Derbyshire County Council - Adult Social Care & Health Shared Lives Infection Prevention and Control Policy Version 1

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This guidance will be reviewed on a regular basis – if you would like to make any comments, amendments, additions etc. please email: asch.adultcare.policy@derbyshire.gov.uk

1. Policy Statement

Shared Lives Derbyshire is committed to protecting the health, safety and wellbeing of Shared Lives Carers, individuals using the service, family members, visitors and staff by minimising the risk of infection.

This policy outlines the measures required to prevent, identify, report and manage infection risks within Shared Lives households and during community-based support. All Shared Lives Carers are expected to always follow good infection prevention and control practices.

IPC Lead

The Shared Lives Derbyshire registered manager holds the accountability for IPC within the management team.

2. Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to:

- Prevent the spread of infection
- Protect individuals receiving support from avoidable harm
- Promote safe and hygienic care practices
- Ensure compliance with relevant legislation and guidance
- Provide carers with clear procedures for managing infection risks

3. Policy application

This policy applies to:

- Approved Shared Lives Carers including respite, long term or day support
- Support and joint Carers
- Shared Lives Derbyshire staff team
- People using Shared Lives services
- Members of the household involved in supporting people

4. Relevant Legislation and Guidance

This policy is informed by:

- Health and Social Care Act 2008 (Regulated Activities) Regulations 2014
- Health and Social Care Act 2008: Code of Practice on the Prevention and Control of Infections
- Health and Safety at Work etc. Act 1974
- Care Act 2014
- Public Health England/UK Health Security Agency guidance
- Control of Substances Hazardous to Health Regulations (COSHH) 2002
- Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations 1999
- NICE Infection Prevention and Control Guidance

- Food Safety Act 1990

5. Definitions

Infection Prevention and Control (IPC)
Measures designed to prevent and reduce the spread of infections.

Standard Infection Control Precautions (SICPs)
Basic infection prevention measures applied to all individuals regardless of infection status.

Personal Protective Equipment (PPE)
Protective clothing or equipment worn to reduce exposure to infection risks.

6. Roles and Responsibilities

Shared Lives Derbyshire will:

- Be clear on IPC and home safety during carer onboarding process
- Provide guidance in addition to this policy as required
- Ensure carers have access to up-to-date training and monitor compliance
- Provide relevant and clear information advice and recommendations
- Ensure that when a person uses respite or moves arrangements, their medical/infection status is safely logged and communicated between carers or external services
- Provide support during outbreaks or significant incidents. An outbreak is defined as two or more people, including service users, carers or visitors, testing positive for or displaying symptoms of the same illness within a specified timeframe
- Provide specific PPE – Personal Protective equipment where identified as necessary to reduce risk
- monitor compliance through visits, reviews, incidents and complaints
- Review incidents and lessons learned

IPC Risk Assessment

Shared Lives Derbyshire will ensure that infection risks are identified, assessed and reviewed where:

- a person has a known infectious condition
- a person has increased vulnerability to infection
- specialist healthcare procedures are undertaken
- an outbreak occurs
- support arrangements change
- Relevant infection risks will be communicated when:
    - someone moves into a Shared Lives placement
    - respite arrangements are used
    - hospital discharge occurs

- external support providers are involved

Shared Lives Carers

Carers must:

- Follow this policy and any related procedures
- Maintain a high standard of personal hygiene
- Attend mandatory training and use information provided to inform good practice
- Report infections, outbreaks or concerns promptly to Shared Lives Derbyshire and health professionals
- Use PPE where appropriate
- Support individuals to maintain good hygiene
- Inform Shared Lives Derbyshire when PPE supplies are running low, particularly where PPE is required for an extended period. Seek advice from the Shared Lives team if unsure about the correct use of PPE

Individuals Using Services

Where able, individuals must be encouraged and supported to:

- Wash hands regularly
- Follow medical advice
- Report illness symptoms
- Maintain personal hygiene standards

7. Standard Infection Control Precautions

The following precautions must be adhered to at all times.

Hand Hygiene

Hand hygiene is the single most effective method of preventing infection.

Hands must be washed:

- Before preparing food
- Between handling raw and cooked foods such as meat
- Before and after providing personal care
- After using the toilet
- After handling waste
- After contact with bodily fluids
- After removing gloves
- Before administering medication
- After touching animals

Effective Handwashing

Advice on effective handwashing can be provided by Shared Lives Derbyshire and will be covered in training. Shared Lives Derbyshire promotes a personalised family-based community environment and does not wish people to transform their homes into clinical settings. However, standard hygiene procedures regarding hand washing are simple to implement and will combat infection, therefore limiting the need for escalation in ICP processes. **Effective handwashing should follow these steps:**

1. Wet hands with warm water.
2. Apply liquid soap. Use of blocks of soap is not recommended as it does not meet IPC standards because they can harbour bacteria, germs and infection.
3. Rub all surfaces of the hands for at least 20 seconds. This includes palms, in between fingers and thumbs, wrists and the back of hands.
4. Rinse thoroughly.
5. Dry with a clean towel or disposable paper towel.

