

## **BRIDGEWAY CARE AND REHABILITATION CENTER AT BRIDGEWATER**

### **Infection Prevention and Outbreak Response Plan**

Residents in 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.

A key piece of an effective Infection Control Program is an Infection Preventionist, who oversees the surveillance process and identifies the presence of infections in the facility. Surveillance includes daily review of the electronic medical record, review of the nursing report, utilization of antibiotics, and monitoring residents for signs and symptoms of infectious disease.

When a resident exhibits symptoms of a contagious disease, we:

- Notify the resident's physician who will order pertinent lab tests;
- Initiate transmission-based precautions
- Increase surveillance for signs and symptoms of other residents and staff to identify cases.

If the case(s) meet the criteria for an outbreak, the resident, family, Director of Nursing, Administrator, Medical Director, and local health department will be notified. The residents, families and staff will receive periodic updates via phone, text, email, or printed materials.

If more than one resident is affected:

- Residents, staff, equipment, and supplies will be restricted to one of three cohorts:
  - 1) Ill
  - 2) Exposed (not ill, but potentially incubating)
  - 3) Not ill/not exposed (new admission)
- Residents on the affected units will be isolated to their rooms.
- Staff assigned to affected units should not rotate to unaffected units.

- Environmental Services will ensure that resident rooms are cleaned with EPA-approved disinfecting agents and will focus on frequently touched areas in the resident room and the common areas in the vicinity of the room.
- Hand hygiene practices will be reinforced for residents, visitors, and staff.
- In-service education will be provided to all staff regarding the disease process, preventative infection prevention practices, and transmission-based precautions.
- Visitation of family, friends, and volunteers may be restricted or discouraged.

An outbreak is generally considered to be over when two incubation periods have passed without the identification of any new cases. The local health department will make the final determination of the end of the outbreak.

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](#).