



## Infection Prevention Team Newsletter December 2023

### Winter planning – be prepared, act now.



**Flu season** is upon us so be prepared for outbreak management and remember that infection rates in the general population peak in week 50, just before Christmas but it is still not too late to get vaccinated. See this [UKHSA flu management leaflet](#) which is also attached to this Newsletter and can be printed out for reference.

**Reporting.** Please continue to report infections and outbreaks to us at [IPC@westmorlandandfurness.gov.uk](mailto:IPC@westmorlandandfurness.gov.uk). Out of hours such as overnight, weekends and bank holidays, urgent advice can be sourced from UKHSA 0151 4344819. We offer advice and guidance on infection prevention and support through outbreak management. Current W&F IPC general reporting template attached.

**LFD stock levels.** Check dates on existing stock and make sure you have ordered sufficient LFDs in plenty of time before the Christmas period.

**PPE stock levels.** Check stock levels and expiry dates on PPE and alcohol gel. Be aware that out-of-date equipment is considered unsafe for use. Much of the early, Government-supplied stock will now be unusable for this reason – for the sake of those in your care and yourselves, don't risk it.

**Christmas Decorations** are a lovely addition to care settings during the festive period. However, they do bring an increased risk of infections. Decorations must be cleaned before use and again before storage for the following year. Be mindful that if something cannot be cleaned effectively, it should not be used. Loose glitter, glitter baubles, tinsel and the like are problematic for this reason. In the event of an outbreak, you would be required to dispose anything not washable. See more on this [guidance on seasonal decorations](#) advice which is also available as an attachment.

#### Skin care

A warm home environment is cosy but means extra attention is needed around skin and the need for regular moisturisation to prevent dry skin and associated rashes, cracking and other damage which can lead to infections. This applies to staff as well as residents.



**Measles is circulating**

**Have you had your 2 doses of MMR?**

Check now, and get up to date with your routine vaccinations

NHS