

Hand hygiene compliance rate among healthcare professionals

To the Editor

Hand washing is the best way to prevent nosocomial infection. I am extremely grateful to Bukhari et al¹ for detailed information in Hera General Hospital, Makkah, Kingdom of Saudi Arabia. Duration, region, cleaner, towel, and drier can be determinants of hand hygiene, although the author mentioned the correct method of hand hygiene was not the aim of this study.² Hand washing is very important for infectious disease prevention inside and outside hospitals. South Korea has the National Hand Washing Movement in cooperation with the Korean Center for Disease Control and Korean Medical Association.³ This organization explains the need for and the right way of hand washing, particularly to children. Website provides games, dance, and quizzes on hand washing, so children can make learning entertaining. If requested small groups can obtain the educational and lecture material available online. Children become used to hand hygiene from early childhood. The relation between early education and adulthood compliance of hand washing has not been investigated, but I think there is a strong correlation. I recommend a national campaign such in South Korea.

Yong H. Kim

Department of Anesthesiology
Haeundae Paik Hospital, Inje University
Busan, South Korea

Reply from the Author

The entire team of Bukhari et al¹ is very thankful to Dr. Kim for his comments on our recent article entitled "Hand hygiene compliance rate among healthcare professionals". In this article, we emphasized on hand hygiene as in a healthcare facility while Dr. Kim tried to explain the South Korea National Hand Washing Movement. These are 2 different projects, which cannot be compared with each other for example, relation between early education, and adulthood compliance of hand washing. In the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia (KSA), hand hygiene is given more importance in healthcare facilities at both government and the private level as compared with the community.

The Infection Prevention and Control program in KSA is moving forward towards global standards since the emergence of a national accreditation body called the Central Board of Accreditation of Healthcare Institutes (CBAHI) formerly called Makkah Region Quality

Program (MRQP). There are 10 Ministry of Health hospitals including Hera General Hospital (HGH), Makkah, which are going to be surveyed by the Joint Commission International at the end of 2011. The HGH is one of the 234 healthcare facilities of Saudi Arabia that is registered with the World Health Organization (WHO) for hand hygiene campaign: clean hands save lives.⁴ In order of frequency of registration with WHO; Saudi Arabia is the eighth country worldwide and the second in the WHO Eastern Mediterranean Region.⁵ Countries or areas from all over the world are today running their own hand hygiene campaigns, and Saudi Arabia has achieved a significant increase in hand hygiene compliance.⁵ A strong education program has been crucial to this success.⁵ In response to Dr. Kim's comment, I would like to mention here that HGH is linked with the community by the Home Care Delivery Program, and some activities mentioned in the South Korea National Hand Washing Movement, will be incorporated.

Although hand washing technique is very important,⁶ the main objective of the study was to establish a baseline hand hygiene compliance rate to set up the target for further improvement.¹ The outcome of our study is a useful indicator to set up the target of hand hygiene compliance rate for year 2011-2012, and also helpful for bench marking with other similar healthcare institutions within the country as there is no available national hand hygiene compliance rate so far.¹

Syed Z. Bukhari

Department of Infection Prevention & Control
Hera General Hospital, Makkah, Saudi Arabia

References

1. Bukhari SZ, Hussain WM, Banjar A, Almainani WH, Karima TM, Fatani MI. Hand hygiene compliance rate among healthcare professionals. *Saudi Med J* 2011; 32: 515-519.
2. Kim HJ, Kim NC. Investigation on hand washing of healthcare workers in intensive care unit. *J Korean Acad Fund Nurs* 2005; 13: 121-130.
3. National Hand Washing Movement. Let's wash my hands. (Updated 2011 August 1; Access 2011 June 17). Available from URL: <http://www.handwashing.or.kr/renew/index.asp> (Korean)
4. Sax H, Allegranzi B, Uçkay I, Larson E, Boyce J, Pittet D. 'My five moments for hand hygiene': a user-centred design approach to understand, train, monitor and report hand hygiene. *J Hosp Infect* 2007; 67: 9-21.
5. World Health Organization. Clean Care is Safer Care: Countries or areas running hand hygiene campaigns. Updated 2011 July 1]. Available from URL: http://www.who.int/gpsc/national_campaigns/en/
6. Joint Commission International. Quality improvement and patient safety QPS-9. JCI accreditation standards of Hospitals. 4th ed. USA: Joint Commission International; 2011. p. 147.