

### Staff Huddle: Why staying home matters - Week #1

- Staying home when sick protects patients, residents, coworkers and yourself.

#### **Talking Points:**

- Healthcare workers (HCWs) have close, frequent contact with patients/residents who are often elderly, immunocompromised, or already ill.
- Presenteeism = coming to work while sick. This increases the risk of spreading infection.
- Even healthy HCWs can become infected and spread germs to others.

#### **Examples of Reportable Symptoms/Illnesses:**

- Respiratory symptoms with or without fever
- Vomiting or diarrhea
- Conjunctivitis (pink eye)
- Weeping or draining skin lesions
- Influenza, COVID-19, or shingles that cannot be covered

#### **Huddle Question:**

- How does coming to work sick put our patients/residents at risk?
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### Staff Huddle: Recognize when to stay home- Week #2

- Know the signs and follow your facility's employee health policy.

#### **Talking Points:**

- Work restrictions apply to HCWs with infectious conditions.
- Symptoms should be reported promptly to employee/occupational health.
- HCWs should not fear punishment for reporting illness.

#### **When to Stay Home:**

- Fever (stay out until fever-free for at least 24 hours without fever-reducing medication)
- Active vomiting or diarrhea
- New or worsening respiratory symptoms
- Any illness identified by employee health as requiring exclusion

#### **Huddle Question:**

- Who should you contact at this facility if you are unsure whether you should work while sick
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### Staff Huddle: Protecting yourself and others at Work- Week #3

- Everyday actions reduce the spread of germs.

**Actions HCWs Can Take:**

Clean hands often:

- After removing gloves
- Between patient/resident contact
- After contact with blood or body fluids
- Use facility-approved moisturizers to prevent cracked skin and contact dermatitis.
- Wear appropriate PPE (gloves, gown, mask, eye protection) when indicated.
- Cover coughs and sneezes; dispose of tissues properly.
- Avoid touching eyes, nose, and mouth.

**Huddle Question:**

- Why is healthy skin an important part of infection prevention?

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**Staff Huddle: Building a culture that supports staying home ?- Week #4**

- Infection prevention is a shared responsibility.

**Talking Points:**

- Leadership and staff should support sick leave policies that do not penalize employees.
- Encouraging staff to stay home when sick helps prevent outbreaks.
- Clean and disinfect shared equipment and high-touch surfaces regularly.
- Do not share phones, desks, or equipment unless cleaned and disinfected first.

**Huddle Question:**

- What can we do as a team to support coworkers who need to stay home when sick?

