

## HEALTHCARE SETTINGS

### Control Measures for Patients

- ◆ Discontinue admissions or transfers to the outbreak-affected unit until the last patient with vomiting or diarrhea has been symptom-free for 48 hours.
- ◆ Ask sick patients to stay in their rooms until symptom-free for 48 hours.
- ◆ Discontinue group activities (including meals) until the outbreak is over.
- ◆ Do not transfer patients (symptomatic or not) from outbreak-affected to unaffected units until the outbreak is over unless it is absolutely, medically necessary.
- ◆ Ask sick visitors to stay home until symptom-free for 48 hours.
- ◆ Do not permit children in the facility until the outbreak is over.
- ◆ Dedicate patient-care equipment to a single patient or among similarly ill patients. Clean and disinfect the equipment between sick patients if using common equipment is unavoidable.
- ◆ Consider giving anti-emetics to patients with vomiting and anti-peristaltics to patients with diarrhea.
- ◆ Use *contact precautions* with sick patients until they are symptom-free for 48 hours.
- ◆ Move sick patients to a private room or a room with other sick patients (cohorting).

### Control Measures for Staff

- ◆ Use plain soap & water to **WASH YOUR HANDS, WASH YOUR HANDS, WASH YOUR HANDS.**
- ◆ Use ethanol-based hand sanitizers (60-95%) **ONLY AFTER** washing hands with plain soap and water.
- ◆ Keep the same staff to patient assignments (cohort nursing).
- ◆ Stop “floating” staff from outbreak-affected to unaffected units.
- ◆ Immediately send home staff who are sick at work; furlough sick staff until symptom-free for 48 hours.
- ◆ Exclude non-essential staff from outbreak-affected units.
- ◆ Wear gloves and gowns when caring for sick patients. Remove protective gear before leaving the room; wash hands immediately.
- ◆ Clean up vomit and diarrhea following guidelines for *Cleaning Up Vomit and Other Unpleasant Tasks.*
- ◆ Use a 1000 ppm bleach solution (1/3 cup household [5.25%] bleach to 1 gallon water) or other disinfectants EPA-registered for norovirus disinfection for routine cleaning during a norovirus outbreak; bleach solutions must be freshly made within 24 hours of use and mop heads changed between batches of bleach.

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Source: MacCannell T, et al. Guideline for the prevention and control of norovirus gastroenteritis outbreaks in healthcare settings. *Infection Control and Hospital Epidemiology* 2011;32:939–6.

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