

Incidence and prevention of infections related to IVIs

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Session 5C

13/3/2010

Despite ongoing efforts, convincing hospital staffers to make hand washing a priority continues to be a challenge, even though the Centre of Disease Control & Prevention has shown empirical evidence that adherence to hand hygiene terminates outbreaks in healthcare facilities thus reducing overall infection rates. Scientists estimate that up to 80% of all infections are transmitted by our hands Hence, handwashing may be the single most important act one can take to help stop the spread of infection and stay healthy.

Nosocomial infections from IVI devices is still a general challenge in many hospitals especially with outbreaks from resistant bacteria such as MRSA. Proper hand hygiene is one of the most effective ways hospitals can reduce healthcare-associated infections, but compliance rates remain low.

To reinforce the importance of hand washing, some hospitals are thinking outside the box. For example ICU staff in an academic medical center in New York City played a card game called SPLAT! where players who fail to follow proper infection control procedures are labeled with stickers from their opponents making hand hygiene compliance rise from 37% to 52% after playing the game (Haas et al, 2006). Other hospitals have reverted to other measures to raise hand hygiene compliance even broadcasting on the hospital radio new lyrics to popular songs to remind staff and visitors to wash their hands. And of the 15 steps a patient is advised by the committee to Reduce Infection Deaths (RID), three are directly associated with IV therapy.

8th European Regional CNF Conference, 12-13 March 2010, Coral Beach Hotel, Paphos, Cyprus
“Advancing Health through Nursing: Commonwealth’s European Region Perspectives”