

STEPS FOR EARLY IDENTIFICATION OF OUTBREAKS

Conduct Surveillance (Green Sign)



- Conduct ongoing surveillance for infections in residents and staff and follow routine practices for infection control.
- Conduct targeted surveillance for respiratory and gastrointestinal symptoms in residents and staff.
- Identify respiratory symptoms such as: runny nose / stuffy nose, sneezing, coughs, congestion, sore throat, hoarseness, difficulty swallowing, fever or abnormal temperature, breathing difficulty, loss of appetite, malaise or muscle pain.
- Identify gastrointestinal symptoms: 2 or more unexpected incidents of diarrhea and/or vomiting within 24 hours.

Suspect an Outbreak (Yellow Sign)



RESPIRATORY

- When one case is laboratory confirmed for influenza, suspect an influenza outbreak.
- OR
- When there are two cases of acute respiratory tract illness detected within 48 hours in one geographic area.
- OR
- When more than one unit has a case of acute respiratory illness within 48 hours.

GASTROINTESTINAL

- When there are two cases of gastrointestinal illness detected within 24 hours in one geographic area.
- OR
- When more than one unit has a case of gastrointestinal illness within 24 hours.

CONTACT THE HEALTH UNIT EARLY ABOUT ANY SUSPECTED OUTBREAK.

Initiate Action for Outbreak Management (Red Sign)



- Implement Infection Control Measures – Routine Practices and Transmission-Based Precautions.
- Notify your local office _____. If you can't speak to _____, ask to speak to the "Infectious Disease Team". After hours call 1 800 267-7120. Ask to speak to the "On Call Manager" and they will be paged.
- Initiate two separate line lists, one for residents and one for staff.
- Fax the line listing daily to the Health Unit in your region.
- Follow Public Health directions to obtain specimens for laboratory testing (NP swabs for respiratory symptoms, stool samples for gastrointestinal symptoms).
- Implement the Public Health Recommendations of Outbreak Control Measures. Maintain daily contact with Public Health to review additional cases.
- For more information, consult the EOHU's outbreak management resources by going to www.EOHU.ca and clicking on the Outbreak Management topic in the Institutional Facilities section.