

Patient Safety Measures

At Cork University Hospital, keeping our patients safe is a top priority. We have put into place many practices and programmes to eliminate medication errors, prevent infections and reduce patient falls. We also continue to provide patient safety training and education for our doctors, nurses and other staff members.

Certain safety practices – some as simple as hand-washing – can have a dramatic impact on patient outcomes. That's why the entire clinical staff at CUH is committed to keeping patients free from harm by establishing strict safety practices, sticking to these practices and seeking innovative ways to further improve safety.

Hand Hygiene

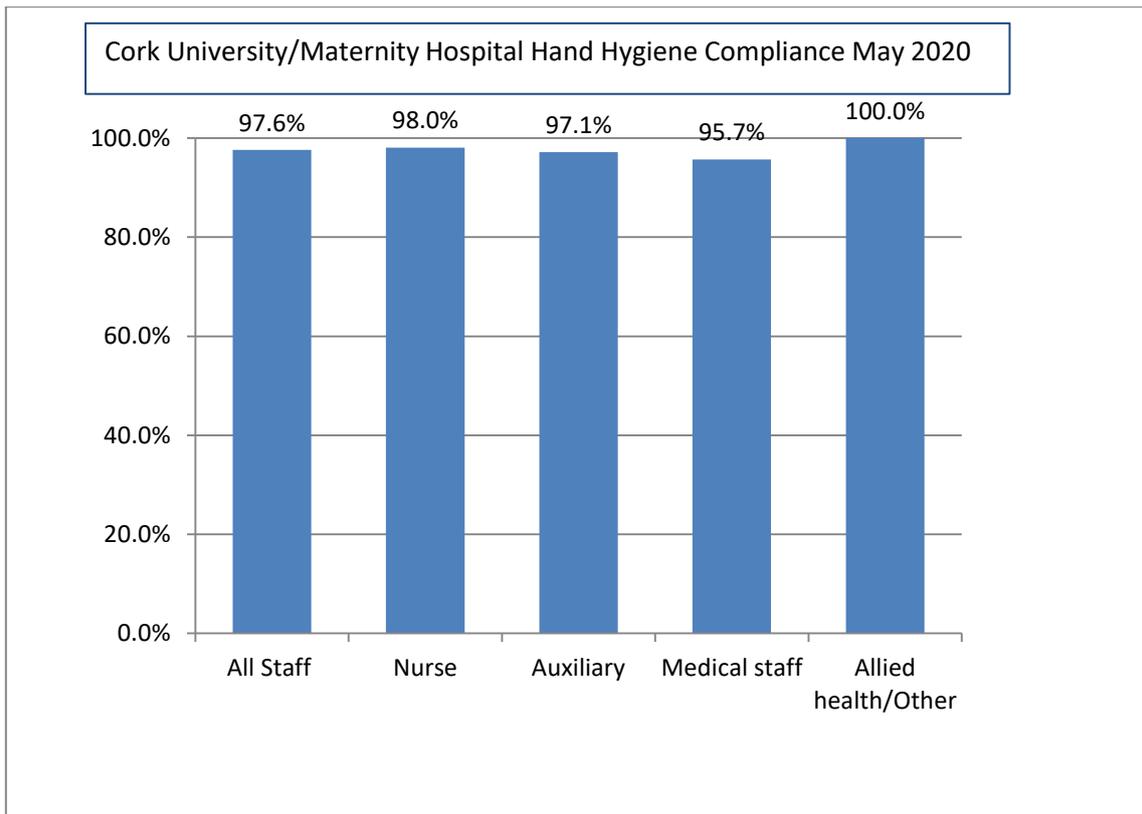
Overview

In the Cork University and Cork University Maternity hospitals, we are committed to keeping patients safe by practicing good hand hygiene. Hand hygiene is a simple and very effective way of preventing the spread of infections. Hand hygiene can be performed with alcohol hand rubs, which are available at all patient contact areas, or by hand washing.

We require our staff to use hand hygiene before and after caring for a patient and before and after performing invasive procedures on patients.

How Are We Doing?

There is a Hand Hygiene Strategy for the improvement and maintenance of hand hygiene standards. The hospital has taken part in the National Hand Hygiene Audit since 2014 and there's been a steady increase in hand hygiene compliance over time. The HSE target is 90% and CUH has consistently achieved that and over since May 2017. See the result from May 2020 below. National hand hygiene audits are carried out twice a year and the results are published on the Health Protection Surveillance Centre (HPSC) website <https://www.hpsc.ie>



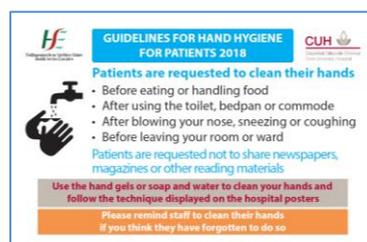
National Hand Hygiene Audit Report 2020

The Cork University and Cork Maternity Hospital (The Cork University Hospital Group (CUHG)) is fully committed to improving hand hygiene compliance across the group, consequently ensuring patient safety. We are striving to create a culture of patient Safety - where each member of staff takes responsibility to comply with the "HSE/WHO 5 Moments for Hand Hygiene".

