

# SOUTHWEST IPAC HUB

NEWSLETTER - Winter 2024 Update

## WHAT IS THE IPAC HUB?



The Southwest IPAC Hub is a collaboration between **Middlesex-London Health Unit**, the **Huron Perth Public Health** and **Southwestern Public Health**. We provide advice, guidance and direct supports to IPAC leads and those responsible for IPAC in congregate living settings including Long-Term Care Homes, Retirement Homes, Group Homes, Shelters, Supportive Housing.

## WHAT SERVICES DO WE PROVIDE?



The e-newsletter is distributed electronically to Long-Term Care Homes, Retirement Homes and Congregate Living Settings in the Southwest IPAC Hub region.

Our team works collaboratively with partners to provide the following IPAC services and supports:

- ◆ Development of education and training programs and materials
- ◆ Supportive visits and consultations
- ◆ Assistance with IPAC self-assessments
- ◆ Coaching/mentoring on IPAC practices
- ◆ Outbreak management planning
- ◆ Communities of Practice (CoP)
- ◆ Best practice recommendations and implementation support

### UPCOMING WEBINARS

#### Voices of Care: Insights from LTCH Support Workers' Survey Results

Date: Tuesday, January 14, 2025

Time: 1300 ET Duration: 1 hour

To Register: [https://www.surveymonkey.ca/r/webinar\\_VoicesOfCare](https://www.surveymonkey.ca/r/webinar_VoicesOfCare)

#### CIDC Webinar: Empowering Adults: Bolstering the Shield Against Pneumococcal Disease (more information to follow)

Date: Thursday, January 23, 2025

Time: 12-1pm

#### IPAC SWO Chapter Meeting & Education Webinar (registration not required and no cost to attend)

Date: Thursday, February 6, 2025

Time: Chapter Meeting 10 - 11 am; Education Webinar 11am - 12 pm

Webinar Topic: Ministry of Labour

Login: <https://us06web.zoom.us/j/89122989593?pwd=FVYjRI3b7z6FlDvfRaibXQsvbJ8xHE.1>

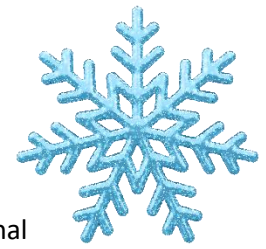
#### Encore: Infection Prevention and Control Surveillance Workshop for Long Term Care (New Webinar Workshop for Members and non-members)

Date: Tuesday, February 25, 2025 (12:00pm Eastern) Duration: 3 Hours.

Please find further information and the link to pre-register by Zoom [HERE](#).

# Organizational Risk Assessments

Healthcare facilities and other congregate living settings can be at increased risk for infectious diseases and outbreaks due to communal living and underlying health conditions of clients and residents. The risk of infections in these settings depends on several factors such as the population served, the level of care, geographical location and layout of the facility.



An organizational risk assessment (ORA) is a systematic approach to determine internal and external infectious diseases risks, identify gaps in infection control practices and implement measures that can effectively reduce the risks of infection transmission in a facility.

Employers should involve various internal and external partners when conducting an organizational risk assessment and it should be completed annually, when there are changes to services or with new emerging threats.

An organizational risk assessment includes five steps:



**Step 1:** Identify risk by determining how infections can be transmitted in your facility and by observing the environment, facility infrastructure, population served, equipment used, activities conducted, and staff practices.

**Step 2:** Analyze how the contributing factors and existing control affect each identified risk in an area. Contributing factors that may increase infection risks include high community transmission, low immunization rates and/or high staff turnover etc.

**Step 3:** Assess the level of risk, the likelihood of each risk occurring and its severity and potential impact to clients, residents and staff.

**Step 4:** Manage risk by reviewing current guidance, IPAC Standards and best practices to determine the most appropriate control measures for mitigating all potential risks. Prioritize high level risk first; control measures need to be achievable and may need customization based on setting.

**Step 5:** Implement new control measures and this may require multi-modal strategies such as adding policy and resources to support IPAC practices, staff training, and regular monitoring. Other measures may include making changes to workflow and physical environment. Ensure these measures are regularly monitored and evaluated to meet its goals and objectives.



Having an organizational risk assessment and a robust infection prevention and control plan will help improve resources allocation, emergency readiness, and compliance with regulatory requirements and standards. In addition, proactive risk mitigation will help prevent transmission of infections and protects the health and safety of your clients, residents and staff.

## UPCOMING COPs

Huron Perth Public Health

LTCH/RH- January 8, February 7, March 12; CLS- February 7, March 7

Southwestern Public Health & Middlesex-London Health Unit

LTCH/RH- January 29, February 25 1-2 p.m.; CLS-February 20, 11-12 p.m.

# Spread Cheer this Holiday Season, Not Germs

## Protect Your Loved Ones from Infections this Holiday Season

Whether you are a relative, a friend, a volunteer, a staff member or a resident...we all play an important role in infection prevention and control. To keep yourself and your loved ones healthy this Holiday Season, follow these simple steps.

- Clean your hands often. Hand hygiene is the #1 way to prevent infections.
- Cover your cough and sneezes and throw out used tissues into garbage. Respiratory droplets can travel 6ft away.
- Clean and disinfect items, objects and surfaces frequently. Germs can survive on surfaces for long period of time!
- Stay home when you are sick. You are not only giving yourself time to heal, you are also protecting others.
- Stay up to date with all your immunizations. This continues to be the best way for people to stay safe and healthy this respiratory virus season.

## Give the Gift of Health

Vaccines help all of us stay healthy, adults, children and babies alike. The protection offered by some vaccines only last for a certain amount of time, so it is important to talk to your health care provider about booster doses you need as an adult to keep yourself and those around you safe. Most vaccines for adults are publicly funded, but some may need to be purchased (or may be covered by private drug plan).

For more information about vaccines, please refer to [SW IPAC Hub newsletter](#) from October 2024.

**Wishing you a wonderful holiday season from all of us at  
South West IPAC Hub.**

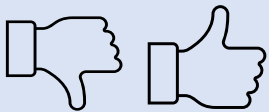
## References

Public Health Ontario- [Infection Prevention and Control Organizational Risk Assessment for Clinical Office Practice](#) July 2024

Public Health Ontario – [Organization Risk Assessment for Clinical Offices](#) July 2024

Public Health Ontario- [Don't Know Where to Start? Try an Organizational Risk Assessment!](#) Oct 2024

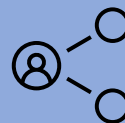
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Do you have a  
service request?



Do you have an IPAC  
story to share?



Do you have general  
feedback or  
suggestions?



Contact your local IPAC hub: [Huron Perth Public Health](#), [Middlesex London Health Unit](#)  
or [Southwestern Public Health](#)