓ Self-isolate at home ✓ Return to work after 48hrs symptom-free	
IPAC Measures	✓ Isolate symptomatic individuals as soon as possible. ✓ Notify Public health unit, employees, residents, and families as soon as an outbreak is suspected or confirmed. ✓ Use appropriate PPE ✓ Use 70-90% alcohol base hand sanitizer for effectiveness against Norovirus. ✓ Follow routine practices when handling soiled clothing/linens and waste.			
Restrictions	Positive Case For the Home: See Case and Contact Management, refrain from group activities  Visitors: Avoid non-essential visits (including outdoors) with symptomatic people supported and visitors symptomatic of an illness, masking and physically distance for essential visits  Employees: See Case and Contact Management		Outbreak For the Home: Universal Masking  Visitors: Follow masking and PPE requirements as per Public Health guidelines  Employees: Monitor for symptoms, See Case and Contact Management	
Enhanced Environmental Cleaning	General Ensure medical grade cleaners that are rated to work against Norovirus.	Each Use Clean and disinfect outbreak equipment (if unable to dedicate sole use to outbreak room)	Twice Daily Clean and disinfect high touch surfaces	Daily Clean and disinfect low touch surfaces

If there are additional questions connect with the Healthcare Strategies Manger for assistance with navigating specific situations.