

INTRODUCTION

Facts at a Glance

As of April 30, 2009, all Ontario hospitals are required to annually post their hand hygiene compliance rates to further promote accountability and transparency within the health system.

Patient safety remains the most important priority for the Deep River and District Hospital and the dedicated health professionals who work in this hospital are committed to providing the best possible care to our patients. This involves ensuring that patients are not at risk for contracting healthcare-associated infections. We have a number of practices in place to help prevent and control infections, including a comprehensive hand hygiene program.

The monitoring of prevention best practices and infection-specific precautions within hospitals is something the Deep River and District Hospital is absolutely committed to. In addition to complying with the *Provincial Infectious Diseases Advisory Committee* recommendations, we also go through an extensive accreditation process that requires us to show our use of prevention best practices. Deep River and District Hospital last completed a successful accreditation in 2006. Accreditation occurs every three years.

Deep River and District Hospital has participated in a number of Ministry of Health & Long Term Care and Ontario Hospital Association education opportunities related to best practices for infection prevention and control and welcomes the use and sharing of best practices.

Hand Hygiene

- Hand hygiene is a key issue for our hospital, and our hospital has mobilized resources to enhance patient and health care provider safety through improved hand hygiene compliance within our organization.
- We know that good hand hygiene is the single most effective way to reduce the risk of health care-associated infections.
- Hand hygiene (hand washing or the use of an alcohol-based hand rub) is something we all do, but it's also something that we want to continue to do better.
- To be clear, health care providers **are** washing their hands. What the provincial audit tool does is help ensure that they are washing them the right way at the right times.
- We have sound infection control programs in place and are committed to using standardized patient safety data and public reporting to drive further improvements.
- Last March, 100% of Ontario hospitals (including Deep River and District Hospital) participated in the government's *Just Clean Your Hands* training program – an evidence-based, multi-faceted hand hygiene program to support hand hygiene improvement in hospitals.
- We continue to support a culture of patient safety involving everyone – health care administration, health care professionals, and, of course, patients and families.

Our Commitment

Deep River and District Hospital strongly supports the provincial government's new public reporting regime because we believe it will inspire improved performance, enhance patient

safety, and strengthen the public's confidence in Ontario's hospitals. The public reporting of hand hygiene compliance rates is another, helpful measure to ensure the care provided to our patients is even safer, and improves over time. The public reporting of hand hygiene compliance rates is not intended to serve as a comparator measure among hospitals. It is about reducing the occurrences of health care-associated infections.

If you have any questions about the information on this website or about our hospital's infection prevention and control program, please contact Rita Montgomery (613) 584-3333 Ext 133 , or Lianne Wheeler (613) 584-3333 Ext 166

Patient Safety – Hand Hygiene Compliance

Questions & Answers

What is 'hand hygiene'?

Hand hygiene refers to the removal of microorganisms ('germs') from hands through handwashing with soap and water or the use of an alcohol-based hand rub.

What are health care-associated infections?

Sometimes when patients are admitted to the hospital, they can get infections. These are called health care-associated infections.

How will the public reporting of hand hygiene compliance affect compliance among health care professionals?

There are many factors that will improve hand hygiene compliance. Mandatory public reporting is one element. The increasing recent attention on the issue as well as the provincial government's multifaceted hand hygiene program called *Just Clean Your Hands* are important to ensuring effective hand hygiene at the right times.

Why is hand hygiene so important?

Hand hygiene is an important practice for health care providers and has a significant impact on reducing the spread of infections in hospitals. Hand hygiene is a different way of thinking about safety and patient care and involves everyone in the hospital, including patients and health care providers.

Effective hand hygiene practices in hospitals play a key role in improving patient and provider safety, and in preventing the spread of health care-associated infections.

What Deep River and District Hospital is doing to support effective hand hygiene:

- Following the "Just Clean Your Hands" program for excellence in hand hygiene
- Alcohol-based hand rub dispensers located throughout the hospital including at all points of care
- Signage to promote effective hand hygiene practices
- Hand hygiene audits
- Information brochures on hand hygiene for patients and families
- New precaution signage and corresponding brochures

What can patients do to help improve their own safety?

Hand hygiene involves everyone in the hospital, including patients. Hand cleaning is one of the best ways you and your health care team can prevent the spread of many infections. Patients and their visitors should also practice good hand hygiene before and after entering patient rooms.

More patient-specific information is available at www.ontario.ca/patientsafety and www.oha.com/patientsafetytips.

Patient Safety – Hand Hygiene Compliance

DRDH Statistics

The goal of public reporting of hand hygiene compliance is to achieve an overall assessment of whether compliance rates are improving. It is normal for rates to vary from hospital to hospital.

What exactly will DRDH begin reporting on April 30, 2009?

