**Hand Hygiene**

**Policy and Procedure**

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**Policy**

It is the policy of this facility that hand hygiene (HH) (e.g., hand washing and/or Alcohol-based hand rub (ABHR), also known as Alcohol-based hand sanitizer (ABHS), is to be performed consistent with accepted standards of practice in order to reduce the potential of the spread of pathogens.

**Purpose**

* To cleanse hands to prevent the spread of potentially deadly infections
* To provide a clean and healthy environment for residents, staff, and visitors
* To reduce the risk to the healthcare provider of colonization or infections acquired from a resident

Hand hygiene continues to be the primary means of preventing the transmission of infection.

**PROCEDURE**

**There are 2 methods for hand hygiene:**

1. **Alcohol-based hand sanitizers** (ABHS) are most effective for reducing the number of germs on the hands of healthcare employees, is the preferred method of use in most clinical situations, and “are the most effective products for reducing the number of germs on the hands of healthcare providers.”1 
   1. ABHS should be used:
      1. Immediately prior to touching a resident
      2. Before performance of an aseptic technique or handling invasive medical devices
      3. When caring for a resident, when moving from a soiled body site to a clean body site of the same resident
      4. After touching a resident or the resident’s immediate environment
      5. After any contact with blood, body fluids or contaminated surfaces
      6. Immediately upon removal of gloves and PPE
   2. When using ABHS, employee should:
      1. Put ABHS product on hands
      2. Rub together, covering all surfaces of the hands with the product until dry for approximately 20 seconds.
2. **Hand Hygiene with soap and water**
   1. Should be performed:
      1. When hands are visibly soiled
      2. After employee is caring for a resident with known or suspected infectious diarrhea
      3. After known or suspected exposure to spores such as *B. anthracis* or *C. difficle*
      4. Before eating
      5. After using the restroom
   2. Wash with soap and water:
      1. By wetting hands first with water
      2. Apply the amount of soap to hands as recommended by the manufacturer,
      3. Rub vigorously for at least 20 seconds, covering all the surfaces of the hands and fingers
      4. Rinse with warm water
         1. Avoid hot water to prevent drying of the skin
      5. Dry with disposable towel and
      6. Use towel to turn off faucet.
3. Do not wear artificial fingernails or extenders if duties include direct contact with patients at high risk for infection and associated adverse outcomes *(****NOTE: Facilities may want to develop an organizational policy on the wearing of non-natural nails by healthcare personnel who have direct contact with patients outside of the groups specified above).*** Recommend direct care staff to keep natural nail tips less than ½ inch long.
4. Residents and their representatives will be advised of the facility infection prevention and control policies on hand hygiene
   1. Encourage residents (or assist as necessary) to perform hand hygiene before eating, after using the restroom and at other times as indicated.
5. Gloves or the use of perineal wipes are not a substitute for hand hygiene.

**Resources**

1Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. Healthcare Providers-Hand Hygiene Guideline. <https://www.cdc.gov/handhygiene/providers/index.html>

Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services State Operations Manual, Appendix PP – Guidance to Surveyors for Long Term Care Facilities (Rev. 173, 11-22-17) Advance Copy, 2022: <https://www.cms.gov/files/document/appendix-pp-guidance-surveyor-long-term-care-facilities.pdf>

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