

Respiratory Symptom Screening Questions: Aide for Health and Social Care Settings

The process of respiratory symptom assessment will vary dependent on both the health and social care facility and the type of service provision but wherever possible, the respiratory symptom assessment questions should be completed digitally or by telephone before the arranged arrival at the facility for all service users and any accompanying carers. If this is not possible, then these questions should be asked on arrival.

These questions will help inform the clinical or care team of the service user respiratory status and potential associated risk before face-to-face care delivery. For those receiving care and support in their own home, the service user should be reminded to let staff know in advance of any visit if they have any symptoms.

If the respiratory symptom assessment is completed before arrival at the health and social care facility, and if the service user answers 'no' to all the respiratory symptom assessment questions, the service user should be reminded to tell a staff member if any symptoms develop before they attend the facility.

The questions below help to inform the clinical or care team of the service users' respiratory status and potential associated infection prevention and control (IPC risk). These are examples that can be used to guide clinical management.

General respiratory screening questions

Do you have any of the following symptoms?

- high temperature or fever
- new, continuous cough
- a loss or alteration to taste or smell
- any other symptoms of a respiratory virus
- any positive tests for respiratory infection within the last seven days

Are you known to have, or do you suspect you might currently have chickenpox, measles or pulmonary tuberculosis?

If the individual answers **yes** to any of the above respiratory screening questions, **and** the admission or appointment cannot be delayed (considered urgent) a local risk assessment should be undertaken to assess the infection risk to others and any control measures required to allow the admission or appointment to proceed.

In doing so, the clinical or care team should:

- Proceed with [Transmission Based Precautions \(TBPs\)](#). Chicken pox, Measles and pulmonary Tuberculosis are R2 respiratory infectious agents. Health and care workers providing care to individuals with R2 infectious agents are required to don RPE. See [Appendix 15 – Mask selection for respiratory infectious agents R1, R2 and R3](#).
- Obtain appropriate diagnostic laboratory samples for suspected respiratory infections. This may depend on the health and care setting.

If the individual answers '**no**' to all of the respiratory screening questions, [Standard Infection Control Precautions \(SICPs\)](#) are adequate provided there are no other symptoms of infection and no other known or suspected pathogens requiring application of Transmission Based Precautions (TBPs). See Chapter 2 of the NIPCM, [Patient placement/Assessment for transmission risk](#).