



- Certain infections are spread when a sick person coughs or sneezes, or when a healthcare worker suction a service user.
- An individual can be infected by inhaling the infection or by touching something that has been sneezed or coughed on

### Preventing Respiratory infections from spreading

- Ensure all healthcare workers and service users receive the flu vaccine
- Provide disposable tissues and tissue bins in healthcare facilities
- Provide alcohol gel in clinics and at point of care for staff and service users to clean their hands
- Advise service users to turn their heads when coughing/sneezing
- Maintain a distance of at least 1metre (3 feet) between service users' beds
- Ensure the environment is cleaned thoroughly and documented cleaning schedules are in place
- Display respiratory etiquette posters for staff and service users (see overleaf)
- Tie up tissue bins in service user's room and dispose of promptly
- If service users are being transferred to an acute hospital ensure ambulance & hospital staff know of their suspected respiratory infection so precautions can be taken
- Masks may be required in certain situations. Consult infection control/public health for advice

#### Common Infections spread by respiratory se- cretions

Colds

Influenza

RSV (respiratory  
syncytial virus)

Tuberculosis

Meningitis

Mumps

Measles

Enterovirus

Pneumonia

# COVER UP

## COUGHING AND SNEEZING

- 
  - Turn your head away from others
  - Use a tissue to cover your nose and mouth
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  - Drop your tissue into a waste bin
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  - No tissues? Use your sleeve
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  - Clean your hands after discarding tissue using soap and water or alcohol gel for at least 15 seconds



**These steps will help prevent the spread of colds, flu and other respiratory infections**

Further information and poster downloads available from [www.hpsc.ie](http://www.hpsc.ie)

### Group Exercise

It is recommended that all healthcare workers and service user receive the flu vaccine, however the uptake of the vaccine amongst staff has been consistently low across all healthcare settings. What is your attitude to the flu vaccine? If you don't receive it why not? Explore attitudes and fears amongst yourselves and make receiving the flu vaccine a priority for the staff in your area.

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