

Hand Hygiene Program in Statewide and Mental Health Services

Background

Hand hygiene (HH) is the single most effective intervention to reduce the risk of healthcare associated infections.

All Health Care Workers (HCWs) must perform effective hand hygiene before and after every patient contact, before and after performing any clinical procedures and after touching the patient's environment. These are known as the 5 Moments for Hand Hygiene (See www.hha.org.au).

The Australian Commission on Quality and Safety in Health Care (ACSQHC) has engaged Hand Hygiene Australia (HHA) to implement the National Hand Hygiene Initiative (NHHI). HHA works closely with existing State and Territory strategies and campaigns to maximise the success of this initiative.

In Tasmania, the Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS) released the revised [Hand Hygiene Policy](#) and [Hand Hygiene Procedure](#) in 2014 that provides policy regarding the implementation of a hand hygiene program for the THOs including Mental Health Services.

All DHHS and THOs health service providers are required to establish and maintain an effective hand hygiene education program to support the effective implementation of this policy.

However, in accordance with the recommendation from HHA, mental health services and other non-acute or residential aged care or primary health services are not required to perform hand hygiene compliance auditing.

Mental health facilities are exempt from the routine compliance auditing component of the NHHI as meaningful data is unlikely to be obtained; however, the remaining key elements of the program must be implemented.

HHA resources are available for all healthcare facilities and many have been adapted for use in non-acute care and non-inpatient care areas.

These resources include:

- Education and Promotion
- Auditing
- Online Learning Package

Education and Promotion

Education is the key component to any HH program and ongoing education will assist to maintain and sustain the HH program. Minimum education for all HCWs should include knowledge of the 5 Moments.

- 1) An educational DVD which includes a 10 minute presentation explaining the 5 moments and is particularly suitable for orientation can be ordered from HHA at www.hha.org.au/ForHealthcareWorkers/dvd-order-form.aspx

- 2) A number of PowerPoint presentations on the HHA website are available for ongoing education at www.hha.org.au/ForHealthcareWorkers/education.aspx. These include:
- [5 Moments explained](#)
 - [Generic Mental Health staff HH](#)
 - [Generic Hand Hygiene](#)
 - [Downloadable video examples of the 5 moments](#)
- 3) Promotional posters about hand hygiene that can be used in mental health facilities: www.hha.org.au/ForHealthcareWorkers/promotion.aspx

Auditing

HHA does not recommend routine hand hygiene compliance auditing using the 5 moments audit tool in non-acute, primary care or mental health settings but does provide other audit tools that can be used. These can be found at www.hha.org.au/ForHealthcareWorkers/auditing.aspx and includes:

- [Hand rub/Moisturiser audit](#)
- [Community hand hygiene audit](#)
- [Facility Product audit](#)
- [Practical HH competency audit](#)
- Aseptic technique auditing will also highlight compliance with the 5 moments specific to aseptic procedures.

Online Learning Package

The DHHS Policy and Procedure states that all DHHS and THO employees working within healthcare services must complete the Hand Hygiene Australia Online Learning Package (OLP) or equivalent, as part of their induction/orientation program and annually thereafter.

- For THO-South and THO-North West staff the OLP for Hand Hygiene is found in THEO: <https://theo.dhhs.tas.gov.au/course/view.php?id=157>
- All other DHHS staff including THO-North use the HHA OLP: www.hha.org.au/LearningPackage/olp-home.aspx

For further information email the Tasmania Infection Prevention and Control Unit at Population Health Services tipcu@dhhs.tas.gov.au or phone 61 66 0605.

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