

South East IPAC Hub Update

January 2024

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As we enter a new year, the South East IPAC Hub continues to expand our services to facilities within Leeds, Grenville & Lanark (LGL), Kingston, Frontenac, Lennox & Addington (KFL&A), and Hastings Prince Edward (HPE) regions. In collaboration with their respective Public Health Units, the Hub has started to establish a monthly Community of Practice (CoP) for IPAC Leads. In KFL&A, topics have included RSV vaccination, outbreak preparedness over the holidays, as well as updates to the IPAC Standard (see page 2 below for details). We also launched a new CoP for HPE, with the first meeting taking place January 23.

The Hub's Coordinators continue to proactively reach out to long-term care and retirement homes as well as congregate living settings. With the expected seasonal increase of respiratory virus transmission and outbreaks, we aim to 'leave no stone unturned'. If you require IPAC support in your setting, please see our contact information at the end of this newsletter.

In this edition of The Spoke, we are adding a new "**Spotlight!**" (page 3) to highlight a local IPAC Lead or facility that has implemented an exciting project or explored creative ways to promote IPAC in their setting. Please contact the Hub if you or someone you know has implemented a new project we can celebrate!

Upcoming Prep Series for LTC-CIP Certification!

We are excited to share an upcoming online [LTC-CIP prep series](#) that is being offered by [Sunnybrook Hospital](#), [University Health Network](#), [Scarborough Health Network](#), [Lakeridge Health](#) and [Michael Garron Hospital's IPAC Hubs](#).

Lectures:

Thursdays from 1-2PM starting February 01 to April 04

Exam Study Question Sessions:

Tuesdays from 1-2PM starting February 06 to April 09

Please contact your Hub Coordinator if you are interested in attending these sessions. A friendly reminder to IPAC Leads in long-term care homes that [CBIC certification](#) is required by April 2025. This prep series can be an excellent way to start your studying!



Save the Date

KHSC's IPAC team will be hosting a 2-day, in-person course, presented by CSA, in Kingston.

Day 1: April 30th
Fundamentals of Infection Control During Construction



Day 2: May 1st
Effective Implementation and Practical Applications in Infection Control

If you are interested in this opportunity, please provide your full name and email to your Hub Coordinator.

Updated: IPAC Standard for Long-Term Care Homes

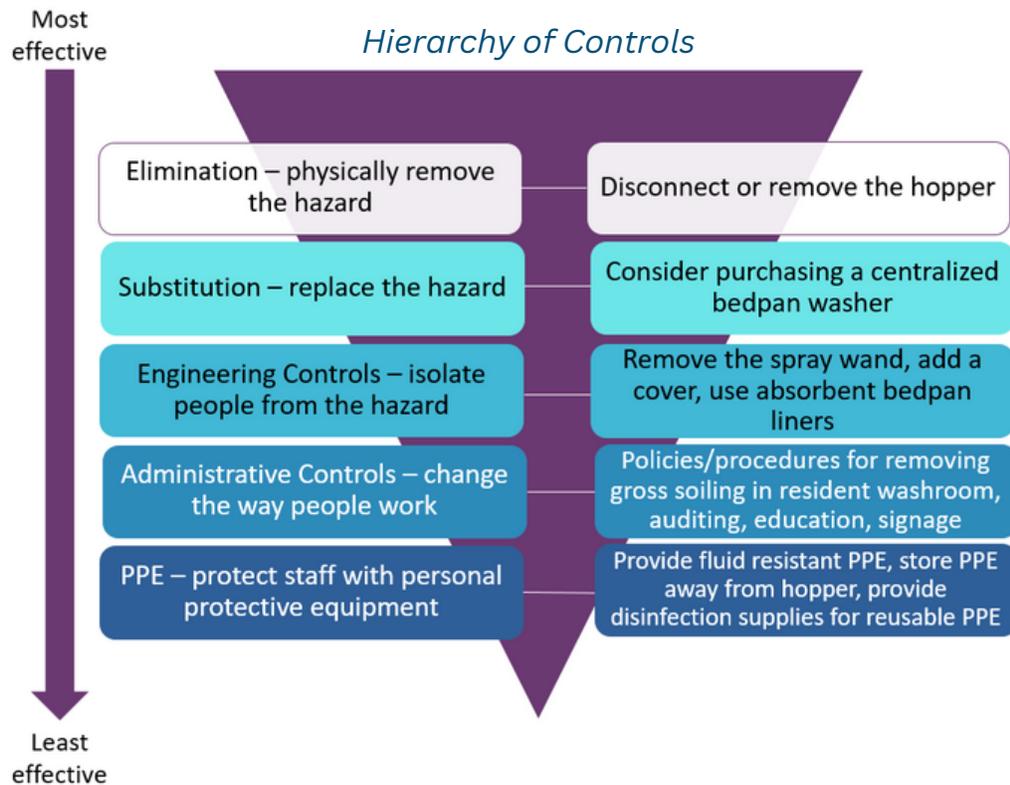
The **IPAC Standard for LTCHs** was introduced in April 2022 and updated in September 2023. Key sections that were updated include:

