

NORTHERN NEVADA ADULT MENTAL HEALTH SERVICES (NNAMHS)

POLICY AND PROCEDURE

SUBJECT: HAND HYGIENE

NUMBER: NN-IC-06

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APPROVAL: _____ Cody L. Phinney _____ Agency Director

I. PURPOSE

To establish hand hygiene procedures to reduce the risk of healthcare-associated infections.

II. POLICY

NNAMHS is committed to providing a safe environment for consumers and staff. Improved hand hygiene is the highest priority area in reducing the risk of healthcare-associated infections.

III. REFERENCES

NNAMHS Policy NN-IC-07 Standard (Universal) Precautions

NNAMHS Policy NN-HR-19 Employee Health Management of Latex-Sensitive Employees

CDC Guideline for Hand Hygiene in Health-Care Settings MMWR Recommendations and Reports October 25, 2002/51 (RR16); 1-44 World Health Organization (WHO) Guidelines on Hand Hygiene in Health Care, Revised August, 2009.

IV. DEFINITIONS

1. Hand Washing Facilities: A facility providing an adequate supply of running, potable water, soap and single-use towels or hot air-drying machines.
2. Healthcare-Associated Infections (HAIs): Infections that consumers acquire during the course of receiving healthcare treatment for other conditions.
3. Alcohol-based Hand Rub: An alcohol-containing preparation designed for application to the hands for reducing the number of viable microorganisms on the hands. In the United States, such preparations usually contain 60% to 95% ethanol or isopropanol.
4. Antiseptic Hand Wash: Washing hands with water and soap or other detergents containing an antiseptic agent.
5. Clostridium difficile: Bacteria found in the intestines, spread through the fecal-oral route. This may lead to intestinal complications.
6. Hand Hygiene: Refers to both washing with plain or anti-bacterial soap and water and to the use of alcohol gel to decontaminate hands.

IV. PROCEDURES

A. Indications for Hand Hygiene

1. Hand hygiene is indicated:
 - a. When hands are not visibly soiled, alcohol gel is the preferred method of hand hygiene when providing health care to consumers.
 - b. When hands are visibly soiled, dirty, or visibly soiled with blood or other body fluids, hand washing is the preferred means of hand hygiene.
 - c. If exposure to potential spore-forming pathogens is strongly suspected or proven, including outbreaks of clostridium difficile (C.diff), hand washing with soap and water is the preferred method of hand hygiene.

B. Performance of Hand Hygiene

1. Hand hygiene must be performed:
 - a. Before and after touching the consumer.
 - b. Before handling an invasive device for consumer care regardless of whether or not gloves are used.
 - c. After contact with body fluids, mucous membranes, non-intact skin, or wound dressings.

- d. If moving from a contaminated body site to another body site during the care of the same consumer.
- e. After contact with inanimate surfaces and objects (including medical equipment) in the immediate vicinity of the consumer.

C. Hand Washing Procedure

1. Hand washing or use of alcohol-based hand rubs must occur before and after any single consumer contact and before putting on gloves and after removing gloves.
2. Wash hands with soap and water when visibly dirty, visibly soiled with blood or other body fluids, or after using the toilet.
 - a. The hand washing procedure should last 40 to 60 seconds.
3. When washing hands with soap and water, wet hands with water and apply the amount of product necessary to cover all surfaces.
 - a. Rub hands together, rubbing all surfaces for a minimum of 15 seconds.
 - b. Rinse hands with water and dry thoroughly with a single-use towel.
 - c. Avoid using hot water, as repeated exposure to hot water may increase the risk of dermatitis.
 - d. Use towel to turn off tap/faucet.
4. Use an alcohol-based hand rub as the preferred means for routine hand antisepsis when hands are not visibly soiled, dirty, or visibly soiled with blood or other body fluids, and there has been no potential exposure to spore-forming pathogens, including *C. diff*.
 - a. Apply a palmful of the product in a cupped hand, covering all surfaces of the hands.
 - b. Rub hands, covering all surfaces of hands and fingers until hands are dry.

D. Glove Usage

1. The use of gloves does not eliminate the need for hand hygiene. The use of hand hygiene does not eliminate the need for gloves.
2. Gloves must be worn and used when there is:
 - a. Potential for touching blood and body fluids, secretions, excretions, and items visibly soiled by body fluids.
 - b. Direct consumer exposure: Contact with blood, mucous membrane and with non-intact skin, when there is the potential presence of highly infectious and dangerous organism, epidemic or emergency situations, and when drawing blood.
 - c. Whenever the employee has cuts, scratches or other breaks in his/her skin.

- d. Gloves must be changed after contact with each consumer. Proper hand hygiene must be completed before and after usage of gloves.

E. Consumer Hand Hygiene

1. Consumer will use liquid soap provided in the shower and sinks in all consumer bathrooms.
2. Bar soap is not allowed on the units.
3. Alcohol-based hand rub will be available in safe locations on each unit. Consumers will be instructed in the proper use of the alcohol-based hand rub and encouraged in the use of hand rubs.