

Grey Bruce Infection Prevention and Control (IPAC) Hub

Topic: Holiday Gathering and Enhanced IPAC Measures

Date: December 24th, 2021

We continue to see an increase in community cases in Grey Bruce and encourage homes to be extra vigilant in your screening and IPAC processes. Grey Bruce Health Unit is encouraging all Grey Bruce residents to be cautious this holiday season.

Surveillance Testing

- Please follow the recommendations of your Ministry and/or governing body for screening of staff, support workers, students, volunteers and visitors

Screening

- Please actively screen daily for staff, students, volunteers, visitors and residents. Any person with symptoms are required to be tested by PCR. Visitors with positive screening are not allowed to enter the facility and required to get tested by PCR.

Visitor Information

- Proactive and ongoing communication with residents, families/friends, and staff about on-site visit procedures, which should include, but not be limited to:
 - Active screening, proper respiratory etiquette, frequent hand hygiene
 - Visit scheduling protocols and any site-specific policies (e.g., outbreak, verification of immunization status).
 - PPE requirements for indoor/outdoor visitors
 - Operational procedures such as limiting movement inside the CLS and ensuring visitors' agreement to comply with the procedures prior to each visit.
 - Identification of dedicated indoor and outdoor visitation areas.
 - A list/log of visitors and their contact information

Cohorting

- Cohort residents for high risk activities (singing, dancing etc.) and dining
- Discourage large group social activities
- Reinforce staff cohorting, including during breaks, and encourage virtual staff meetings where possible.

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Absences, Admissions and Transfers

- Regardless of whether pre-admission screening has taken place, CLS should also conduct active screening in-person upon the arrival of the resident to the setting (see above).
- As directions are always changing, please follow the most up to date information from your ministry or regulatory body.
- In general, fully vaccinated individuals are considered to be at low risk for a COVID-19 infection and do not require self-isolation or COVID-19 testing on arrival, provided that they are not symptomatic and/or have not had a recent high-risk exposure to a known COVID-19 case.
 - Exception: testing (see below) of all individuals (regardless of vaccination status) should be strongly considered in some settings that serve primarily transient and/or a large number of residents given the high-risk nature of these settings (e.g., shelters). This may also help to reduce potential stigma associated with vaccine status within the setting.
- For all other individuals (i.e., individuals who are partially vaccinated, unvaccinated, or for whom their COVID-19 vaccination status is unknown), they should:
 - Follow additional precautions until they receive a negative result on a COVID-19 PCR test⁷ OR 10 days have passed:
 - Monitor for symptoms
 - Avoid using common areas; however, if a common area cannot be avoided, the resident must use a medical (surgical/procedural) mask if tolerated
 - Limit contact with other residents
 - Only participate in group activities if physical distancing is maintained (i.e. 2 metres) and a medical (surgical/procedural) mask is used for the duration of the activity
 - Practice proper hand hygiene by washing hands often (using soap and water or using ABHR)
 - Adhere to respiratory etiquette

IPAC Measures

- Consider completing the PHO IPAC checklist
 - [COVID-19 Preparedness and Prevention for Congregate Living Settings \(publichealthontario.ca\)](https://publichealthontario.ca)
- Hand hygiene, respiratory etiquette, vaccination, physical distancing are all key IPAC measures to keep in mind!

If you have any questions or concerns please feel free to reach out to your GBHU infectious disease liaison 519-376-9420 ext. 6 or the GBHU IPAC Hub ipachub@publichealthgreybruce.on.ca.

Have a safe and happy holiday season!

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Grey Bruce Public Health

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