

Adding the Patient's Perspective to Hand Cleaning Compliance

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Purpose: The aim of this project is to improve hand cleaning compliance rates of HCPs by adding the patient's perspective to the multi-modal hand cleaning practices. Patients' views and opinions are usually not included in these initiatives but could help to reduce HAIs by adding another layer of monitoring.

Relevance/Significance: The gold standard to prevention and control of infections especially in the health care setting is hand cleaning. Hand cleaning before and after patient care is associated with improved patient outcomes, decreases in length of stay, and lower treatment costs to the patients and hospitals. A strategic goal of most hospitals is the reduction or elimination of HAIs.

Strategy and Implementation: A 5-question survey was completed by 50 patients on various units to help determine comfort levels in giving HCPs reminders. The program was piloted on 1 unit for 1 month prior to adoption in other hospital areas. Instruction methods for staff utilized short PowerPoint presentations, educational videos for patients, and signage attached to the Whiteboards to remind everyone it is OK to ask your caregivers to hand clean. Nurses utilized the teach back method with their patients to help with the program's success. Hospital educators assisted with the training and implementation. Good collaboration is needed from all areas for the program to become an accepted part of our practice. An infection prevention learning management system module that includes the initiative will provide an additional educational opportunity. A media campaign with television banners, brochures, and other media items will be available to hospital guests, patients, and family members.

Evaluation/Outcomes: Base-line data comprised of hand cleaning audits from July 2018-November 2018 revealed an average compliance rate of only 73%. The results show how poorly the compliance for hand cleaning was prior to the beginning of the evidence-based project. The pilot unit's audit data from December 2018-February 2019 revealed a significant increase in the hand cleaning compliance rates to an average of 91%.

Implications for Practice: When patients take a more active role in their care plans, health awareness improves, medical errors and length of stay can decrease resulting in costs reductions for all. A culture change is needed to make patient involvement a reality that is valued, supported, and hardwired into our practice.

Keywords: hand hygiene, hand cleaning, hand washing, hospital-acquired infections, patient's perspective

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