

Special Situations for Hand Hygiene in Community-based Services

Alcohol-based hand rub (ABHR) is the most effective method of hand hygiene. If hands are visibly soiled, or the client has diarrhea or is vomiting, soap and water should be used. If this is not possible, follow the recommendations below:

- Sinks excessively soiled or clean sinks inaccessible
 - Use ABHR if hands are not visibly soiled.
 - If hands are visibly soiled, use a pre-moistened towelette to remove visible soil. Discard the towelette and follow with ABHR. Staff should not routinely use pre-moistened towelettes for hand hygiene.
- No ABHR dispensers
 - Carry a personal-size AHS-approved ABHR. To avoid the risk of a client ingesting the contents, personal-size containers must stay with the healthcare provider and never be left unattended.
- No AHS-approved soap or lotion dispensers
 - Carry personal-size AHS-approved hand hygiene soap and lotion.
 - Never use a client's bar soap or other hand hygiene products, including pump dispensers, found in the client's home.
- Public Health boil water advisory
 - Use ABHR if hands are not visibly soiled.
 - If hands are visibly soiled, use a pre-moistened hand towelette to remove visible soil. Discard the towelette and follow with ABHR.
- Unsafe and/or unpredictable environments (includes urgency of care, presence of physical danger or extreme environmental conditions)
 - There may be occasions, especially in pre-hospital environments, when a 'life over limb' emergency is encountered. Omitting hand hygiene is never recommended. However, if necessary to miss hand hygiene due to urgency of the situation, don gloves and perform task. Remove gloves and perform hand hygiene at first opportunity.