

Care Home Infection Prevention and Control

IPC Standards Checklist

Version **1.0**
Date **September 2026**

Version history

Version	Date	Summary of changes
1.0	September 2026	Newly published document

Approvals

Version	Date Approved	Group/Individual
1.0	September 2026	Abigail Mullings, Nurse Consultant, Clinical Lead / CHIPC OAG

Contents

Introduction	4
How to use the Care Home IPC Standards Checklist.....	5
Standard 1: Leadership and Governance	6
Standard 2: Education and training.....	7
Standard 3: Communication.....	8
Standard 4: Assurance and monitoring systems	9
Standard 5: Optimising antimicrobial use	10
Standard 6: IPC policies, procedures, and guidance.....	11
Standard 7: Equipment is maintained, clean and safe.....	12
Standard 8: The built environment	13
Standard 9: Acquisition and provision of equipment	14
Care Home IPC Standards Checklist Action Plan Template	15
Tips for action planning.....	16
References	17

Introduction

Welcome to the Care Home Infection Prevention and Control (IPC) Standards Checklist which has been developed by Antimicrobial Resistance Healthcare Associated Infection (ARHAI) Scotland.

Infection Prevention and Control (IPC) is a practical evidence-based approach which aims to promote safety and reduce harm from infection. The Care Home IPC Standards Checklist (referred to as ‘the checklist’ herein) is an entirely voluntary resource, developed to support care home staff in Scotland assess, monitor, and support improvements for local IPC practice and processes.

All care home staff have an important role to play in preventing the spread of infection by recognising that IPC is everybody’s responsibility. Therefore, it is a Scottish Government expectation that care homes in Scotland adopt and implement both the [Healthcare Improvement Scotland IPC Standards](#) (HIS IPC standards) and the ARHAI Scotland [Care Home Infection Prevention and Control Manual \(CH IPCM\)](#)

The [HIS IPC Standards](#) have been developed for use across health and adult social care, including care homes. These standards support care homes to quality assure IPC processes and practice and the principles set out in the CH IPCM. The Care Inspectorate take these standards into consideration during all relevant scrutiny and regulatory activities across care homes.

The checklist has been developed with the aim of enabling care home staff to identify local IPC compliance in addition to highlighting IPC gaps requiring improvement, and to provide local assurance that they fulfil the [Health and Social Care Standards: My support, my life](#) in relation to IPC.

How to use the Care Home IPC Standards Checklist

- The checklist is an entirely voluntary resource which can be adapted to meet local requirements.
- The checklist contains each of the nine HIS IPC standards with practice examples and evidence suggestions. All content should be viewed by staff as the minimum requirement as content is not exhaustive.
- Frequency for use of the checklist and supporting governance process should be determined locally.
- The checklist may be used:
 - intermittently or as one-off spot check or for an organisational review or peer-review
 - as a standalone compliance assessment before and/or after external inspections
 - as a support tool to enhance existing arrangements within the governance and risk management processes for IPC

Standard 1: Leadership and Governance

There are effective IPC leadership and governance systems in place.

Practical examples may include:

- an appropriate management structure and/or system that sets out clear accountability and responsibility for IPC within the care home
- an IPC assurance and accountability framework
- processes to demonstrate effective management of outbreaks
- governance processes for learning from adverse events, inspections, incident, and outbreaks to support good practice and continuous quality improvement in IPC
- executive reports, meeting agendas, minutes of meetings, action plans, and risk assessments for IPC within the associated governance arrangements

Standard 2: Education and training

Staff are being supported to undertake IPC education and training, appropriate for their job role and its associated responsibilities for the minimisation of infection risks.

Practical examples may include:

- staff induction packages detailing role specific IPC training requirements
- individual records of staff attendance at IPC training events or webinars; including records of training for those who have designated IPC roles
- governance for staff IPC training requirements; including learning records for the [Scottish Infection Prevention and Control Education Pathway \(SIPCEP\)](#)
- evaluation, and feedback processes utilised for IPC education and training

Standard 3: Communication

There are robust communication systems and processes to enable effective application of high-quality IPC, information sharing and the continuity of care and support for the staff and residents.

Practical examples may include:

- evidence of [Health and Social Care Standards](#) being applied in relation to IPC and decisions being made with residents and next of kin involvement (where appropriate)
- communication plans detailing when and where to access NHS Board IPCT or HPT (dependant on local processes) IPC support and advice
- how staff access local pharmacy support and the NHS boards Antimicrobial Management Team
- IPC enquiries and responses provided between the care home, local NHS Board IPCT or HPT (depending on local processes)
- internal escalation processes for IPC related issues or any incidents that have been associated with the built environment within the care home
- accessible electronic or written formats of IPC information sheets/leaflets for residents who are colonised or infected with multi-drug-resistant organisms such as MRSA or CPE
- IPC triage and multi-agency information sharing processes, regarding residents admitted or transferred by the care home
- how the care home informs the Care Inspectorate following a notifiable disease notification

Standard 4: Assurance and monitoring systems

Co-ordinated, robust quality assurance and monitoring systems are in place to assesses the application of IPC practices, to minimise and manage associated HAI risks.

Practical examples may include:

- evidence of current IPC audits for example, safe and clean care audits, SICPs audits, environmental audits, audits of invasive devices
- the local reporting, sharing, and escalation of IPC audit data
- local improvement action plans for IPC audit, observational activities, monitoring activities, and resident feedback
- IPC related improvement plans for notifications provided by the Care Inspectorate following inspection

Standard 5: Optimising antimicrobial use

The care home can demonstrate reliable systems and processes are in place that support the optimal use of antimicrobials and promote antimicrobial stewardship.

