CARE PATH Symptoms of Lower Respiratory Infection

Symptoms or Lower Respiratory Infection Noted*
- New or worsened cough
- New or increased sputum production
- New or worsening shortness of breath
- Chest pain with inspiration or coughing
- New or increased findings on lung exam (rales, wheezes)

Take Vital Signs
- Temperature
- BP, pulse, apical HR (if pulse irregular)
- Respirations
- Oxygen saturation
- Finger stick glucose (diabetics)

Vital Sign Criteria (any met?)
- Temp > 100.5°F
- Apical heart rate > 100 or < 50
- Respiratory rate > 28/min or < 10/min
- BP < 90 or > 200 systolic
- Oxygen saturation < 90%
- Finger stick glucose < 70 or > 300
- Resident unable to eat or drink

NO
YES

Evaluate Symptoms and Signs for Immediate Notification**
- Examine resident for cough with or without sputum production
- Abnormal lung sounds
- Edema
- Change in mental status

Notify MD / NP / PA

NO
YES

Consider Contacting MD/NP/PA for orders (for further Nursing evaluation and management)
- Portable chest X-ray
- Blood work (Complete Blood Count, Basic Metabolic Panel)

Tests Ordered

NO
YES

Monitor Response
- Vital signs criteria met
- Worsening condition and/or immediate notification criteria met

Evaluate Results
- Critical values in blood count or metabolic panel
- WBC > 14,000 or neutrophils > 90%
- Infiltrate or pneumonia on chest X-ray

Manage in Facility
- Monitor vital signs every 4-8 hrs
- Oral, IV or subcutaneous fluids if needed for hydration
- Oxygen supplementation as indicated
- Nebulizer treatments and/or cough suppressants as indicated
- Consider antibiotic therapy (check allergies)
- Update advance care plan and directives if appropriate

* Refer also to the INTERACT Shortness of Breath Care Path
** Refer also to other INTERACT Care Paths as indicated by symptoms and signs