

The Infection Post

Hand Hygiene - On May 5, we celebrate HH Day!

Audits

- Completed regularly to assess for adherence
- Increase frequency during an outbreak
- Use audit outcomes to develop education and identify common lapses

Training

- All staff should have annual education on HH practices
- Training can be done with videos or interactive activities
- The hub can support education
- Timely on-the-spot education during audits helps to reinforce messaging

Residents & Visitors

- Should receive education on importance of hand hygiene
- Staff can support with reminders, queuing, and helping residents with completing the task especially after using the washroom and before/after eating

Prevention Tips

- ABHR dispensers must be easily accessible to all residents, staff, and visitors
- Ideally, ABHR dispensers should be located within the door area, near the bedside, and outside of the washroom in the room
- Designated hand hygiene sink - resident sinks, kitchen sinks for food prep cannot be used for hand hygiene
- ABHR, soap, and paper towels need to be stocked regularly
- Gloves cannot be used as a substitute for hand hygiene
- Involve your residents by creating "Hand Hygiene Champions" to support practices
- Ensure policies are up to date - this supports education for non-adherence

Why Does It Matter?



Fun Fact: Hands of healthcare workers are the most common “vehicle” for transmission of germs from resident to resident; resident to equipment or the environment; and from equipment or the environment to residents

Effective hand hygiene reduces healthcare associated infections by 50%. Hand hygiene practices kills or removes germs on the skin, while also maintaining good health. There are two methods for hand hygiene: handwashing with soap and water; and sanitizing with alcohol based hand rub that contains 70-90% alcohol concentration. There is no superior method - both work the same way! However, soap and water is the preferred method when hands are visibly soiled.

Guidance Documents & Educational Resources

- For educational ideas and videos to prepare you for hand hygiene week or on-the-spot education, scan the QR code to access our “Hand Hygiene Day 2026” webpage.
- For policy development, refer to PHO’s Best Practices for Hand Hygiene in All Healthcare Settings document.

