Barriers, Perceptions and Compliance: Hand Hygiene in the Operating Room & Endoscopy Suite

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The greatest barriers to HH in the EPR were inconvenience and forgetfulness (20%, 20% n=20). In 2011 there were 1.9 surgical site infections (SSI) per 100 surgeries in the US2. VCU Medical Center’s operating rooms exhibits a foaming in/out compliance rate of 11% (19/166).

**Background**
- Non-surgical scrub hand hygiene (HH) practices, including alcohol-based antiseptic hand rubs, provide a simple yet effective intervention in preventing the spread of infection.
- Nevertheless, HH compliance is low in the operating room (OR) with 2% and 8% compliance of foaming in/out respectively3.
- Endoscopy procedure rooms (EPR) exhibit an overall baseline compliance of 21.4%.4
- A total of 271 (36%, n=774) OR and 29 (33%, n=89) EPR surveys were collected. pearson chi square and Fisher’s exact tests were performed using version 9.4.

**Objective**
- We examined the barriers and perceptions of HH in the OR and EPR.

**Methods**
- Two separate but similar IRB approved voluntary, anonymous surveys containing 25 Likert-scale and 1 free response questions were distributed to health care personnel at medical conferences and in common work areas in both the OR and EPR.
- Resultant data was analyzed using Statistical Analysis Software (SAS version 9.4).
- Pearson chi square and Fisher’s exact tests were performed using two-way and three-way contingency tables.

**Results**
- A total of 271 (36%, n=774) OR and 29 (33%, n=89) EPR surveys were collected.
- Total self reporting of foaming in/out compliance was 73% (n=392) in the OR and 95% (n=40) in the EPR.
- The greatest barrier to HH in OR was inconvenience (49%, n=187).
- The greatest barriers to HH in the EPR were inconvenience and forgetfulness (20%, 20% n=20).
- OR environmental services (EVS) personnel were aware of the HH policies (100%, n=14).
- The importance of HH was emphasized in EVS training (80%, n=15).

**Conclusions and Implications**
- Despite poor observed HH compliance, the majority of OR and EPR respondents are aware of HH policies and the benefits in reducing HAIs.
- There is adequate access to foam in the OR/EPR and it is physically tolerated.
- Although HH practices are encouraged in both areas, OR/EPR managers poorly role model HH.
- OR nurses are empowered HH advocates, knowledgeable of the benefits of HH and may serve as change agents to improve HH compliance.
- Hospitals promoting HH in the OR/EPR should:
  - Be knowledgeable of perceptions and barriers across services
  - Increase the awareness/education of HH to all providers
  - Empower employees to address colleagues’ HH
  - Remind supervisors to lead by example
  - Measure HH compliance with feedback to managers and frontline providers.

**References**