- 5.6: Frequency of cleaning and disinfection and using a risk matrix to inform policies
- 5.7: Ward rooms (updates to align with current context)
- 5.8: Hoppers to be eliminated or risk reduced where still in use
- 6.2: PPE to be available and accessible to essential visitors
- 6.7: Masking (updates to align with current context)
- 10.3: Hand washing facility (hot and cold water)
- 10.5: Eye wash stations must not be attached to hand washing sinks
- 11: Immunization and screening for staff and residents



A Closer Look at the Use of Hoppers in Long-Term Care

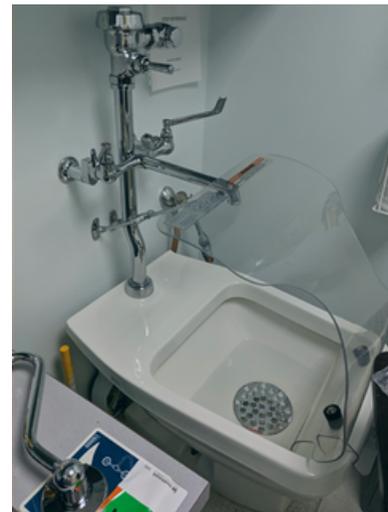
NEW: Section 5.8 of the standard requires homes to take every effort possible to eliminate the use of hoppers. Where hoppers are still in use, homes should add measures to reduce the risk of transmission to staff and contamination of the environment. Please see below for several examples of mitigation measures.



Refresher: What is the IPAC Standard?

The Standard is pursuant to section 102(2)(b) of the Ontario Regulation 246/22 under the Fixing Long-Term Care Act, 2021. This document sets out requirements for IPAC programs in LTCHs during periods of regular operations and during infectious disease outbreaks.

Licensees must comply with these requirements in a way that respects and promotes residents' rights as set out in the Residents' Bill of Rights under section 3 of the Act.



Examples of covers used to mitigate risk of hoppers.

IPAC SPOTLIGHT

CONGRATULATIONS!

