**PREVENTING INFECTION**

It is useful to consider how you might reduce the risk of infection. You and your Personal Assistants (PAs) should discuss personal preferences for keeping everyone safe. This could include wearing personal protective equipment (PPE) such as wearing gloves, aprons, face masks and very occasionally visors. This factsheet provides guidance of good practice.

**Gloves:** Wearing gloves helps to prevent the spread of germs. Gloves should not be worn instead of handwashing.

**Aprons:** Help to protect clothes and stop germs being carried on PAs clothes

**Facemasks:** Facemasks help to protect from air-borne germs. The use of face masks is still one of the most important things that we can all do to decrease the risk of spreading infection. They need to fit well, covering the mouth and nose and should not be touched. Remember to replace at least every 4 hours or if wet, dirty, or damaged. Cloth, homemade or fashion masks won’t work as effectively as fluid resistant masks (hospital or surgical masks) and should not be used in their place.

They need to fit well, covering the mouth and nose and not be touched. They need to be changed if they are wet, dirty, or damaged as well as at break times and at least every four hours.

**Eye protection:** Help to protect from body fluids splashing into the eyes. This could be visors or goggles (not prescription glasses).

**Consider what to wear:**

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Activity** | **Gloves** | **Aprons** | **Face mask**  | **Eye protection goggles / visors** |
| Social support (in the same room) | X | X | ü | X |
| Jobs that involve contact with body fluids (personal care, emptying catheter bags, handling laundry that might be contaminated) | ü | ü | ü | If splashing of body fluids is likely |
| Jobs with no contact with body fluids (medication & handling clean laundry)  | X | X | ü | X |
| Cleaning (using disinfectants and detergents) | if splashing is likely | if splashing is likely | ü | If splashing is likely |
| Aerosol generating procedures (such as changing tracheostomy tubes or suctioning) | Seek advice on which PPE to use from your specialist team or health care professional, e.g. District Nurses |

**Frequently asked questions**

*Where can I buy these items from?*

You can buy PPE such as gloves, aprons, masks and visors from many retailers such as pharmacies and some supermarkets. Since the pandemic many online retailers now sell PPE, which may be cheaper option.

*How do I pay for them?*

If you require PPE so that your PAs can assist with your personal care and support then funding to purchase the Items you require should be included in your Direct Payment. If you are unsure whether funding for PPE is included then please contact your social work team or your ICB contact, if you have a personal health budget. If funding is not currently included you should explain what you need it for so that it can be included. If you have your support provided by care provider then they will supply their care workers with the appropriate PPE.

*What if my PA refuses or doesn’t want to wear them or to do things like wash their hands?*

Wearing the relevant clothing and equipment, along with undertaking activities like washing hands and keeping clean is really important to keep both you and your PAs safe. You should have a conversation with them to find out why they don’t like to wear them and see if there is anything you can do to help this (if there are allergies to certain gloves or products you could buy that they won’t react to). You can show this fact sheet to explain why it is important.

Useful guides on infection control and donning PPE are available at:

[Infection Prevention and Control: Quick Guide for Care Workers](https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/infection-prevention-and-control-in-adult-social-care-settings/infection-prevention-and-control-quick-guide-for-care-workers) or [Guide to Donning and Doffing PPE](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/1044504/COVID-19_Non_AGP_Donning_and_doffing_PPE_droplet_precautions.pdf)

Training for PAs and Individual Employers, information on which can be found at: [www.disabilitysheffield.org.uk/training](https://www.disabilitysheffield.org.uk/training)

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Author:** | Cinnamon Verge, Blake Williamson, Jake Green  | **Version:**  | 1.00 |
| **Approved by:** | 2 Nov 2022 | **Published on:** |  |
| **Approved on:** | Direct Payment Steering Group | **Review due:** | 1 November 2024 |