What Are We Doing To Improve Hand Hygiene?

Regular monthly audits of hand hygiene compliance are carried out in all wards and departments in the hospital.

Business sized "hand hygiene cards" are available for our visitors and patients to remind them also to clean their hands.



There are leaflets also available for visitors and patients:

HAND HYGIENE TECHNIQUE

Follow these simple steps given by the World Health Organisation (WHO) to clean your hands.

HOW ELSE CAN I, A VISITOR, HELP REDUCE HEALTHCARE ASSOCIATED INFECTIONS?

For infection prevention & control purposes, and to keep patients safe and well, visitors are requested:

- **Not to visit** when you are unwell e.g. have a cold, flu, cold sores, diarrhoea and/or vomiting.
- **Not to eat or drink** in the ward. Canteen facilities are provided for this purpose.
- **Not to use** a patient's cup or glass.
- **Not to use** the patient toilets.
- **Not to sit** on a patient's bed. Use the chairs provided.
- **Not to touch** any medical devices, drips or catheters.

Always follow staff instructions on hand hygiene as, in some illnesses, soap and water is better at removing bacterial germs such as Clostridium difficile.

Hand Hygiene

Information for patients, relatives and visitors

CORK UNIVERSITY HOSPITAL

WHAT IS HAND HYGIENE?

Hand Hygiene is the general term that refers to the action of hand cleansing. Hands are the main pathways of germ transmission and the most important way to avoid spreading harmful germs and prevent healthcare associated infections is hand hygiene.

WHY IS HAND HYGIENE IMPORTANT?

Germs are often harmless but they can also cause illnesses such as colds, tummy bugs as well as a more serious illness like flu, MRSA and Clostridium difficile. You pick up germs routinely on your hands when you touch the environment such as door handles, telephones and after using the toilet and coughing or sneezing into your hands.

Hand hygiene is one of the most important ways to prevent the spread of infections.

WHEN SHOULD I CARRY OUT HAND HYGIENE?

Patients
You should carry out hand hygiene when hands are visibly dirty and

- Before eating or handling food.
- Before touching your eyes, nose or mouth.
- Before and after touching dressings or medical devices such as drips (Intravenous Catheter) and/or urinary catheters.
- After using the toilet, bedpan or commode, and
- After blowing your nose, coughing or sneezing.

Visitors
You should carry out hand hygiene on entering the hospital and

- Before and after visiting your relative or friend.
- Before carrying out tasks, such as helping a relative with their meal or helping them to the toilet, and
- On entering and leaving an isolation area.

Staff
Staff should carry out hand hygiene

- Before touching you.
- Before they perform a clean/aseptic procedure, such as inserting an IV (Intravenous Catheter).
- After tasks which might lead to exposure to body fluids, such as emptying your urinary catheter.
- After touching you, and
- After touching things in your care area, such as bed rails or your medical chart.

Please remind staff to clean their hands if you think they have forgotten to do so.

HOW DO I CARRY OUT HAND HYGIENE?

There are a number of ways to keep your hands clean and free from germs including bacteria and viruses.

Wash your hands with dispensed liquid soap and warm running water

- When your hands look dirty or stained.
- Remove your jewellery. Wet your hands and apply soap from the dispenser. Rub all parts of the hand and wrist vigorously (see step by step technique pictures overleaf).
- Rinse well under running water and dry with paper towels.

Use alcohol-based hand rub or gel:

- When your hands look clean and if soap and water is not available.
- Clean looking hands may still carry a lot of germs.
- Alcohol is very effective at killing germs.
- Rub your hands together vigorously using the same technique in the pictures overleaf until your hands are dry.

Our healthcare workers practice hand hygiene according to the HSE/World Health Organisation's (WHO) "Your 5 Moments for Hand Hygiene".



“Your 5 Moments for Hand Hygiene”

This is a worldwide concept where hand hygiene is performed at key points during patient care to disrupt the transmission of germs to patients. These moments are:

- • Before touching a patient
- • Before a clean or aseptic procedure
- • After contact with blood or body fluids
- • After touching a patient
- • After touching a patient’s surroundings

Hand must be cleaned before and after using gloves because gloves are not a substitute for clean hands. Gloves can lead to a false sense of cleanliness, when in fact they have touched many areas which may be contaminated.

What Do We Do To Improve Hand Hygiene And Protect Our Patients?