*E.J. McQuigge
Lodge*

IPAC Lead:
Dana Anderson



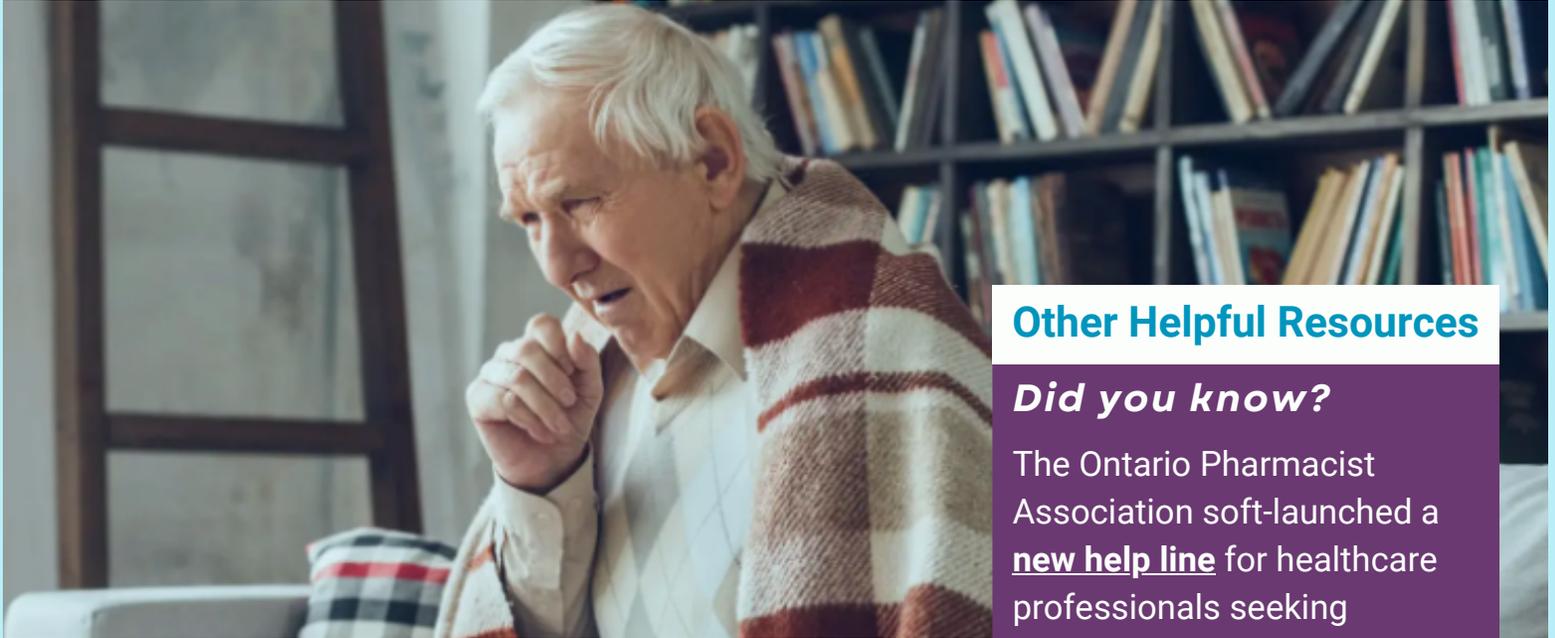
Congratulations to E.J. McQuigge Lodge! E.J. McQuigge Lodge is a long-term care home located within HPE in Belleville. The home's IPAC Lead, Dana Anderson, worked alongside one of our IPAC Coordinator's to design a **Tabletop Education Exercise** specific to the home for all staff and departments. The topic was **Respiratory Preparedness and Response**, and the exercise was held in November. Through the interactive learning exercise staff were led through a realistic guided scenario prompting critical thinking and problem solving. The staff found the session informative and beneficial to future outbreak management and response. Topics discussed during the exercise included:

- Recognizing signs and symptoms of various respiratory infections
- Immediate actions when a resident presents with symptoms
- Communication between staff during outbreaks
- Respiratory testing and additional precautions
- Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) donning/doffing and challenges

ATTENTION IPAC LEADS!

! ! If you would like to collaborate with the Hub to design a Tabletop exercise specific to your home's needs, please reach out to your IPAC Coordinator or SEHubIntake@kingstonhsc.ca. Remember, a tabletop exercise can be designed for any topic!

NEW PHO REPORT: Respiratory Virus Outbreak Planning



In December 2023, Public Health Ontario published a new report on **considerations for respiratory virus outbreak planning** in settings such as long-term care, retirement homes and other congregative living settings including shelters and group homes.

The report is intended for public health unit's planning purposes, but IPAC Leads working in the above settings may also find it useful to review.

Overview of topics covered:

- Page 2-7: Planning considerations for immunization, monitoring, testing, antiviral use, cohorting, staffing shortages and communications
- Page 8: Table 1 highlights key distinctions in managing outbreaks for influenza, COVID-19, and other viruses such as RSV
- Page 10: Testing considerations when multiple viruses are co-circulating in the facility
- Page 11: Line lists and counting cases and deaths
- Page 11: Antiviral medications for prophylaxis and treatment during influenza outbreaks

Other Helpful Resources

Did you know?

The Ontario Pharmacist Association soft-launched a **new help line** for healthcare professionals seeking guidance in prescribing or accessing therapeutics for COVID-19.



