



ACIPC

Australasian College
for Infection Prevention and Control

ACIPC Position Statement Mandatory hand hygiene training

ACIPC guidelines for mandatory hand hygiene training

Executive Summary

This position statement provides direction for the mandatory training of hand hygiene.

ACIPC recommends:

- A multimodal hand hygiene improvement program should be implemented in all health care settings to minimise risks of healthcare-associated infections (HAIs).
- All clinicians and healthcare workers participate in hand hygiene training and competency programs to improve patient/resident/client safety.

Introduction

Approximately 170,574 healthcare-associated infections (HAIs) in Australian healthcare facilities annually and 74,000 hospital-acquired complications relating to healthcare-associated infections (HCAI) occur in Australian hospitals annually (1,11). Many of these are considered preventable with the implementation of core infection prevention and control strategies. Effective healthcare worker hand hygiene at key points of care is well established to be one of the most important strategies in reducing the risk of these infections (3,4,5,6,7,8). As such, ACIPC strongly promotes the implementation of a multimodal hand hygiene improvement program in all health care settings. ACIPC supports all clinicians and healthcare workers participating in their organisation's program to improve patient, resident, or client safety.

Definitions

Health care facility: is the building and facilities in which care is provided – visit, short stay or permanent.

Health care setting: is a broad array of services and places where healthcare occurs, including acute care hospitals, urgent care centres, rehabilitation centres, aged and disability residential care, specialised outpatient services (e.g., haemodialysis, dentistry, podiatry, chemotherapy, office-based services (GP, dental, consulting rooms), community care.

Health care worker: is anyone who works in a healthcare or social care setting. i.e. medical practitioners, nurses, midwives, carers, dentists and allied health professionals (such as physiotherapists); psychologists, dieticians, social workers, speech therapists, students on placement; as well as executives, managers and administration

Literature review

In the Australian public health care facilities, implementation of the National Hand Hygiene Initiative (NHHI) is required as part of The National Safety and Quality Health Service (NSQHS) Standards; while in the Australian aged care setting, The Aged Care Quality and Safety Standards provide the requirements for infection prevention and control and antimicrobial stewardship. In New Zealand requirements are set by The Ngā Paerewa Health and Disability Services Standard Infection Prevention and antimicrobial stewardship. All standards advise actions to prevent and reduce HCAs (7,8,9, 10).

Recommendations

In all healthcare settings, ACIPC recommends the implementation of locally supported hand hygiene programs. ACIPC suggests that local programs should include healthcare worker education and competency testing, the use of alcohol-based hand sanitiser at point of use, and all other infection prevention and control strategies as recommended in the NHHI initiative (7,8, 10).

ACIPC recognises that health care worker hand hygiene practices are dependent on healthcare worker understanding of requirements and best practice guidelines. A range of hand hygiene and infection prevention and control online learning modules, including a module for staff with hand care issues such as dermatitis, has been developed by the Australian Commission on Safety and Quality in Health Care (ACSQHC) (7).

ACIPC recommends organisations include on employment and annual hand hygiene education and training within their mandatory education schedules, whereby all healthcare workers complete either the national hand hygiene eLearning program or a recognised equivalent that complies with the World Health Organization recommendations. ACIPC also supports regular and ongoing practical assessment for all healthcare workers to ensure continued safe practice to reduce the risk of infection transmission to consumers.

To facilitate ACIPC recommendations, all healthcare facility executives should endorse and support the formal inclusion of hand hygiene education/training and assessment (practical and theoretical).

Endorsements

This position statement is endorsed by Australasian Society for Infectious Diseases (ASID)



References

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Version

Version	Date	Addition/Amendments	Author	Review By
1.0	9/2013		Policy Committee	Executive Council
2.0	22/06/2017	Literature review updated. Format amendments to the template.	Thea van de Mortel	ACIPC Board
3.0	1/2024	Literature review updated and new inclusions. Reference to aged care standards. Format amendments to the template.	Nicola Isles, Carrie Spinks, Karen McKenna	Practice Guidance Committee ACIPC Board
4.0	3/2024	Endorsement received from ASID	-	ASID