

Infection Control – Handwashing PC.125

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**POLICY:** Lifelong Hospice and Palliative Care follows hand hygiene guidelines recommended by the Centers for Disease Control and the World Health Organization.

**PROCEDURE:**

1. Hospice staff must wash hands:
  - a. before touching a patient;
  - b. before performing clean / aseptic procedures;
  - c. after performing tasks that involve risk of exposure to body fluids;
  - d. after touching a patient;
  - e. before and after wearing gloves; and
  - f. after any activity involving physical contact with a patient’s immediate environment.
2. Hands must be washed regardless of whether or not gloves are used.
3. Hospice clinicians are provided with hand washing supplies, including antibacterial liquid soap, disposable towels and an alcohol-based hand cleanser as part of their routine supply inventory.
4. When decontaminating hands with an alcohol-based hand rub, apply product to palm of one hand and rub hands together, covering all surfaces of hands and fingers, until hands are dry.
5. When washing hands with soap and water, wet hands first with water, apply an amount of product recommended by the manufacturer to hands, and rub hands together vigorously for at least 15 seconds, covering all surfaces of the hands and fingers. Rinse hands with water and dry thoroughly with a disposable towel. Use towel to turn off the faucet.
6. Staff providing direct patient care or working in the patient’s environment may not wear artificial fingernails or extenders.
7. Fingernails must be clean, well-manicured and kept less than 1/4-inch in length.
8. As part of the hospice’s infection control program, in-service training regarding hand hygiene requirements is included in new staff orientation and the annual staff education program.

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9. Adherence to hand hygiene requirements is monitored directly by observation during supervisory visits and indirectly through monitoring inventory levels of hand washing supplies.

<https://www.cdc.gov/handhygiene/providers/index.html>

<http://www.who.int/gpsc/5may/tools/9789241597906/en/>

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