

# Healthcare Facilities Quick Guide

for infection control and selected pathogens

## Legionella & Water Management Programs



**Legionella** bacteria live naturally in water and can become a problem in building water systems, like those found in healthcare facilities.



The bacteria can cause a severe lung disease, called **Legionnaires' disease**. People get sick by inhaling water droplets that contain the bacteria. One in four (25%) people who get their illness in a healthcare facility will die.



The best way to prevent *Legionella* is to create and use a **water management program**.

### A water management program includes:

- Creating a team focused on keeping the facility's water safe
- Understanding the building's water system
- Taking actions to reduce the risk of *Legionella* growing and spreading in the building water system

### For more information:

Visit: <https://www.cdc.gov/control-legionella/php/toolkit/wmp-toolkit.html>

Email: [Legionella.Health@tn.gov](mailto:Legionella.Health@tn.gov)

**CMS requires that all critical access, long term care and acute care facilities have a water management program.**

## Norovirus & Outbreaks



**Norovirus** is a contagious virus that causes diarrhea and vomiting. Outbreaks of norovirus are common, but can be especially problematic in healthcare facilities.

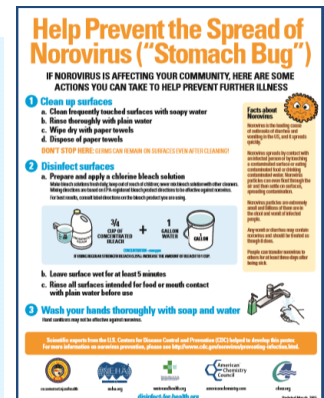


If you suspect a norovirus outbreak or any disease outbreak, contact your **local health department** or the Tennessee Department of Health main office (615-741-7247) for assistance.



The **health department can assist** by:

- Providing norovirus-specific cleaning guidance
- Investigating the cause and spread of illness
- Identifying ways to stop the outbreak



### Prevention resources can be found here:

<https://www.cdc.gov/norovirus/communication-resources/index.html>

### Norovirus prevention in long-term care facilities guidance can be found here:

[https://www.tn.gov/content/dam/tn/health/documents/LTCF\\_guidelines.pdf](https://www.tn.gov/content/dam/tn/health/documents/LTCF_guidelines.pdf)

# Infection Control

An infection control program must include **seven** essential elements. Written infection control policies are required for each element.

1

## Infection Control Risk Assessment

is a written document that is updated at least annually and clearly prioritizes infection control actions for the facility

2

## Hand Hygiene

- Alcohol-based hand sanitizer is preferred except when *C. difficile* or norovirus are suspected, which require soap and water
- Hand hygiene dispensers are available at points of care
- The facility performs hand hygiene audits and provides staff feedback

3

**Contact Precautions** which utilize personal protective equipment (PPE) and transmission-based precautions should include:

- Signage that clearly shows the type of PPE needed prior to entering a resident's room



- Competency-based education for donning / doffing PPE with return demonstration
- Regular audits and staff feedback regarding PPE compliance
- Contact precautions specific to norovirus, CRE, VRE and other multi-drug resistant organisms

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## Injection Safety

- should specify:
- Use of *One Needle, One Syringe, Only One Time*
  - Never administer medications from a single-dose vial or IV bag to multiple patients
  - Limit the use of multiple-dose vials and dedicate them to a single patient whenever possible



6

**Infection Control Education** is required for all clinical and environmental services staff (EVS) upon hire and at least annually with return demonstration. This includes:

- EVS education for cleaning and disinfection of high touch areas for resident and common areas (shower rooms, etc.)
- Use of correct EPA-registered products and contact time ("kill times")  
<https://iaspub.epa.gov/apex/pesticides/f?p=PPLS:1>
- Education to ensure that equipment is cleaned and disinfected between patients with clarity about responsible party (e.g. glucometers → nursing staff)

7

**Water Management Program** for prevention of *Legionella* and other waterborne pathogens:

- Create a team focused on keeping the facility's water safe
- Understand the building water system and identify areas where *Legionella* could grow or spread
- Take actions to prevent and control the growth and spread of *Legionella*
- Document the program and activities

4

**State Reportable Diseases** guidance including:

- Have a current, readily available list of the state reportable conditions
- Report in required timeframes (online or using the PH-1600 form)
- Ensure the microbiology lab used submits required isolates to the State Laboratory

<https://www.tn.gov/health/cedep/reportable-diseases.html>

## Questions?

Call: 615-741-7247

Email: [HAI.Health@tn.gov](mailto:HAI.Health@tn.gov)