

# Acute respiratory viral illness surveillance possible in long-term care

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(HealthDay)—Active acute respiratory illness surveillance can be

implemented among patients and staff in an adult long-term care facility, according to a study published online Sept. 25 in *Infection Control & Hospital Epidemiology*.

Caroline A. O'Neil, M.P.H., from the Washington University School of Medicine in St. Louis, and colleagues conducted active surveillance of acute respiratory viral infections among 105 residents (stays of at least seven days) and 76 [health care personnel](#) at a long-term care facility during the 2015 to 2016 winter respiratory illness season.

The researchers found that 12 percent of patients and 32 percent of [health](#) care personnel reported any respiratory symptoms during the surveillance period. Eight patients and 11 health care personnel had a positive specimen collected during the study. There were fewer infections than expected, which may be attributable to the facility's vaccination policy and a mild respiratory virus season in St. Louis. The vast majority (89 percent) of health care personnel who reported an illness said they worked when they were sick despite the facility's policy against working while ill. None of the patients with acute respiratory viral infections reported contact with a sick visitor during the previous five days, but just under half of health care personnel with acute respiratory viral infections reported a sick household member prior to illness (44 percent).

"Although there was no evidence for acute respiratory viral [infection](#) transmission among study participants, the greater incidence of illnesses among health care [personnel](#) suggests that paradigms of patient-centered infection prevention programs should expand to include all persons living and working in a long-term care facility," the authors write.

**More information:** [Abstract/Full Text \(subscription or payment may be required\)](#)

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