

Hand Hygiene Reviews in Public Health Settings

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If you have any questions or comments regarding this information please contact the Infection Prevention & Control Hand Hygiene Program at: hand.hygiene@ahs.ca.

Frequently asked questions

- 1. Is the workstation (e.g. desk, keyboard, mouse, and computer) in the client exam room considered patient environment or healthcare environment?**
 - The workstation in the exam room is considered healthcare environment.
- 2. The [Alberta Health Services \(AHS\) Hand Hygiene Procedure](#) states washing hands with soap and water is the preferred method for hand hygiene when preparing/handling client's food. Since the vaccine for rotavirus is an oral formulation, is it necessary to wash hands with soap and water prior to administration?**
 - No. According to the [AHS Standard for the Administration of Immunizations](#) (Oral Applicators), either ABHR or washing hands with soap and water is acceptable for vaccine preparation.
- 3. Does hand hygiene need to be performed before accessing the vaccine bag each time during the client appointment?**
 - No. Vaccine bags should be cleaned and disinfected before initial use with a client. After the bag is cleaned and disinfected, the nurse can access the clean supplies from the bag without performing hand hygiene each time.
- 4. Does hand hygiene need to be performed each time the healthcare provider uses a pen to chart as they move between the client and the document during the appointment?**
 - No. Pens should be cleaned following the appointment and before the next appointment along with all equipment used during the appointment (e.g. weigh scale, toys, etc.).

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5. How do we keep reviews anonymous when there are only a small number of healthcare providers in a public health office or program?

- Hand hygiene reviews are performed for quality improvement and are not meant to be punitive. If at all possible, it would be best to accumulate data from a few reviews over the month or fiscal quarter and generate a report when you have collected observations from several healthcare providers.

6. When administering multiple vaccines at different body sites on the same client, is it necessary to perform hand hygiene between vaccines?

- No. If the nurse performs hand hygiene prior to preparing both vaccines and the injection sites, they can administer multiple vaccines on the same client without performing additional hand hygiene unless the clean procedure workflow is compromised. Refer to your departmental procedures for additional information.

Note: When an oral vaccine is administered during the same visit, the nurse must perform hand hygiene following the administration as there is a body fluid exposure risk (Moment 3).

7. Are support staff who weigh and measure children eligible to be reviewed?

- Yes. All AHS employees who have direct contact with the client or client environment can be reviewed. This includes members of the medical and midwifery staffs, students, volunteers, and other persons acting on behalf of AHS (including contracted service providers as necessary).

8. The office I work in is located in a provincial building. The company contracted to maintain the building restocks the hand hygiene products. Do we still need to use AHS provided hand hygiene products?

- Yes. It is recommended in the [AHS Hand Hygiene Policy](#) that staff use AHS provided hand hygiene products. The products are compatible with Workplace Health & Safety requirements for hand integrity. AHS provided products meet the current hand hygiene standards.

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