Alcohol hand sanitiser may be used when hands are visibly clean. **This does not replace handwashing where contamination is visible.** How to wash your hands - NHS

8. Personal Protective Equipment (PPE)

PPE must be used based on risk assessment, but should always be used in the following situations:

Gloves

- Supporting people with any personal care
- Contact with blood or bodily fluids is anticipated
- Handling waste or soiled items

Disposable Aprons

- Undertaking personal care
- Cleaning any contamination
- Handling soiled laundry

Face Masks and Eye Protection

Use when there is a risk of:

- Respiratory infection transmission
- Splashes from bodily fluids

PPE must:

- Be used once only
- Be disposed of safely after use
- Never replace good hand hygiene

9. Respiratory Hygiene

Carers and individuals should:

- Cover the nose and mouth when coughing or sneezing
- Use single use disposable tissues
- Dispose of tissues immediately following coughing, sneezing or catching any secretions
- Wash hands after coughing, sneezing or blowing the nose
- Increase ventilation by opening windows where appropriate as good practice, but more so when there are signs of infection

10. Cleaning and Environmental Hygiene

Shared Lives households should be maintained in a clean and hygienic condition. Particular attention should be paid to:

- Bathrooms
- Toilets
- Kitchens
- Frequently touched surfaces including objects such as a television control
- Door handles
- Handrails
- Light switches
- Any high traffic/high use areas

Cleaning products should be used in accordance with manufacturer instructions and COSHH requirements.

11. Laundry Management

Laundry contaminated with blood, faeces, urine, vomit or other bodily fluids should:

- Be handled with minimal agitation
- Be placed directly into a suitable laundry bag
- Be washed separately where necessary
- Be washed at the highest temperature suitable for the fabric

Gloves must be worn if handling contaminated laundry or clothing and hands must be washed after handling.

12. Food Hygiene

Carers must:

- Follow food hygiene principles contained in the food hygiene and safety policy
- Check expiry dates
- Keep raw and cooked foods separate

- Store food at correct temperatures
- Wash hands before food preparation and during if switching between raw and cooked foods
- Avoid preparing food if experiencing diarrhoea or vomiting

Any suspected food poisoning must be reported immediately to the Shared Lives Scheme.

13. Waste Disposal

Household waste should be managed safely.

Contaminated waste should:

- Be bagged securely
- Be disposed of according to local authority guidance
- Not be allowed to accumulate

Sharps, where used, must be disposed of in approved sharps containers.

Sharps containers must:

- Never be overfilled
- Be stored safely
- Be collected by authorised disposal services. The persons GP, clinic, pharmacist or other health professionals should be able to advise
- If you or someone you care for is injured by a needle or other item classed as ‘sharps’, please inform Shared Lives Derbyshire immediately who will advise, also information on what to do can be found on the Health and Safety Executive website

14. Managing Infectious Illness

Individuals Using Services

Where an individual develops symptoms of infection, carers should:

1. Monitor symptoms
2. Encourage rest and hydration
3. Follow healthcare advice
4. Contact health professionals where required
5. Carry out additional cleaning of frequently touched areas to prevent spread
6. Inform the Shared Lives Scheme if support arrangements may be affected or for advice/support

Individuals displaying symptoms of an infection should minimise close contact with others wherever possible. If the individual also receives support outside the Shared Lives home, such as at a day support service, movement between services should be paused. This should be for five days for a respiratory infection, or for 48 hours after symptoms of a communicable infection, such as diarrhoea and vomiting, have stopped. The Shared Lives

team can provide advice, particularly where this may affect a Carer's other commitments and responsibilities.

Shared Lives Carers

Carers should not provide support if they experience the following themselves:

- Have vomiting or diarrhoea until symptom-free for at least 48 hours
- Have a contagious infection or disease that may pose a risk to others
- Have been advised by a healthcare professional not to work

The Shared Lives Scheme must be informed as soon as possible.

15. Blood and Body Fluid Spillages

Any spillages must be treated immediately.

Procedure

1. Wear appropriate PPE.
2. Restrict access to the area.
3. Absorb excess fluid using disposable materials.
4. Clean using approved disinfectant products.
5. Dispose of waste safely.
6. Wash hands thoroughly after completion.

16. Vaccinations

Shared Lives Carers are encouraged to maintain recommended vaccinations, including:

- Seasonal influenza vaccine
- COVID-19 vaccinations in line with national guidance which can be found on the Government website
- Other vaccinations as advised by healthcare professionals

Vaccination information will be treated confidentially by Shared Lives. Shared Lives Carers are expected to advocate for and support people to receive protective vaccinations as advised by their GP surgery or other medical professionals taking account of individuals' rights to choice and control.

17. Animals and Pets

Where pets are present in the household:

- Animals must be healthy and appropriately cared for
- Food preparation areas must be protected from contamination, and animals or pets should not be kept close to food preparation areas
- Hands must be washed after handling or feeding animals
- Animal waste must be disposed of safely
- Animals, especially dogs and cats must receive regular worming and flea

treatments in order to protect the whole household

18. Reporting and Recording

The following must be reported to the Shared Lives Scheme:

- Significant infections
- Suspected outbreaks
- Hospital admissions relating to infection
- Exposure to infectious diseases
- Any incident affecting health and safety

Records should include:

- Date and time
- Symptoms observed
- Actions taken
- Advice received
- Outcome

Shared Lives Derbyshire will:

- Log, monitor and support
- Ensure appropriate advice from Health Protection Team is sought and followed if required
- Notify CQC if required

19. Training

Shared Lives Carers must receive training and updates covering:

- Infection prevention and control
- Food hygiene (new training coming soon)

Training records will be maintained by the Shared Lives Scheme.

20. Monitoring and Review

The Shared Lives Scheme will monitor compliance through:

- Carer reviews
- support visits
- Supervision
- Incident reviews
- Quality assurance processes

This policy will be reviewed at least every two years or sooner if legislation, guidance or service needs change.

Change History

Version 1	October 2026	Quality and Compliance	New policy