

Influenza is a common cause of outbreaks 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: A person supported with new and unexplained respiratory symptoms that could be spread through the droplet route i.e., new or worsening cough or shortness of breath and sudden onset of fever (fever may not be present in older adults)		
Declaring an Outbreak	Once confirmed by laboratory testing that influenza is the cause of acute respiratory illness (Declared by Public Health).		
Declaring Outbreak Over	When no new cases have occurred <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - within 8 days from the onset of symptoms of the last person supported who was ill - or 3 days after the last ill employee worked. (Declared by Public Health). 		
Case and Contact Management	People Supported <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Take precautions for droplets and contact until 5 days after the onset of acute illness or until symptoms resolve (whichever is shortest) ✓ Test for COVID-19 and other respiratory viruses ✓ Monitor daily for symptoms ✓ 	Employees <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Self-monitor for symptoms of illness <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✗ Do not attend work if symptomatic ✓ Leave work as soon as possible if symptoms develop at work ✓ Return to work after 24hrs symptom-free and no fever (48hrs if gastrointestinal symptoms) ✓ Wear mask at work for the 10 days following symptom onset 	
IPAC Measures	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ 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 ✓ Universal masking and physical distancing when able in outbreak areas ✓ Screen <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Visitors, at each visit - People supported, daily for symptoms - Employees, prior to each shift during outbreak ✓ Prophylaxis connect with healthcare team to see if antiviral treatment is appropriate 		
Restrictions	Positive Case For the Home: See <i>Case and Contact Management</i> , refrain from group activities Visitors: Avoid non-essential visits when visitor is symptomatic of an illness, masking and physically distance for essential visits Employees: See <i>Case and Contact Management</i>	Outbreak For the Home: Universal Masking Visitors: Follow masking and PPE requirements as per Public Health guidelines Employees: See <i>Case and Contact Management</i>	
Enhanced Environmental Cleaning	Each Use Clean and disinfect outbreak equipment (if it needs to be shared)	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 Manager for assistance with navigating specific situations.