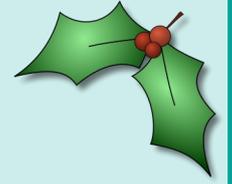


IPC Bulletin for Care Homes

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Guidance for seasonal decorations during COVID-19



Please follow your local advice on seasonal decorations in the first instance. Seasonal decorations can impede effective cleaning of the environment. During winter, there is an increase in cases of Norovirus, Flu, and *Clostridioides difficile* (*C. difficile*) and this year there is also COVID-19. Cleaning, as in all previous years, remains extremely important. We are aware you would like to ensure residents over the festive season are able to enjoy a cheerful atmosphere, without having an adverse impact on infection prevention and control. Therefore, the following guidance for seasonal decorations have been produced for you to consider:

- Decorations should be single season use and disposed of when taken down unless they are washable/wipeable with a disinfectant which destroys *C. difficile* spores and is effective against COVID-19
- Ideally, decorations should only be hung or displayed on walls, i.e. so they cannot be touched
- Avoid putting decorations on horizontal surfaces, as this impedes thorough cleaning of the area. Decorations on horizontal surfaces should be minimal to facilitate enhanced cleaning
- Residents can display their own artificial Christmas tree and decorations in their room
- No wood, straw or live trees should be used, artificial trees only
- No cloth or knitted toys should be displayed
- No decorations should be displayed in clinical rooms
- Please note that if there is an outbreak of infection, e.g. *C. difficile*, Norovirus, COVID-19, in the home, all decorations may need to be disposed of

Following this guidance will help minimise the risk of infection, facilitate environmental cleaning, whilst ensuring a festive environment for your residents and staff.

External cleaning companies

If you use an external cleaning company, particularly for a 'deep clean', please ensure that they follow the guidance below:

- First, clean with a pH neutral detergent solution, e.g. Hospec and warm water, or detergent wipes
- Then, disinfect using either:
 - ◊ A chlorine-based product at 1,000 parts per million, e.g. Milton, 50 ml in 1 litre of cold water; or
 - ◊ A virucidal product that is tested and conforms to EN testing standard EN14476; or
 - ◊ 70% alcohol wipes
- Alternatively, a 2-in-1 cleaning and disinfection product, e.g. Chlor-Clean, Actichlor-plus, Clinell Universal Wipes, can be used as a one-step method

Visit our website to find lots of IPC resources, many of which are free to download.

www.infectionpreventioncontrol.co.uk

Call us on 01423 557340, or find us on:

