

Time to Open Up (Part 1)

How infection prevention and control (IPC)
measures can enable safe and compassionate
care home interactions; visual scenarios
bringing this to life



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WITH COM♥SSION**

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Using Infection Prevention and Control as an Enabler

The evidence tells us how Infection Prevention and Control measures stop the spread of viruses such as coronavirus. IPC measures work. When applied in the right way and at the right time they stop the spread of infection and protect people from infectious diseases including COVID-19. Their effectiveness has been well established over many decades.

In the context of COVID-19, IPC can and should therefore be used as an enabler and supporter of safe, compassionate entry to homes of loved ones to support psychosocial and/or physical care. If masks, hand hygiene, appropriate use of other PPE, and a regularly cleaned environment are promoted as protective measures when applied properly in all settings, they can play one critical part in protecting vulnerable residents, family members/friends and staff in care homes. This is IPC.

To support the use of IPC as an enabler, the example scenarios presented here explain how safe and compassionate interactions between relatives/friends and residents can happen.

Thinking through a step by step approach for common scenarios can be a helpful way of making sense of IPC measures, as opposed to a list of “do’s” and “don’ts” that often have no meaning in people’s busy day to day lives. Different scenarios may require, for example, hand hygiene at different times. However, key to this is that there are broad IPC principles common across all situations, that when applied, will prevent COVID-19 and enable safe, compassionate interactions.

The goal is to return to open access to care homes (“Time to Open Up”) - the residents’ own homes - and to enable meaningful interaction for those who want and require this to happen. Applying IPC practices will keep people as safe as possible in these exceptional circumstances; this is possible. IPC and compassionate care are not mutually exclusive.

Note that within these examples, only correct IPC measures are described. Inappropriate measures are not listed.

Safe practices with compassion in a care home

Prevent COVID-19 and other infections by applying reliable, evidence based actions

SCENARIO EXAMPLE 1 – spending time with a loved one (indoors)



1



Relative/friend enters care home with permission, **at allocated time, wears a clean mask and cleans hands.**



2



Instructions are received (at **distance**) and **posters** are pointed out. **Temperature** is taken, if necessary (relative/friend is well¹).



3

Relative/friend **signs building entry sheet** and **cleans hands.**



6



Relative/friend enters room and resident reaches out, they **embrace**. Relative/friend **cleans hands** and sits down.



5

Staff and then relative/friend **touches** a door, they both **clean hands**³.



4

Relative/friend is directed to the resident (remaining at **distance** from staff until destination reached²).



7



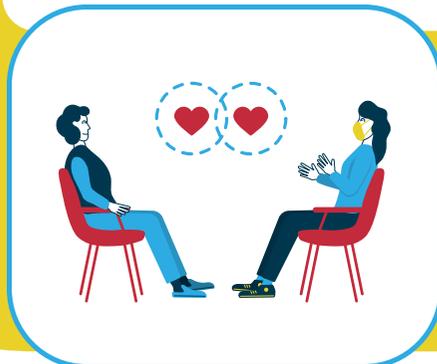
While sitting chatting, relative/friend asks resident if they can **brush** their hair, **cleans hands**, picks up the brush and moves over to them.



8



Relative/friend finishes, picks up a **wipe** and **cleans** the brush handle, puts brush down, **cleans hands** and sits down.



¹ Testing may or may not be taking place but does not change these actions (neither does vaccination). Other PPE, as well as use of a mask, may also be offered, i.e. disposable apron, face shield, gloves. |

² Resident's own room is appropriate. | ³ if anything else is touched on route to meeting up, including face mask, hands should be cleaned.

9



Relative/friend **adjusts mask** and immediately **cleans hands**.

10



Staff member **enters** (wearing a **mask**) with tea for the resident and puts it on the table then leaves.

11



Relative/friend removes phone from their bag, video calls another family member, stands aside resident and has a group **chat**.

12

Relative/friend sits down, puts phone away and **cleans hands**.



15



Relative/friend uses a **wipe** to clean chair arms⁴, walks to leave, **cleans hands** and says goodbye again.

14



Relative/friend stands and holds resident's hands, **embraces** them and says goodbye. Relative/friend **cleans hands**.

13



Relative/friend reaches the exit⁵, maintaining **distance**, leaves the home (disposes of **mask** if appropriate) and **cleans hands**.



SAFE PRACTICES WITH COMPASSION

⁴ And anything else that has been frequently touched. If possible it is courtesy to consider wiping the surfaces but not obligatory.
⁵ If anything else is touched on the way to the exit, including mask, hands should be cleaned immediately.

