**Hand Hygiene: Everybody’s Responsibility**

We have all heard repeatedly that effective hand washing will prevent the risk of infection in healthcare. This applies to worker safety, as well as protecting our patients from infections caused by organisms such as *Staphylococcus aureus* (including MRSA), *Streptococcus pyogenes* (Group A Strep), *Clostridium difficile* and hepatitis A.

A Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) survey in 2011 revealed that an estimated 722,000 healthcare associated infections (HAI) occurred and that 1 in 25 hospital patients have at least one HAI on any given day. The survey also revealed that “more than half of all HAI’s occurred outside of the intensive care unit.” The World Healthcare Organization (WHO) reports 80,000 die annually from a HAI.

The Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) documented 653,900 healthcare related injuries in 2010. “That is 152,000 more cases than the next industry sector: manufacturing.” The CDC reported in 2013 that there were 58 healthcare workers that contracted HIV.

Do your part and always practice good hand hygiene:

* Wash hands for 15-20 seconds by wetting hands with warm water, lathering with soap and scrubbing hands including cuticles and under nails. Be sure to thoroughly rinse and dry hands. The process for washing hands is the equivalent time to singing the “Happy Birthday” song very slowly.
* Always be aware of clean and dirty areas within the hospital and laboratory. Never wear gloves in designated clean areas.
* Hand hygiene must be performed just prior to patient contact and after patient contact. It is not acceptable to touch a computer, answer the phone, or perform other functions in the room, then touch a patient without performing hand hygiene.
* Use alcohol based hand sanitizer when hands are NOT visibly soiled.
* Remember to use a gown and gloves for all patients in contact precautions. Properly don (place on) and doff (take off) gown and gloves as to not risk the spread of infection.

According the CDC, “hand washing is like a ‘do-it-yourself’ vaccine…” Be safe and protect yourself, our patients, and others who come into contact with you.

If you have any questions, please see your supervisor or site safety officer. For more information, refer to the Hand Hygiene policy on Inside Beaumont, or speak to your supervisor. You can also refer to the CDC, WHO and OSHA websites.

**Hand Hygiene Compliance Rates**

Did you know that there are “secret shoppers” who specifically watch hand washing techniques of hospital personnel on a monthly basis? For the laboratory this includes in-patient phlebotomists. Designated individuals round and indicate whether the employee correctly performed hand hygiene.

**October Rates:**

Grosse Pointe ....................................... 100%

Royal Oak ............................................ 92.7%

Troy ......................................................... 82%

Remember to effectively wash hands and be aware of clean and dirty areas. **Prevent disease and put everyone else at ease!**

