



# Managing a single case of COVID-19 or influenza in your facility

## What's new? A summary of the latest guidelines (August 2024)



### Residents who test positive for COVID-19 or influenza

- Liaise with the resident's GP to see if antiviral treatment is needed for those with flu. Treatment should be started as early as possible, ideally within 48 hours of symptom onset.
- **COVID-19 and Flu:** For residents, the period of isolation for COVID-19 and other respiratory viral infections such as influenza or RSV is 5 days having had no or minimal residual symptoms for the last two days **Don't repeat positive COVID-19 or flu tests** - even at the end of the illness.



### Close contacts of resident

- **COVID-19: NO CONTACT TRACING** needed. Don't identify close contacts. They don't need to restrict movements or be tested unless they have symptoms of COVID-19.
- **Flu:** Resident close contacts of flu should be closely monitored for symptoms. Testing of asymptomatic close contacts of flu cases is not recommended. Antiviral prophylaxis for close contacts may be recommended by Public Health.



### Staff who test positive for COVID-19 or influenza

- **COVID-19:** Staff who test positive should self-isolate at home for at least 5 days from symptom onset. Before returning to work your symptoms must have fully or mostly gone for the last 48 hours.
- **Flu:** Staff with confirmed influenza should remain off work for 5 days from the onset of symptoms and until they are well enough to return, **NO CONTACT TRACING** needed for staff cases of COVID-19 or flu.



### Support for residents

- Isolation can be stressful for residents. Residents with COVID-19 or flu should continue to have access to their support person.
- Social activity is an important part of your community. Residents should be supported to participate unless they are infectious.
- A compassionate and practical approach advised for dying residents.



### Who might need testing for COVID-19 or influenza?

- A resident with viral respiratory symptoms should have a rapid antigen test done for COVID-19. If this is positive, treat as COVID-19. If this is negative, arrange PCR test for full respiratory panel.
- We **do not recommend** testing of asymptomatic people. You usually **don't need** to test asymptomatic residents before admission (testing may be advised for those on non invasive respiratory support; after a risk assessment).



### Top tips!

- Maintain an up-to-date list of all your residents and staff.
- Remind staff not to attend work if they are unwell.
- **Continue supporting residents and staff to get their COVID-19 and influenza vaccines.** For tips on supporting people to get vaccinated, check out this short module on [www.hseland.ie](https://www.hseland.ie): "Talking about immunisations."