Patient Care Services / Nursing

All Hands In For Hand Hygiene

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BACKGROUND

Hand hygiene is the most important factor in preventing hospital acquired infections. The staff at Lehigh Valley Pocono demonstrates a need for improvement based on data collection.
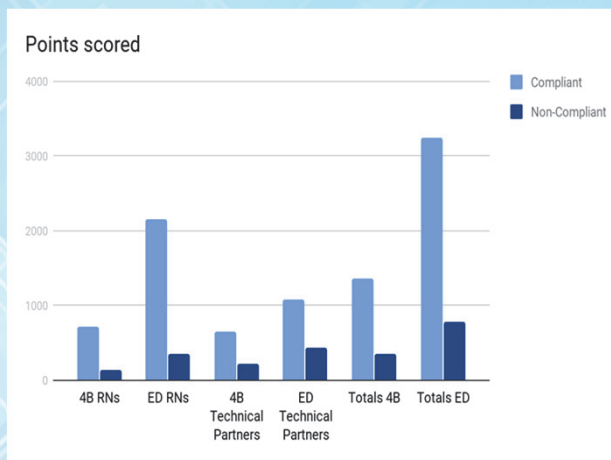
PICO

- P - Healthcare Staff in the ER and Med-Surg settings.
- I - Staff champions to observe hand hygiene rates.
- C - Not using a staff champion.
- O - Increased hand hygiene compliance.

EVIDENCE

- The evidence in the articles collectively agree that the prevention of HAIs is an important patient safety intervention and that hand hygiene is the most effective way of preventing them.

- A leaders-directed, socially cohesive environment improved the compliance with Hand Hygiene.

- In an article, it was found that observation was the direct cause of increase in hand-hygiene (Huis, 2012). Covert observation resulted in lower rates of HH.

- Barriers: heavy nursing workload, improper staffing, inconveniently located sinks/sanitizers.

OUTCOMES

For the duration of two months, direct observation took place during six shifts a week, 3 day shifts and 3 night shifts. Overall the compliance rate of both units were better than the non-compliance. However, even with direct observation, there is much need for improvement.

Points scored

IMPLEMENTATION

- In the ER and 4B floors at Pocono, emails were sent out to al nurses, providers, and technical partners informing them of staff champions for HH.

- 4-5 Staff champions were chosen from each floor.

- Place hand hygiene signs in the staff break room and staff bathroom, as well as directly outside of patient rooms

NEXT STEPS

Hand hygiene compliance is a difficult battle within the healthcare system. Although we can record observations, there are many limitations to a research study like this and it is just too difficult for people to get a grasp of the true numbers. It will take much more than a few people to observe what they can while also performing their own job duties. If there were people hired specifically just to sit and observe everyone throughout all shifts numbers would still be inaccurate. The idea of electronic monitors is the most fault proof system there can be for such a study.

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1. More references upon request

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