

Respiratory Infection Outbreaks in Institutions

Fact Sheet

Outbreaks occur when the usual incidence of respiratory disease in a Long Term Care Home (LTCH) or Retirement Home (RH) is exceeded at any given time.

Early identification of an outbreak is essential since the implementation of control measures and therapeutic interventions can prevent the spread of infection and decrease the morbidity and mortality of a very frail, compromised population.

Respiratory tract infections are the most commonly diagnosed infections of LTCH and RH residents.

Residents are predisposed to such infections in part because they may be elderly, may have chronic illnesses which weaken their immune system, and may have chronic lung or neurological disease which impairs their ability to clear secretions from their lungs and airways.

Residents are also at risk because many viral and bacterial pathogens are easily transmitted in this type of environment.

Respiratory infection outbreaks in institutions are reportable to Public Health.

Other Questions?

Talk to your health care provider or call our Communicable Disease Program at 613-966-5500 x349. Toll Free 1-800-267-2803 | TTY Dial 711 (1-800-267-6511) | www.hpepublichealth.ca

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