

# Public Reporting on Hand Hygiene Compliance

## **Q&A for clients and families**

Patient safety remains the most important priority for Holland Bloorview Kids Rehabilitation Hospital and 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. 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.

If you have any questions about the information below or about our hospital's infection prevention and control program, please contact:

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## **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. Certainly 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 is Holland Bloorview doing to improve patient safety?**

Hand hygiene is a key issue for Holland Bloorview, and we have mobilized resources to enhance patient and health care provider safety through improved hand hygiene within our organization.

Patient safety remains the most important priority for Holland Bloorview. This involves ensuring that patients are not at risk for contracting health care-associated infections. We know that good hand hygiene is the single most effective way to reduce the risk of health care-associated infections.

Hand washing 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.

At Holland Bloorview, 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 per cent of Ontario hospitals 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 are working to create a culture of patient safety involves everyone – health care administration, health care professionals, and, of course, patients and families.

## **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 Health Quality Ontario<sup>1</sup> and *[CS1] Your Health Care – Be Involved*<sup>2</sup>.

<sup>1</sup> <http://www.hqontario.ca/public-reporting/patient-safety>

<sup>2</sup> <http://www.oha.com/Services/PatientSafety/Pages/PatientCampaignsAcute.aspx>

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