On an annual basis, beginning April 30th, 2009 DRDH along with all Ontario hospitals will be required to publicly report on their own websites:

- The overall hand hygiene compliance rates (i.e. the number of times hand hygiene was performed relative to the number of indications for hand hygiene)

The Ministry of Health and Long Term Care will report the same information on its own website.

Hand Hygiene Compliance Calculations

Ontario hospitals are posting their hand hygiene compliance rates as percentages for time periods identified by the Ministry of Health and Long-Term Care, using the following formula:

$$\frac{\text{\# of times hand hygiene performed}}{\text{\# of observed hand hygiene indications}} \times 100$$

These percentages also reflect:

- (i) hand hygiene before initial patient/patient environment contact by combined health care provider type (e.g., nurses, allied health professionals, physicians, etc.)
- (ii) hand hygiene after patient/patient environment contact by combined health care provider type (e.g., nurses, allied health professionals, physicians, etc.)

HAND HYGIENE INFORMATION SHEET

WHY DO CLEAN HANDS MATTER?

Although we may think that germs spread through the air, they are actually more often spread by contact between peoples' hands. Even if your hands don't appear to be dirty, there are germs on them. These germs can make you sick when they move from your hands into your body through your mouth, nose, eyes and open wounds.

One of the best ways to stop the spread of germs is to clean your hands by washing them with soap and water or applying alcohol based hand rub. By cleaning your hands, you greatly reduce the chance of spreading germs around.

- Alcohol hand rubs should only be used if no visible dirt is present on the hands
- To be effective the alcohol content must be at least 70%
- The alcohol in hand rubs completely evaporates as it dries and is safe to use on children
- 99.9% of germs are killed by hand rubs within seconds
- People shed one million flakes of skin a day. Each flake can contain microorganisms capable of causing harm.
- The average person has 1,500 germs on each square centimeter of their hands, and the average bathroom faucet has more than 229,000 germs on each square inch.
- Every 60 seconds a working adult touches up to 30 objects. You are picking up their germs when you pick up or touch those objects!
- Even though hands may appear to be clean, they may carry germs that are capable of causing disease
- It is important to encourage and help children wash their hands
- Some viruses and bacteria can live from 20 minutes to 2 hours or more on surfaces like doorknobs, hand rails, faucets and telephones

CLEANING YOUR HANDS IS THE MOST IMPORTANT THING YOU CAN DO TO MINIMIZE YOUR RISK OF INFECTION.

SOME CRITICAL TIMES TO CLEAN YOUR HANDS

- Before eating or preparing food
- When hands are visibly dirty
- Before and after contact with someone who is sick
- After using the washroom
- After blowing your nose, coughing or sneezing
- After handling garbage

HOW TO CLEAN YOUR HANDS

Alcohol Based Hand Rub

Alcohol based hand rub is the preferred method of hand hygiene when your hands are NOT visibly soiled.

- Apply a 'loonie-sized' amount of alcohol rub to the palm of one hand - enough that when you rub your hands together you cover all areas of your hands, including under your nails.

- Rub your hands together, covering all surfaces of hands and fingers.
- Rub until your hands are dry. This will take a minimum of 15 to 20 seconds if sufficient product is used

Soap & Water

How you wash your hands is just as important as when you wash them. Just rinsing your hands is NOT ENOUGH! By rubbing your hands vigorously with soapy water, you pull the dirt and the oily soils free from your skin. The soap lather suspends both the dirt and germs trapped inside and are then quickly washed away.

- Wet your hands with warm running water
- Add soap, and then rub your hands together, making a soapy lather. Do this away from the running water for at least 15 seconds, being careful not to wash the lather away. Wash the front and back of your hands, as well as between your fingers and under your nails.
- You do not have to use antibacterial soap. Any type of plain soap may be used. However, bar soap should be kept in a self draining holder that is cleaned thoroughly before new bars are put out. Liquid soap containers should be used until empty and then disposed of.
- Rinse your hands and wrists well under warm running water to remove all the soap.
- Pat dry with a paper towel. In your own home, you may use a cloth towel.
- Turn off taps with paper towel and discard towel garbage.
- To prevent chapping, wet your hands before applying soap and use a mild lotion soap with warm water; pat rather than rub hands dry; and apply lotion liberally and frequently.

IF YOU ARE A PATIENT IN THE HOSPITAL

There are important moments when your health care team should clean their hands such as:

- After touching objects in a patient’s room and going to another room
- Before and after treating patients
- Before and after special procedures such as giving a needle
- After contact with body fluids such as blood or urine

Deep River and District Hospital Hand Hygiene Compliance Rate

2008	_____ %
2009	_____ %
2010	_____ %

<http://www.justcleanyourhands.ca/>

Special thanks to St Francis Memorial Hospital for their assistance with sharing this information