

AVALON AT BRIDGEWATER

Infection Prevention and Outbreak Response Plan

Residents in assisted living and long-term care facilities are at greater risk of developing illness when exposed to communicable diseases. Bridgeway Senior Healthcare has developed a comprehensive infection prevention and outbreak response plan for early detection of an outbreak and implementation of control measures to reduce further transmission.

An outbreak is defined as an increase in the incidence of a disease which is greater than what would be expected to occur within a single unit, wing or throughout the facility during a defined time. Criteria to declare an outbreak are disease-specific and are defined by the New Jersey Department of Health (NJDOH).

The purpose of the Outbreak Response plan is to guide the facility to handle confirmed or suspected outbreaks of disease. Response is customized according to the type of outbreak, such as respiratory or gastrointestinal. Due to the scope of the COVID-19 pandemic, a separate COVID-19 Outbreak Response Plan has been developed, however the basic process for managing an outbreak is described below.

When the facility suspects an outbreak, whether due to a cluster of symptomatic residents or staff or through laboratory confirmation, the following steps will occur:

1. When possible, laboratory confirmation will be obtained through a laboratory contracted with the facility or by a lab at the state Public Health and Environmental Laboratory (PHEL) if the health department requests that the specimen be sent to a PHEL
2. Surveillance of residents, staff and visitors is increased to alert for new-onset of illness or a recent history of illness which may previously have been recognized as a part of the outbreak. Individuals who present with illness will not be allowed to enter the facility. A line listing of affected residents and staff will be maintained.
3. Efforts will be made to identify and eliminate possible sources of transmission.
4. Control measure will be initiated which can include:
 - a. Residents may be placed on transmission-based precautions.
 - b. Visitors may be restricted.
 - c. Residents, staff and visitors will be reminded to perform frequent hand hygiene.
 - d. Additional education will be provided to staff related to the disease process and infection practices specific to the outbreak.
 - e. When feasible, staffing patterns will be adjusted to minimize potential spread.
5. Notify residents, resident's families, visitors, staff and physicians of the outbreak with routine updates.
6. Notify public health officials of the outbreak and provide routine updates of the status of the outbreak.
7. Ensure adequate staffing and implement crisis staffing if needed.

The outbreak plan will be reviewed annually and as necessary and will be revised in accordance with CDC, NJDOH and the Association of Professional in Infection Control and Epidemiology (APIC) guidelines.

For additional information on our COVID-19 Outbreak Plan, click [here](#).