Did you know?

There is a provincial program available for long-term care, retirement homes and other congregative living settings that can **support N95 respirator fit-testing**. If your organization has at least 10 individuals who require fit-testing, the program can match you with a local service provider to assist you.

In Case You Missed It!

1. **NEW:** [Infection Prevention and Control Practices for Immunization Clinics](#)

In October, PHO released a new guide for implementing immunization clinics which includes: PPE considerations, safe injection practices and safe use of multi-dose vial.

2. **UPDATED:** [Interim IPAC Recommendations for Use of Personal Protective Equipment for Care of Individuals with Suspect or Confirmed COVID-19](#)

In December, PHO updated the recommendations for use of PPE for suspect or confirmed COVID-19 individuals.

3. **UPDATED:** [Interim Infection Prevention and Control \(IPAC\) Measures Based on Respiratory Virus Transmission Risks in Health Care Settings.](#)

In December, PHO updated the recommendations of fluctuating respiratory virus activity and additional IPAC measures to implement to reduce risk of transmission

4. **UPDATED:** [MLTC Long-Term Care Staffing Programs and Supports](#)

In November, the MLTC extended its “Infection Prevention and Control Initiative” until 2025. The funding will support LTC IPAC Lead training and education, including CBIC certification.

5. **NEW:** [PHO Hand Hygiene Resources for Health Care Settings](#)

In December, PHO released a suite of hand hygiene resources to support implementation of best practices in health care settings:

- [FAQ: Four Moments of Hand Hygiene](#)
- [FAQ: Glove Use and Hand Hygiene](#)
- [At a Glance: Hand Hygiene Product Placement](#)
- [Poster: Caring for Your hands](#)
- [Checklist: How to Protect Your Skin](#)
- [Checklist: Hand Hygiene Product Placement in Resident and Hallway Areas](#)
- [Checklist: Maintenance of Hand Hygiene Products and Equipment](#)

Epidemiology Update

COVID-19, Influenza, and RSV activity is on-going in all regions. Please check the following links for updates on local, provincial, and national epidemiology.

LOCAL:

Hastings Prince Edward Public Health:

- [Weekly Respiratory Infection Dashboard](#)
- [COVID-19 Status Dashboard](#)
- [Diseases of Public Health Significance Dashboard](#)

Kingston, Frontenac, Lennox & Addington:

- [Respiratory Illness Surveillance Dashboard](#)

Leeds, Grenville and Lanark:

- [Respiratory Virus Surveillance Dashboard](#)
- [Diseases of Public Health Significance Surveillance Dashboard](#)



PROVINCIAL:

- [Ontario Respiratory Virus Tool](#)
- [COVID-19 Data and Surveillance](#)

NATIONAL:

- [COVID-19 Update](#)
- [Respiratory Virus Detections Report](#)
- [FluWatch Summary](#)

Respiratory Season Reminders

COVID-19

- Review [COVID-19 Vaccine Guidance](#) and determine if your residents/patients/clients are eligible.
- Continue administration of COVID-19 vaccines based on eligibility and Public Health recommendations.
- Confirm [Resident Eligibility](#) for antiviral treatment (Paxlovid/Remdesivir), in case needed, or contact [COVID-19 Therapeutic Support Line for Healthcare Workers](#) for any questions.

INFLUENZA

- Continue administration of Influenza vaccine to residents.
- Ensure up-to-date resident list with doctor approvals is available for resident [Influenza Antivirals](#). Tamiflu product monograph available [here](#).
- Follow your facility's Influenza Immunization policy by promoting continued uptake, encouraging staff to obtain prophylaxis proactively, and/or advise exclusion criteria during Influenza outbreak.

RESPIRATORY SYNCYTIAL VIRUS (RSV)

- Encourage residents and staff to stay well-hydrated.
- Begin or continue RSV vaccine administration for those [eligible](#). Use [RSV Vaccine Fact Sheet](#) to help promote uptake and [consent form](#) for documentation.

SUPPLIES

- Ensure ample supply of PPE, discard any expired PPE. Access [PPE Supply Portal](#) if eligible.
- Ensure ample supply of cleaning and disinfecting products (health care-grade disinfectants/virucidal and sporicidal claims).
- Ensure testing kits are available (RATs, PCR, enteric kits, etc.) and check expiry dates.

