Hand Hygiene Promotion in a General Medical Ward: A 18-month Review
Lau KY, Yao S, Wong R
Department of Medicine, QEH

Keywords:
Hand Hygiene Promotion
Medical Ward

Introduction
Healthcare-associated infections (HAIs) cause significant concern regarding the safety and quality of healthcare worldwide (Burke, 2003). HAIs have been identified as a fundamental priority, and were selected as the topic of the first Global Patient Safety Challenge (WHO, 2009). Hand hygiene was identified as the core component of this strategy because it is a simple, standardized, low-cost measure based on solid scientific evidence. In order to improve adherence to hand hygiene procedures, novel methods of integrating hand hygiene becomes a habitual act for all HCW, and needs to become a priority for hospital management. Based on the WHO guidelines on multimodal hand hygiene improvement strategy, the key five components on successful strategy are: i) System change; ii) Training / Education; iii) Evaluation and feedback; iv) Reminders in the workplace and v) Institutional safety climate (WHO 2009). In this project, the components on ‘Reminders in the workplace’ and ‘Institutional safety climate’ were emphasized. They were the key tools to prompt and remind HCW about the importance of hand hygiene and it also helps to create an environment, climate and the perceptions that facilitate awareness-raising about patient safety issues. The hand hygiene promotion project was first launched in September, 2012 and the compliance rate was doubled up afterwards. After 18-month of the project implementation, a review was conducted in June 2014 to evaluate the sustainability of the project.

Objectives
1. To promote health maintenance and safety to both ward staff and patients. 2. To enhance the hand hygiene compliance among ward staff by creating culture and behavioral change.

Methodology
Multimodal strategies were implemented to promote the hand hygiene compliance, e.g. voice & audible reminder, visible reminder, sticker reminder, slogan competition &
notice board, hand hygiene champion and secret shopper. The review on hand hygiene compliance was conducted by direct observation of The Five Moments of Hand Hygiene by an iPhone Application - iScrub which was launched by The University of Iowa in USA in 2009 and was approved by Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) in 2009.

Result
The project was sustainable. The overall hand hygiene compliance was satisfactory and the compliance rate was up to 80%. Successful and sustained hand hygiene improvement is achieved by implementing multiple actions to tackle different obstacles and behavioral barriers. Also, the hand hygiene compliance should be monitored periodically in order to maintain the patient safety and healthcare quality.