Annual World Hand Hygiene Day May 5th

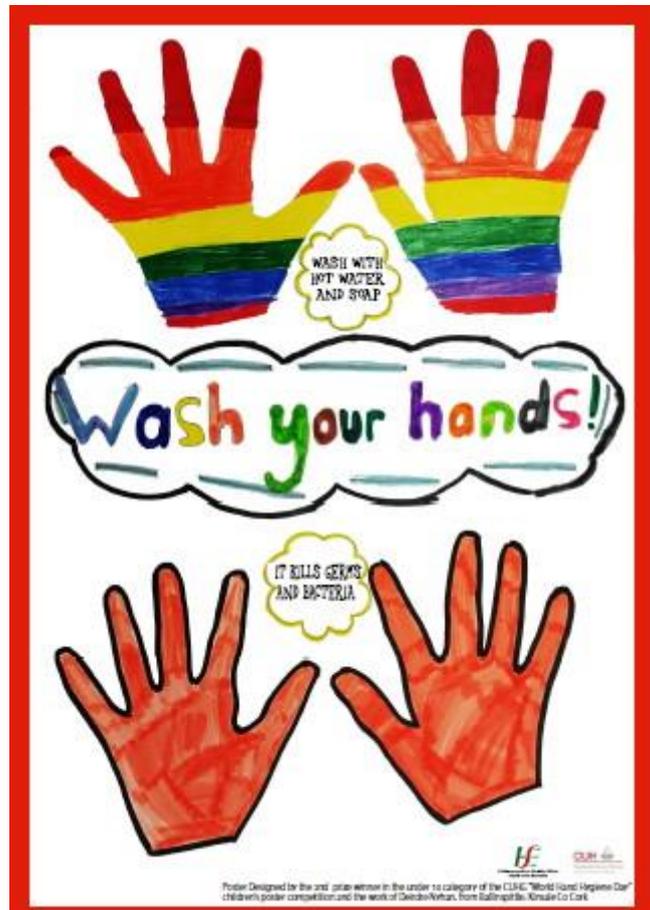
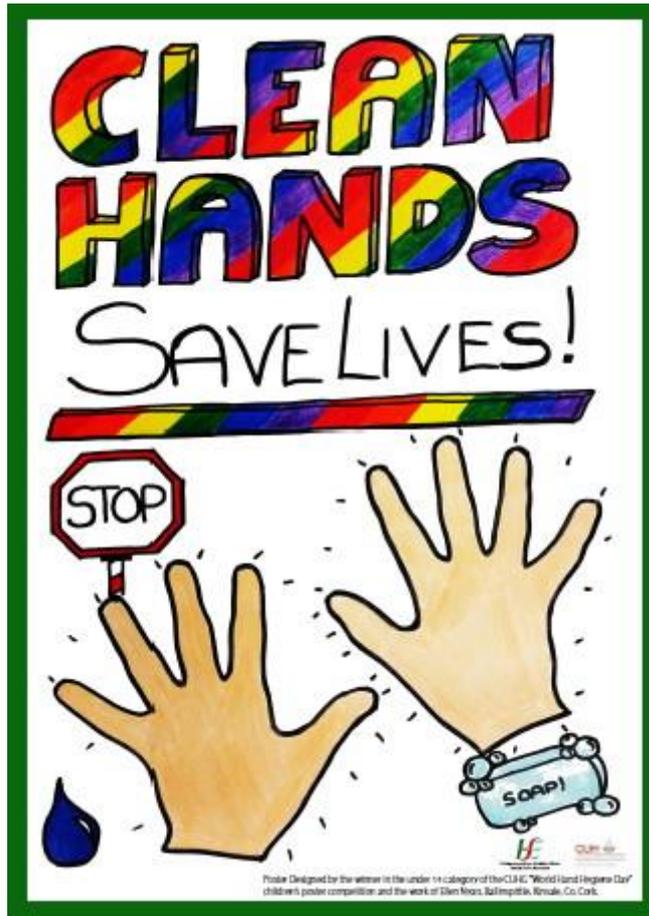


The annual “World Hand Hygiene Day” is celebrated each year with promotions and displays of hand hygiene products.

Hand hygiene is also promoted regularly in the hospital through product displays, competitions and prizes. This children’s competition in 2018 was open to local schools and patient and staff families and was very well received. A selection of the entries shown below:



The following posters were developed from a children’s hand hygiene poster competition to celebrate “World Hand Hygiene Day” on 2015.



Bare Below The Elbows Policy

The Hospital continues to draw attention to the “***Bare below the Elbows***” Policy in the hospital. This is a poster designed by the hospital and using personnel from all disciplines to spread the message.



ALL CLINICAL STAFF NEED TO BE
'Bare Below the Elbows'
when performing hand hygiene?



The Clinical Area starts once you enter the door of any patient ward or department.....

'Bare below the Elbow' means

- ***Bare wrists (short sleeve top or rolled up sleeves)***
- ***Do not wear a cardigan over uniform in clinical areas***
- ***Do not wear long sleeved top under uniform in clinical areas***
- ***Remove all wrist jewellery, including wristwatch***
- ***Remove all hand jewellery (a single plain band may be worn)***
- ***Keep fingernails short (tips less than 0.5cm)***
- ***Do not wear nail varnish, gel or false nails***

Infection Prevention & Control CUH 2016



CUH
Ospidial Oilescoll Chorcaí
Cork University Hospital