When a resident exhibits one or more respiratory symptoms, outside of their baseline, initiate required additional precautions and test.

Congregate Living Settings

As we navigate through respiratory season, Public Health Ontario updated their [Outbreak Preparedness, Prevention and Management in Congregate Living Settings Checklist](#) to replace "COVID-19 Preparedness and Prevention in Congregate Living Settings and Managing COVID-19 Outbreaks in Congregate Living Settings".

Please contact SEhubintake@kingstonhsc.ca if your CLS would like assistance or guidance to complete this tool which supports preparedness and response in your setting.

Carbapenemase Producing *Enterobacteriaceae* (CPE)

Enterobacteriaceae are a group of gram-negative bacteria that can be found in the gastrointestinal tract. Carbapenemase is an enzyme that can inactivate strong classes of antibiotics including Carbapenems which are used to treat the most difficult infections. Carbapenemases can be most commonly found in *Escherichia coli*, *Klebsiella* and *Enterbacter* species, as well as other gram-negative bacteria.

An individuals can be colonized, usually in the gut, and exhibit no signs or symptoms of infection. Alternatively, an individual can be infected with CPE, which may require treatment.

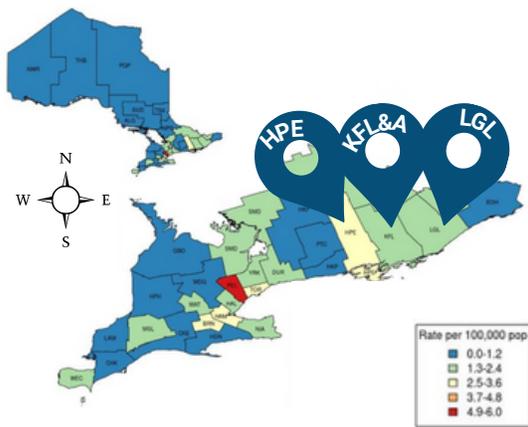


Figure 1 adapted from: [PHO Surveillance Report: Carbapenemase-producing Enterobacteriaceae in Ontario: 2022 Annual Summary](#).

As we continue to see a rise of CPE in our regions, it is important to implement and practice control measures or at minimum prepare for continuing care of individuals with CPE in our facilities. An updated report was released December 2023; figure 1 illustrates CPE rates by public health unit in Ontario, May 2018 to December 2022.

Public Health Ontario released new and updated [CPE resources](#) which are available on their website and are specific to long-term care.

LTCH-Specific Resources

New

AT A GLANCE

CPE Transmission Risk Factors in Long-Term Care Homes

Key risk factors of CPE transmission for LTCHs to consider when making decisions about the restrictiveness of IPAC practices to implement when a resident has CPE.

1 MB | Published 28 Nov 2023

[Click here for additional information.](#)

New

Q&A / FAQ

Information about CPE for Long-Term Care Homes Residents, Family and Visitors

Responses to common questions to support family members, visitors and residents who are colonized or infected with CPE in long-term care homes (LTCHs).

922 KB | Published 28 Nov 2023

[Click here for additional information.](#)

CHECKLIST

Resident Admission, Discharge, and Transfer Considerations for Carbapenemase-Producing Enterobacteriaceae (CPE)

These checklists support LTCHs to prepare for the safe admission, transfer, and discharge of residents who are colonized or infected with CPE. The checklist may be used as a self-assessment and as a communication tool.

387 KB | Published 28 Nov 2023

[Click here for additional information.](#)

Contact the Hub at: SEHubIntake@kingstonhsc.ca



Service requests

Our Team is available for a variety of services, including on-site visits, staff education, outbreak management, IPAC policy review, IPAC resource development and other supports to help enhance your IPAC program.



IPAC-related questions

Where do I find more information on...? Can you help me implement ... in my facility? Our Coordinators are happy to provide advice on your IPAC-related questions and direct you to best practice resources.



We want your feedback!

We value our partner suggestions and feedback. If the Hub has provided your organization with services, please take a moment to complete our [feedback survey](#) to help us improve our program.