SCENARIO EXAMPLE 1 – Spending time with a loved one indoors

(A single session, direct interaction with one resident)

A written outline of IPC measures in practice, to complement visual illustration

	Activity – What and When	KEY IPC ACTIONS and Why
1	Relative/friend enters care home with permission, at allocated time, wears a clean mask and cleans hands	Wears mask, cleans hands before touching any items in the care home (and after having touched items outside of the care home). To protect everyone against any harmful germs carried on your hands (by removing them through cleaning hands) and from any potentially harmful particles in secretions coming from the nose or mouth (by wearing a mask).
2	Instructions are received (at distance) and posters are pointed out. Temperature is taken, if necessary (relative/friend is well (1))	Keeps distance of 2 metres from staff, wears mask. To protect everyone from any potentially harmful particles in secretions coming from the nose or mouth (by wearing a mask and keeping distance).
3	Relative/friend signs building entry sheet and cleans hands	Wears mask, keeps distance and cleans hands immediately after touching something (and before going on to touch anything else). To protect everyone against any harmful germs carried on your hands (by removing them through cleaning hands) and from any potentially harmful particles in secretions coming from the nose or mouth (by wearing a mask).
4	Relative/friend is directed to the resident (remaining at distance from staff until destination reached (2))	Keeps distance, wears mask. To protect everyone from any potentially harmful particles in secretions coming from the nose or mouth (by wearing a mask and keeping distance).
5	Staff and then relative/friend touches a door, they both clean hands (3)	Wears mask, cleans hands immediately after touching a communal item. To protect everyone against any harmful germs carried on your hands (by removing them through cleaning hands) and from any potentially harmful particles in secretions coming from the nose or mouth (by wearing a mask).

	Activity – What and When	KEY IPC ACTIONS and Why
6	Relative/friend enters room and resident reaches out, they embrace. Relative/friend cleans hands and sits down	Wears mask, cleans hands immediately after touching something else (windows also open where possible). To protect everyone against any harmful germs carried on your hands (by removing them through cleaning hands) and from any potentially harmful particles in secretions coming from the nose or mouth (by wearing a mask and providing ventilation).
7	While sitting chatting, relative/friend asks resident if they can brush their hair, cleans hands, picks up the brush and moves over to them	Cleans hands immediately before touching a communal item (as other items/surfaces may have been touched since hands were last cleaned), wears mask. To protect everyone against any harmful germs carried on your hands (by removing them through cleaning hands) and from any potentially harmful particles in secretions coming from the nose or mouth (by wearing a mask).
8	Relative/friend finishes, picks up a wipe and cleans the brush handle, puts brush down, clean hands and sits down	Cleans surface (if possible), cleans hands immediately after touching something. To protect everyone against any harmful germs carried on your hands or on surfaces (by removing them through cleaning hands and the surface/item that has been touched if possible).
9	Relative/friend adjusts mask and immediately cleans hands	Cleans hands immediately after touching mask. To protect everyone against any harmful germs carried on your hands (by removing them through cleaning hands before touching anything else – this is particularly important after touching masks).
10	Staff member enters (wearing a mask) with tea for the resident and puts it on the table then leaves	Wears mask. To protect everyone from any potentially harmful particles in secretions coming from the nose or mouth (by wearing a mask).
11	Relative/friend removes phone from their bag, video calls another family member, stands aside relative and has a group chat	Wears mask. To protect everyone from any potentially harmful particles in secretions coming from the nose or mouth (by wearing a mask).
12	Relative/friend sits down, puts phone away and cleans hands	Cleans hands after handling a personal item, before touching something/communal surfaces. To protect everyone against any harmful germs carried on your hands or on surfaces (by removing them through cleaning hands).

	Activity – What and When	KEY IPC ACTIONS and Why
13	Relative/friend stands and holds family member's hands, embraces them and says goodbye. Relative/friend cleans hands	Wears mask, cleans hands immediately after touching something (and before going on to touch other items/surfaces). To protect everyone against any harmful germs carried on your hands (by removing them through cleaning hands) and from any potentially harmful particles in secretions coming from the nose or mouth (by wearing a mask).
14	Relative/friend uses a wipe to clean chair arms (4), walks to leave, cleans hands and says goodbye again	Cleans surfaces (if possible), cleans hands immediately after touching items (and before going on to touch other items/surfaces). To protect everyone against any harmful germs carried on your hands or on surfaces (by removing them through cleaning hands and the surface/item that has been touched if possible).
15	Relative/friend reaches the exit (5), maintaining distance, leaves the home (disposes of mask if appropriate) and cleans hands	Keeps distance from staff, wears mask, cleans hands immediately after having touched any items in the care home or own mask. To protect everyone against any harmful germs carried on your hands (by removing them through cleaning hands) and from any potentially harmful particles in secretions coming from the nose or mouth (by wearing a mask and keeping distance).

