

# **Link Champions**

## **Introduction**

The aim of the Infection Prevention and Control (IPC) Link Champion (LC) programme within Care Homes is to provide a unique opportunity for staff with a keen interest in IPC, to enhance their personal and professional practice, whilst developing skills and manage change.

The IPC LC will become a role model in initiating best IPC practice within their working area, by education, leadership skills, and by developing networking opportunities.

The LC will liaise with, work in partnership with, be both supported by and support the IPC team and line manager.

They will support the adoption and maintenance of good IPC practices and maintain an environment which will reduce the risk of infections to residents/patients, staff and visitors.

## **Care Home Manager role**

Managers should have a commitment to:

- Support LC and re enforce their role
- Release the LC for meetings, study events, audits and other IPC related activities
- Be on the rota as supernumerary to conduct in house training and audits
- Allow the LC opportunities to learn and develop their own IPC knowledge and skill both in practice and theory
- Ensure the LC is made aware of updated guidance relating to IPC and assists in the implementation of the same
- Support the LC in challenging practice
- Support the LC in celebrating success and good practice

## **Link champion role**

The role of the Link Champion is:

- To maintain a consistent approach to the role and responsibilities
- Be aware of limitations to the role and seek advice where necessary
- To support and be directly responsible to the Care Home manger
- To become an accessible role model for their Care Homes staff
- Have good communication and leadership skills
- To keep the Care Home themselves and staff updated in IPC initiatives and guidance
- Act as a recourse and point of contact to all staff including ancillary staff on IPC matters

- Liaise with IPC team and be prepared to work as part of the multi-disciplinary team, such as Public Health and Environmental Health
- Have a commitment to attending LC meetings and study events
- Utilise learning opportunities
- To challenge poor practice, support staff to review and rectify behaviour; and also encourage and support other staff to do the same
- To celebrate good practice
- Act as a local resource for audits and surveillance, assisting the IPC team with the same
- Sharing of evidence based knowledge with staff, residents and visitors
- Be prepared to undertake in house audits e.g. hand washing
- Lead on and develop IPC initiatives
- With the Managers support update and disseminate IPC and best practice information
- Be aware of Local IPC policies and procedures and that they are implemented and followed at all times
- Assist in the purchasing of new equipment, with support from the Manager and IPC team. Be knowledgeable of the:
  - Infection control hazards
  - Care and maintenance of the equipment
  - Correct decontamination and storage
- Work with ancillary staff to ensure effective and co-ordinated approach to IPC in their area

#### Provisional Action plan

- Compile list of Link Champions and contact details
- Monthly Q & A sessions
- Link into yearly IPC study event
- Development of PD competency workbook
- Develop resource folder
- Newsletter via bulletin

