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| AC Nursing and Health Services Inc. Policies and Procedures | | | | | | |
| Human Resources Section 5 -Infection Control |  | | | | | |
| Policy: Hand Hygiene | <table border="1" style="width: 100%; border-collapse: collapse;"> <tr> <td>Policy Number: HR-IC 2.10</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Effective Date: January 2022</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Revision Date:</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Approved by: Board of Directors – Management</td> </tr> <tr> <td> </td> </tr> </table> | Policy Number: HR-IC 2.10 | Effective Date: January 2022 | Revision Date: | Approved by: Board of Directors – Management | |
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Policy

AC Nursing and Health Services Inc. service providers and volunteers must perform accepted hand hygiene practices to prevent the spread of infectious microorganisms. Hand hygiene compliance testing is required for all field staff and service providers.

Definitions

Hand hygiene is the action of hand cleaning that includes the removal of visible soil and removal or killing of transient microorganisms from the hand, while maintaining good skin integrity¹. Effective hand hygiene is the single most important method for preventing infection in community health care.

There are two accepted methods of hand hygiene:

1. Hand sanitizing with a 70 to 90% alcohol-based hand rub (ABHR). This is the preferred method when hands are not visibly soiled.
2. Hand washing with liquid soap and running water. This must be performed when hands are visibly soiled.

Resources

- Best Practices for Hand Hygiene In all Health Care Settings, 4th Ed. 2010. Provincial Infectious Disease Advisory Committee (PIDAC). Retrieved from: <http://www.publichealthontario.ca/en/eRepository/2010-12%20BP%20Hand%20Hygiene.pdf>
- Public Health Ontario. Just Clean Your Hands. Ontario's evidence-based hand hygiene program. Released 2008. [cited November 25, 2012]. Available from: <http://www.publichealthontario.ca/en/>

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Procedure

Hand hygiene is performed at the following points of contact:

- Upon entering and exiting the client’s home
- Before providing direct care to the client
- Before moving from a contaminated body site to a clean body site during care
- Before putting on gloves and immediately after removing gloves
- After providing care involving body fluids, secretions, excretions, or blood
- Before and after using personal protective equipment (gloves, gowns, mask, respirator, etc.)
- Before preparing, handling, or serving food

- After contact with items in the client’s environment
- After personal functions (toileting, sneezing, blowing nose)
- Keep nails clean and short.
- Keep nail polish (if worn) fresh and free of cracks/chips.
- Avoid artificial nails or nails enhancements.
- Hand and arm jewellery, including watches, must be removed, or secured above the wrist.
- Clothing or other items that interferes with hand hygiene should be removed or pushed back.

Technique for Using ABHR

1. Inspect and prepare hands.

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2. Ensure hands are visibly clean and dry.
3. Apply nickel-sized quantity of product onto one palm; the volume should be such that 15 seconds of rubbing is required for drying.
4. Spread product over all surfaces of hands, concentrating on fingertips, between fingers, back of hands, and base of thumbs.
5. Continue rubbing hands until product is dry (minimum of 15 seconds). Hands must be fully dry before contact with the client or environment.

Technique for Hand Washing

1. Inspect and prepare hands
2. Wet hands with warm water
3. Apply liquid or foam soap.
4. Vigorously lather all surfaces of hands for a minimum of 15 seconds. Pay particular attention to fingertips, between fingers, backs of hands and base of the thumbs:
 - a. Interlace fingers and rub palms and back of hands with circular motion keeping fingertips down.
 - b. Rub knuckles of one hand into the palm of the other; repeat with other hand.
 - c. Rub thumb on one hand with the palm of the other hand; repeat with other hand.
 - d. Work the fingertips of one hand into the palm of the other. Massage soap into nail spaces; repeat with the other hand.
5. Clean fingernails with a nail stick or fingernails of the other hand

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6. Using a rubbing motion, thoroughly rinse soap from hands.
7. Dry hands thoroughly by blotting hands gently with a paper towel. Do not use client’s personal cloth towels.
8. Turn off taps with paper towel.
9. Do not use ABHR immediately after washing hands, as skin irritation will be increased.

Clients

Encourage or assist clients/caregivers to perform hand hygiene when hands are visibly soiled, after toileting, after touching possibly contaminated items in their environment, and prior to eating.

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