



# West Windsor Township Health Department: Project Firstline



## Background

Caring for and protecting patients is the priority in healthcare. This includes shielding patients from infections that can lead to dangerous health outcomes. When a healthcare worker understands and applies infection control methods consistently – *with every person, every action, every day* – lives can be saved. With a foundational knowledge of pathogen spread and a recognition of why infection control is important, healthcare workers can recognize infection risks and make the right choices to prevent illness in at-risk populations.

## What is Project Firstline?

CDC's Project Firstline (PFL), developed in 2021, provides free, innovative, and accessible training resources for healthcare workers. Trainings focus on infection control and cover topics on where pathogens are found, how they spread, and preventing transmission. PFL lessons and materials are created *by* healthcare workers, *for* healthcare workers. The resources are tailored for the diverse healthcare workforce, including translations into multiple languages.

The program is designed to empower healthcare workers to think critically about infection control using adult learning principles, educational best practices, CDC recommendations, and the science that informs them.

## How?

PFL educational sessions are offered by West Windsor Township nurses to staff members at the four Assisted Living facilities located in West Windsor and Robbinsville: Fox Trail, Artis, Rose Hill, and Bear Creek. These facilities are home to at-risk, older individuals, making it imperative to prevent infection before it causes dangerous health problems.

PFL courses are brief, bite-size 20 minute segments designed to accommodate the limited time staff have available (away from patient care tasks) for training. Staff are able see demonstrations, ask questions, and engage with the nurses to make the most of their learning.

## What's next?

Recognizing the benefits PFL offers healthcare facilities in our community, the Health Department adapted the program to childcare sites. Young children are another at-risk population susceptible to infectious diseases. Educating staff on infection control principles helps to prevent illness, shorten outbreaks, and reduce the impacts to families.

Status: 158 staff trained; 14 sessions at 14 separate facilities and counting...

Topics: cleaning versus disinfection; norovirus; PPE; hand hygiene; rashes; cough/congestion

## Who?

In February 2023, West Windsor public health nurses Ann and Karen implemented PFL education for long-term care facilities in West Windsor and Robbinsville. Karen was a pediatric and certified school nurse for 32 years prior to joining West Windsor's team. Ann has an extensive background in behavioral health, infection control, long term care, and nursing education.

# 167 =

The number of staff members who attended trainings



## What?

February 2023 through March 2024

Topics:

- Hand hygiene;
- Personal protective equipment;
- Environmental cleaning versus disinfection;
- COVID-19 spread from surfaces to people;
- Asymptomatic spread of COVID-19 and norovirus;
- Micro-sessions on managing draining wounds, rashes, and cough/congestion

