

ADDITIONAL IPC UPDATE

Further on from this morning's forum here are some of the bullet points around IPC in Home Support:

- **6 stage Hand wash Technique;** The technique is tried and tested in health care and is one of the most effective ways of breaking most of the methods of spread of infections in health care settings. Our hands are amazing evolutionary tools and enable us to pick up everything which means we pick up **EVERYTHING!** By utilising the 6 stage technique we can get into every area of our little mitts and kill off any transient bacteria and/or virus, especially our newly found friend: COVID-19. The whole technique is crucial to adhere to (for washing and alcohol gel) and one of the most important areas is the ends of our fingertips. U.V Light box tests often show this is an area we miss the most so we need to reiterate to all front line staff the importance of washing or disinfecting the finger nail/tip area.
- **PPE;** The use of PPE coupled with good hand hygiene is very important and works very much in tandem of each other when adhering to good Infection Prevention & Control. As many Domiciliary workers will see a number of people through their day it's is very important to utilise PPE to protect themselves and the people they are giving care to.
 - The use of Gloves will minimise the amount of bacteria and viruses clinging to our skins, it will act as a barrier for the skin.
 - Disposable aprons will protect your uniform from contamination and help the worker localise any infectious agents to that household and not the next one they are visiting.
 - Face mask work both ways as well; they will protect the care worker from any airbourne particles that could be breathed in or expelled towards the health care workers face via a cough or sneeze. The face mask will also protect the client from the staff member as we to can transmit the virus to them and we (at this moment) are still unaware of how prevalent asymptomatic spread is. The face mask will prevent droplets from spreading to the client when we are in close contact to them.
 - A face visor or goggles will protect the eyes from being a portal of entry. This is the Mucocutaneous Membrane route and is often overlooked as a portal of entry. If you are working with someone who is suspected or positive of COVID-19 you must protect this route especially if you are carrying out close personal cares which break the 2 metre social distance.
- **Donning & Doffing Of PPE;** Just as it is important to wear PPE you have to follow the proper donning & doffing procedure. Please see info graphics available for this procedure and have them available for staff out I the field if they need a reminder. The main hazard will be doffing (taking off) of PPE ; if this is done incorrectly you risk cross contamination. Practice can make perfect in this instance so always have a reminder session on the protocol.
- **Car Sharing;** When sharing a car with your work buddy it is very important that you wear a face mask so as to lessen any possible transmission of COVID-19 to each other. One technique now used is to avoid 'face-to-face' contact when in the car. Due to the close proximity of staff to each other when the passenger is sat in the side passenger seat the tendency to turn and talk to each other means the 'face-to-face' contact is happening. A simple solution

to this would be to seat the passenger on the back seat where not only are they a little further away but they are no longer at risk of 'face-to-face' contact, this essentially puts you out of the droplet zone.

- **Hand wash facilities:** One of the biggest challenges you may find when working in the community is accessing good hand wash facilities. This is where alcohol gels can become very useful so use these where you need to but avoid using if your hands are visibly soiled; they are a disinfectant not a wash/detergent solution. As far as the hand wash basin goes this can vary and not all will have elbow/hands free operated taps. One trick you can use so you avoid re-contaminating your hands after singing happy birthday twice to yourself is to use a paper towel or a clean disposable glove to cover the tap head when you turn it off. This will provide a protective layer so your hands don't become re-contaminated after you spent 45 seconds washing them.