

HEALTH ADVISORY: Long Term Care Facility Respiratory Outbreak Guidance

October 23, 2024

Dear Colleagues,

We hope this message finds you well.

Benton County Health Department is sharing long term care facility (LTCF) respiratory outbreak guidance. The respiratory guidance is related to outbreak prevention, reporting, and mitigation. To better communicate respiratory outbreak guidance to our LTCF colleagues, this health advisory includes:

1. OHA's March 2024 Respiratory Disease Outbreak Guidelines
2. Benton County Communicable Disease Program (CD) Contact Information
3. Benton County Immunization Program (IZ) Contact Information
4. CDC Project Firstline COVID-19 Infection Prevention Videos
5. OHA/CDC Respiratory Data
6. Relevant Public Health Communicable Diseases Oregon Administrative Rules (OARs)

1. OHA's March 2024 Respiratory Disease Outbreak Guidelines

A summary of key points from [OHA's March 2024 Respiratory Guidelines](#) is available below:

Outbreak Definitions & Reporting (Section 3, Page 3): Respiratory outbreaks are to be reported if there are **two or more individuals** epidemiologically linked (**epi-linked**; that is, 2 or more people who share a disease exposure) during a **7-day period** with any of the following:

- 2 or more lab-confirmed individuals (e.g., residents, staff, visitors).
- 1 lab-confirmed individual and 1 or more individuals with similar symptoms.
- 2 or more individuals without a lab-confirmed disease but have similar symptoms with a known epi-link.

Recommendations for LTCFs (Section 5.2.2, Page 6): LTCFs are deemed to be a "high-consequence" setting due to residents being at increased risk for severe disease or mortality. Recommendations include:

- Strongly encourage vaccination for staff and residents as preventative measure.

- Strongly encourage prompt clinical evaluation and testing of individuals with symptoms.
- Strongly encourage prompt prophylaxis and treatment during an outbreak.
- Conduct contact tracing and targeted testing during outbreaks.
- Utilize appropriate PPE during outbreaks.

Note: Respiratory outbreaks are resolved **14 days** after the last individual's onset date.

Return to Work Guidance (Section 5.2.2, Page 6): Generally, sick staff can return to work after:

- **COVID-19:** 24 hours since last fever without medicine AND 7 days since onset for COVID-19 if negative viral test obtained between days 5-7 (otherwise, 10 days)
- **FLU:** 24 hours since last fever without medicine AND 7 days since symptom onset
- **RSV:** 24 hours since last fever without medicine AND recovery from symptoms

Periods of Communicability (Section 2.4, Page 2): OHA shared a [Compendium of Respiratory Diseases](#). The compendium includes common respiratory diseases with incubation periods, symptoms, transmission, etc.

Severe Outbreaks (Section 5, Pages 4-5): Severe respiratory outbreak morbidity or mortality is defined as:

- 2 more or more deaths or 3 or more hospitalizations within 2 weeks
- Confirmed pneumonia in 3 or more epi-linked individuals with unknown etiology
- Clusters of new or uncommon signs or symptoms

Resources (Section 5, Page 6):

- [Interim Summary of Long-Term Care Facility Infection Control for COVID-19 and Other Respiratory Pathogens](#)
- [Infection control guidance for respiratory pathogens](#)
- [CDC Respiratory Toolkit for Nursing Homes](#)

2. Benton County Communicable Disease Program (CD) Contact Information

The best way to contact Benton County Communicable Disease Program (CD) is via email:

- cdreporting@bentoncountyor.gov

The CD Reporting Email is shared by all CD team members. A CD team member will respond to messages and provide support.

Other options for reaching our CD team include (names listed by preferred contact order):

1. **Christina Camacho (Communicable Disease Specialist/Infection Prevention & Control)**
 - a. Email: christina.camacho@bentoncountyor.gov
 - b. Phone: 541-766-6344 (desk) OR 541-745-4889 (cell)
2. **Mary Shaughnessy (Communicable Disease Nurse)**
 - a. Email: mary.shaughnessy@bentoncountyor.gov
 - b. Phone: 541-602-1821 (cell) OR 541-766-6255 (desk)
3. **Gerald Dyer, Jr. (Communicable Disease Program Manager)**
 - a. Email: gerald.dyer@bentoncountyor.gov
 - b. Phone: 541-766-6654 (desk)

3. Benton County Immunization Program (CD) Contact Information

To receive support with the coordination of LTCF vaccination clinics, please contact Benton County's Immunization Program (IZ) via the following team email:

- IZTeam@bentoncountyor.gov

The IZ Email is shared by all immunization team members. A IZ team member will respond to messages and provide support.

LTCFs can also contact the Benton County IZ Program Coordinator at:

- Amanda Wilkerson (RN Immunization Coordinator)
 - Email: amanda.wilkerson@bentoncountyor.gov
 - Phone: 541-766-6603 (desk) OR 541-602-1685 (cell)

4. CDC Project Firstline COVID-19 Infection Prevention Video

CDC has helpful infection prevention videos available at [Project Firstline](#). These videos provide an overview of respiratory disease transmission, infection prevention, and source control. Example videos include:

- [How Does COVID-19 Spread?: A Review](#)
- [Why Does Contact Time Matter for Disinfection?](#)
- [What is Source Control?](#)

5. OHA/CDC Respiratory Data

OHA and CDC have helpful respiratory data dashboards for tracking respiratory diseases. The dashboards links are located below:

OHA:

- <https://public.tableau.com/app/profile/oregon.public.health.division.acute.and.communicable.disease.pre/viz/OregonsRespiratoryVirusData/TableofContents>

CDC:

- <https://www.cdc.gov/surveillance/resp-net/dashboard.html>

6. Relevant Public Health Communicable Diseases Oregon Administrative Rules (OARs)

- [OAR 333-018-0000](#) (Reporting Responsibilities)
- [OAR 333-018-0015](#) (What and When to Report)
- [OAR 333-019-0000](#) (Investigation of Reportable Diseases)
- [OAR 333-019-0002](#) (Cooperation with Public Health Authorities)
- [OAR 333-019-0003](#) (Providing Information)
- [OAR 333-019-0010](#) (School, Child Care, and Worksite Restrictions)

The complete list of Oregon Public Health Chapter 333 OARs can be found at:

https://secure.sos.state.or.us/oard/displayChapterRules.action;JSESSIONID_OARD=QExL87RKxFa3jgigiJhMKAEvVC9JPP5BI9gqGQGKbwF554Rhm3V8!48253970?selectedChapter=89

Thank You

Benton County would like to take a moment to share our appreciation to all working and/or living within our nursing home communities. Thank you for your dedication to the health of LTCF residents, staff, and visitors.

We wish everyone the very best of health.

With gratitude,



Carolina Amador, MD, MPH
Public Health Officer



April Holland
Public Health Administrator