Enhancing Hand Hygiene (HH) Compliance for Health Care Providers (HCP) in Accident and Emergency Department of Pok Oi Hospital

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Keywords:
hand hygiene
hand-washing
hand rub
POH
AED
AED

Introduction
Good hand hygiene (HH) can significantly reduce the transmission of micro-organisms and prevent health care provider (HCP) associated infections. Hand washing or rubbing of hands with alcohol hand-rub before and after patient care is a simple and effective way in preventing cross infections in hospitals but the compliance amongst health-care workers (HCWs) to these recommended actions are commonly poor (Pittet, 2000). As the compliance rate for hand hygiene (HH) (in term of hand washing and use of hand-rub) in our department was only 55% in Nov 2014, a departmental campaign was started to improve HH.

Objectives
1. To increase the awareness of importance of HH amongst HCWs; 2. Aim to increase the compliance rate of HH for HCWs.

Methodology
A team was formed to implement HH campaign in AED of POH. Site visits to various locations in the AED and interviews with HCWs were performed to assess the knowledge on hand hygiene and identify the barriers to HH (e.g. alcohol handrub causing skin irritation, inconvenient access of hand washing or handrub facility, “being too busy”, “forget to do it” or “already wearing gloves”). It was found that the importance of HH was insufficiently recognized by staff. The HH campaign resulted in the implementation of the following measures: 1. Automatic handrub dispensers with less irritable alcohol based formula were installed at each consultation rooms and at
easily accessible locations in the clinical areas. 2. Regular audio announcements through computer speaker (every 30 minutes) at the main clinical area to remind staff on HH. 3. Visual reminders (HH posters) in eye-catching locations to emphasize the “5 moments” and importance of HH. 4. Delegate HH ambassador at each shift to educate staff on the importance of HH, advocate the usage of automatic handrub dispenser and provide immediate support to staff.

Result
Observational Audit by hospital infection control team on the compliance rate of HH was performed regularly to analyze the trend. The compliance rate of hand washing or hand rubbing increased from 55% in Nov 2014 to 91% in Jan 2015 showing that the awareness of HCWs on HH has been significantly enhanced. The provision of easily accessible hand hygiene facilities, staff education together with strategies to regularly remind staff on HH greatly enhanced the compliance rate and the awareness of HH in our department.