(1) Testing may or may not be taking place but does not change these actions (neither does vaccination). Other PPE, as well as use of a mask, may also be offered, i.e. disposable apron, face shield, gloves – depending on the circumstances

(2) Resident's own room is appropriate. IPC measures ensure a safe environment and a person's own environment means their own, often harmless, germs are contained there

(3) If anything else is touched on route to meeting up, including face mask, hands should be cleaned

(4) And anything else that has been frequently touched. If possible it is courtesy to consider wiping the surfaces but not obligatory

(5) If anything else is touched on the way to the exit, including mask, hands should be cleaned immediately.

Safe practices with compassion

Prevent COVID-19 and other infections by applying reliable, evidence based actions

SCENARIO EXAMPLE 2 – spending time with a loved one (outside/a car journey)



1



Relative/friend arrives at care home, at allocated time, waits beside car, wears a **clean mask**¹.

2



Resident arrives at front door with carer. Carer is wearing a **mask**².

3

Relative/friend **cleans car** door handles and hard surfaces before resident enters, and **cleans hands**.

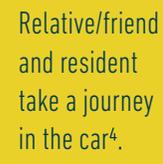
6



Car arrives at destination, relative/friend **cleans hands** and helps resident out of car. They take a walk⁵.



5



Relative/friend and resident take a journey in the car⁴.



4



Resident is brought to car by carer and helped to enter³.



7



Relative/friend and resident return to car and drive to the care home⁴.

8



Relative/friend alerts home that they have returned. Relative/friend **cleans hands** and helps resident out of the car and walks to front door⁶.

9



Relative/friend says goodbye and leaves.

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Working version 1.0 (February 2021).
Created by KS Healthcare Consulting and Maraltró.

¹ If relative/friend enters care home to collect resident other actions may be necessary. Actions should be taken as per Scenario Example 1. A negative test may also be necessary. Relative/friend is also assumed well. | ² Resident may also be wearing a mask if possible/relevant. | ³ This may involve packing wheelchair in to car, hands should already be clean. Carer leaves and should clean hands. | ⁴ Window open slightly if possible, no other passengers are in the car in this scenario. | ⁵ A wheelchair may also be used for time in a local park, for example. | ⁶ Alerts home by phone or door buzzer.

SCENARIO EXAMPLE 2 – Spending time with a loved one outside / on a car journey

A written outline of IPC measures in practice, to complement visual illustration

	Activity – What and When	KEY IPC ACTIONS and Why
1	Relative/friend arrives at care home, at allocated time, waits beside car, wears a clean mask (1)	Wears mask. To protect everyone from any potentially harmful particles in secretions coming from the nose or mouth (by wearing a mask).
2	Resident arrives at front door with carer. Carer is wearing a mask (2)	Wears mask. Resident may also be wearing a mask where possible. To protect everyone from any potentially harmful particles in secretions coming from the nose or mouth (by wearing a mask).
3	Relative/friend cleans car door handles and hard surfaces before resident enters, and cleans hands	Cleans commonly touched car surfaces, cleans hands immediately after touching items/ surfaces, before going on to touch anything else. Also keeps distance from carer during this time. <i>To protect everyone against any harmful germs present on surfaces or carried on hands (by removing them through cleaning surface/item that has been touched and cleaning hands).</i>
4	Resident is brought to car by carer and helped to enter (3)	Masks are still worn and distance is kept when possible (however it may require two people to safely help resident into the car and this is possible).
5	Relative/friend and resident take a journey in the car (4)	Mask is still worn. Window open slightly if possible.
6	Car arrives at destination, relative/friend cleans hands and helps resident out of car. They take a walk (5)	Cleans hands after touching something (parts of the car (even though it has been cleaned), before touching someone. <i>To protect everyone against any harmful germs carried on hands (by removing them through cleaning hands before touching anything else).</i>

	Activity – What and When	KEY IPC ACTIONS and Why
7	Relative/friend and resident return to car and drive to the care home (4)	Mask is still worn. Window open slightly if possible.
8	Relative/friend alerts home that they have returned. Relative/friend cleans hands and helps resident out of the car and walks to front door (6)	Cleans hands. To protect everyone against any harmful germs carried on hands (by removing them through cleaning hands before touching anything else).
9	Relative/friend says goodbye and leaves	Mask is still worn. If anything is touched, hands should be cleaned again.

(1) if relative/friend enters care home to collect resident, other actions may be necessary. Actions should be taken as per Scenario Example 1. A negative test may also be necessary. Relative/friend is also assumed well.

(2) resident may also be wearing a mask if possible/relevant

(3) this may involve packing wheelchair in to car, hands should already be clean. Carer leaves and should clean hands

(4) window open slightly if possible, no other passengers are in the car in this scenario

(5) a wheelchair may also be used for time in a local park, for example

(6) alerts home by phone or door buzzer.