Practical examples may include:

- details of access to antimicrobial expertise through the local NHS board ensuring optimal antimicrobial use for those receiving care
- local antimicrobial policies and guidelines being accessible to staff
- Scottish antimicrobial prescribing guidance being accessible to staff
- antimicrobial prescribing reviews and resistance data
- education and training on antimicrobial stewardship for all staff who prescribe, supply, or administer medication

Standard 6: IPC policies, procedures, and guidance

The care home has IPC policies, procedures, and guidance that are evidence based.

Practical examples (which are accessible and have been implemented) include:

- evidence of implementation of the CH IPCM and associated support resources
- local outbreak response plans, environmental and equipment cleaning schedules
- Care Inspectorate inspection reports and IPC related improvement plans
- evidence of implementation of care home winter preparedness and outbreak response plans
- evidence of implementation of support tools for the treatment and management for CAUTI, UTI
- adoption of annual guidance regarding the use of antivirals for the treatment and prophylaxis of seasonal influenza
- adoption of seasonal implementation plans for immunisation programmes including COVID-19, RSV, and influenza

Standard 7: Equipment is maintained, clean and safe

The care home ensures care equipment is in a good state of repair, clean, cleanable, and well maintained

Practical examples may include:

- evidence that the care home has implemented national guidance for cleaning and decontamination, in accordance with the CH IPCM
- evidence of current cleaning and decontamination systems and processes in place
- evidence that reusable care equipment is being stored clean, and is safe for onward use
- signed and completed records and schedules for cleaning and maintenance of care equipment
- describe or demonstrate that all care equipment is subject to assurance and monitoring systems
- details of risk assessments, safety action notices, adverse events, and lessons learned that have involved care equipment
- evidence of associated care equipment improvement plans for notifications which are associated with quality indicators for the Care Inspectorate

Standard 8: The built environment

The care home ensures infection risks that may be associated with the healthcare-built environment (buildings and systems) are being minimised.

Practical examples may include:

- evidence of compliance with the [National Cleaning Services Specification for Care Homes](#)
- that the care home environment, including surfaces, fixtures and fittings are being well maintained and are clean
- evidence of planned preventative maintenance schedules and monitoring processes for the care homes fixtures, fittings, water, drainage, and ventilation systems
- evidence of signed and completed records and schedules for repairs, cleaning and maintenance activities
- demonstrate the process for reporting issues with fixtures, fittings, water, drainage, or ventilation systems
- the care home water safety plans, including legionella risk assessment
- the process for agreeing and enacting control measures that will minimise the risk of HAI during planned or emergency repair or maintenance works
- risk assessments, safety action notices, adverse events, and lessons learned that have involved the care home environment
- associated improvement plans for notifications which are associated with quality indicators for the Care Inspectorate

Standard 9: Acquisition and provision of equipment

The care home can demonstrate that it acquires and provides equipment that is safe for use in the care home setting.

Practical examples may include:

- evidence of policy, guidance of processes followed for the acquisition of procured, donated, and loaned equipment
- assurances that equipment being procured, donated, or loaned is compliant with IPC requirements, the CHIPCM and the national cleaning specification
- documented risk assessments, safety action notices, adverse events, and lessons learned that have involved equipment
- associated improvement plans from notifications associated with quality indicators for the Care Inspectorate

Care Home IPC Standards Checklist Action Plan Template

Care Provider Name	
Care Home Name	
NHS Board Region	
Reason for completion	
Assessor Name/Role	
Date of 1 st Audit	
Completion Date of Action Plan	

Standard	Action Details	Action Owner	Review Frequency e.g. Daily Weekly Monthly Quarterly	Progress Status e.g. Not started Active Pending Complete	Date
To add additional rows tab beyond end cell					

Tips for action planning

- Save each updated version of the action plan separately for transparency, and an ability to look back.
- Clearly state what each associated action intends or aims to achieve.
- Clearly state who owns each action and your intended review date or frequency.
- Provide an up-to-date progress status.
- Clearly state how the care home intends to measure and evidence the effectiveness of each action and at what forum.
- List any risks or barriers that could affect progression, including those which are operational, strategic, or technical.
- Identify any other support or expertise required.
- Communicate findings, recommendations, and progress updates to colleagues.
- Further information regarding quality improvement is available from the care inspectorate within the [QI hub](#).

References

Care Inspectorate. (2022) [A quality framework for care homes for adults and older people: For use in audit, scrutiny, and improvement support.](#)

Care Inspectorate. (2024) [QI hub](#)

Healthcare Improvement Scotland. (2022) [Infection Prevention and Control Standards: For Health and Social care settings.](#)

NHSScotland National Services Scotland (2023) [National Cleaning Specification for Care Homes](#)

NHSScotland National Services Scotland (2024) [The Care Home Infection Prevention and Control Manual](#)

Scottish Government (2022) [Health and Social Care Standards: My Support, my life](#)

Public Services Delivery Scotland

PSD Scotland
Gyle Square
1 South Gyle Crescent
Edinburgh
EH12 9EB
Tel: 0131 275 6000
www.publicservicesdelivery.scot

©PSD Scotland 2026. You can copy or reproduce the information in this resource for use within NHS Scotland and for non-commercial educational purposes under creative commons CC BY-NC 4.0 Deed | Attribution-Non Commercial 4.0 International | Creative Commons. Use of this document for commercial purposes is permitted only with the written permission of PSD Scotland.