

## SET UP THE SHELTER TO REDUCE THE SPREAD OF DISEASE



**People with flu can spread it to others up to about 6 feet away.** Flu viruses are spread mainly by tiny droplets made when people with flu cough, sneeze or talk. These droplets can land in the mouths or noses of people who are nearby or possibly be inhaled into the lungs. People might also get flu by touching a surface or object that has flu virus on it and then touching their own mouth or nose.

**Increase the distance between people.** When possible, place groups or families in individual rooms or in separate areas of the facility. Place cots head-to-toe and keep cots six feet apart.



**Separate clients with symptoms of flu** in an area away from others, if possible. If a separate room is not available, separate a single room with clients with flu on one side and others on the opposite side.

**Clean and disinfect surfaces.** Make sure commonly used surfaces are cleaned and disinfected routinely, paying careful attention to door knobs and hand rails.



## IDENTIFY SYMPTOMS OF FLU

**Consider screening clients during the intake process about current flu symptoms.** People who have flu often feel some or all of these symptoms:

- Fever or feeling feverish/chills (*not everyone with flu will have a fever*)
- Cough
- Sore throat
- Runny or stuffy nose
- Muscle or body aches
- Headache
- Fatigue
- Some people may have vomiting and diarrhea, though this is more common in children than adults.



Refer to your agency's guideline practices for screening and managing clients who are sick. Offer resources for clients to have a medical evaluation.

**Reassure clients that they won't be denied or lose a bed if they report symptoms.** Residents may be afraid to seek healthcare or take advantage of respite and recovery beds out of fear of losing their bed at the shelter. Beds can be saved and counted as full for residents with short term illnesses seeking health care or respite care.

**Encourage residents to report illnesses to shelter staff.** Explain that the screening questions and symptom reporting are to help maintain a healthy environment.

## PROMOTE FLU PREVENTION

Remind staff and volunteers to stay home when they are ill. Flu can spread from 24 hours before illness onset to a week or more after fever is gone. It's most important to stay home when they have fever **AND** for 24 hours after the fever is gone. This is the most contagious period for flu.



**Promote hand hygiene and cough etiquette among all residents.** Display posters in your shelter to educate clients on proper hand washing and to encourage them to cover their coughs. Provide tissues for covering coughs and sneezes.

**Encourage vaccination for both residents and staff each flu season.** The best way to prevent flu is to get vaccinated.

## SEEK EARLY TREATMENT FOR HIGH RISK CLIENTS

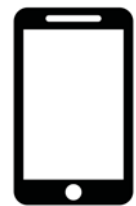
**Encourage residents at higher risk for severe illness from flu to seek medical care promptly for treatment.** Early treatment can prevent severe illness and hospitalization. This is especially important for people who are at high risk for hospitalization for flu, including:

- Seniors
- Pregnant women
- People with diabetes, asthma, heart disease, extreme obesity, weakened immune systems or other chronic medical conditions
- American Indians and Alaskan Natives
- Children and infants under age 5



## PUBLIC HEALTH RESOURCES

**Report to Public Health if you have multiple residents with flu symptoms.**  
Call 206-296-4774, available 24/7.



**Get resources online:**

- More on flu: [www.kingcounty.gov/health/flu](http://www.kingcounty.gov/health/flu)
- Videos for homeless providers to help Stop Germs: [bit.ly/2mfpBpS](http://bit.ly/2mfpBpS)
- Pandemic influenza guidance from the National Health Care for the Homeless Council (includes information about seasonal flu): [bit.ly/2CZqBJ1](http://bit.ly/2CZqBJ1)