Notes: if the activity is focused on a walk without a car, these actions might still be useful in order to help facilitate safe interactions with compassion. If any other activity occurs, e.g. food/drinks, consideration must be given to hand hygiene, use of masks, and appropriate distancing when possible. If mask is touched at any time, hands should be cleaned preferably immediately but as soon as possible and particularly before touching anything else/communal items that may be touched by others, e.g. in the car.

Key Points

We acknowledge that official government guidance currently outlines the necessary IPC measures/resources. In order for the scenario presented here to be successful, we reinforce and summarise a number of dependent factors.

1. The right resources

A system to support communication between relatives/friends and the care home, in order to address questions, concerns and expectations.

Availability and reliable access to IPC materials e.g. handrub, masks, instructional posters, surface cleaner.

Maintenance of systems for reliable procurement, distribution, storage of IPC resources in care homes including for offering items to relatives and friends who enter.

Back up measures to address problems that arise with supplies.

Policies and procedures consistent with the IPC recommendations.

2. Training

Accessible and consistent training information as well as ways to provide informed reassurance to relatives/friends. This might include personal instruction, visual direction and online options and should be consistent with evidence based IPC recommendations (this first requires informed and confident care home staff).

3. Feedback

Promotion of the positive results of following the IPC recommendations.

Review of circumstances where guidance is not adhered to, and the approaches necessary to deal with making improvements in a supportive way.

4. Reminders, prompts and other communications

Visual and personal instruction to constantly reinforce the recommended IPC measures, positioned in the right places and updated as necessary.

Updates and communications of any changing circumstances through a range of media that will easily reach all those who need to know. This should include reassurance on IPC measures to allay fears and lack of confidence/trust.

Promotion of the environment as "home" rather than "clinical" setting even when IPC measures (handrubs, PPE) are in place.

5. Role modelling

Correct IPC practices carried out by every member of staff, as well as relatives/friends, to positively reinforce a culture of safety alongside compassion.

Supportive actions and attitude displayed and role modelled by leaders (do not assume that people know why and how to clean their hands or wear a mask).

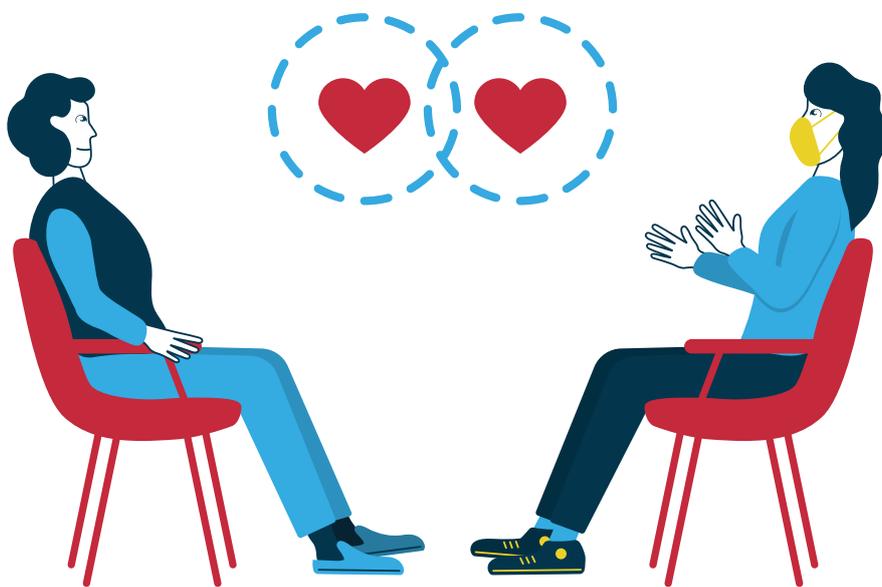
Routine or enhanced cleaning practices should be taking place concurrently, which supports the reduced burden of a contaminated environment and therefore the potential for germs to spread.

Hand hygiene addresses the issue of touching potentially contaminated surfaces and will always interrupt the transmission of germs from surfaces including coronavirus.

Safe and compassionate IPC practices are also dependent on people being 'well' and "symptom free", and a level of trust between those entering care homes and the staff.

IPC measures should not be viewed as an additional burden to the work load within a care home but should be a positive routine.

Interactions between loved ones are essential for wellbeing, and person centred care is critical.



Disclaimer

All the information in this document is published in good faith and for general information purposes. We acknowledge that official government guidance currently outlines the necessary infection prevention and control measures/ resources. The materials were developed to support these measures. The resources are not a substitute for official guidance.

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Document updated 20th February 2021