

IPC Advice Bulletin for staff providing Domiciliary Care (Care at Home) Issue No. 01 – June 2016

To support care staff, here is some information on good infection prevention and control (IPC) practice.

Bare Below the Elbows

It is best practice to be 'Bare Below the Elbows' (BBE) to facilitate good hand hygiene when delivering direct care to service users.

- BBE means being free from long-sleeved clothing, wrist and hand jewellery (other than one plain band ring).
- Nails should be clean and short, free from nail varnish, false or gel nails and nail jewellery.
- Dermal piercings below the elbow are not recommended as the jewellery will harbour bacteria.
- Long sleeves, if worn, should be rolled or pushed up to the elbows.

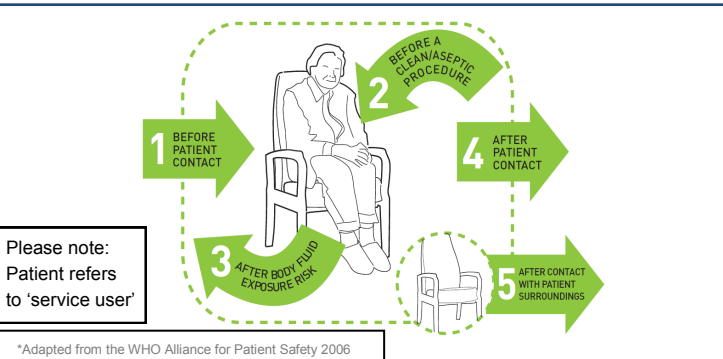


Hand Hygiene

Hand hygiene is the single most important way to prevent the spread of infection and you should apply 'Your 5 moments for hand hygiene at the point of care'. Here are some examples of when you should wash your hands:

- **whenever** hands are visibly dirty
- **before** work, **between** each visit/task and **before** you go home
- **before** putting on and **after** removing clinical or domestic gloves
- **before** preparing/serving food or assisting with eating or drinking
- **before** and **after** having a break and **after** using the toilet
- **after** handling used laundry, e.g., making beds, dirty clothing

Your 5 moments for hand hygiene at the point of care*



- **after** washing, dressing and toileting service users
- **after** coughing, sneezing or blowing your nose
- **after** performing housework
- **after** emptying commodes, urinals, catheter bags.

The use of liquid soap in a pump dispenser is recommended for use by all care staff. However, alcohol handrub can be a practical and acceptable alternative to handwashing in most situations. Please note that alcohol handrub should **not** be used when:

- hands are visibly dirty
- dealing with service users with Norovirus (viral gastroenteritis)
- dealing with service users with *Clostridium difficile*.

Therefore, handwashing with liquid soap, warm running water and drying with paper towels, e.g., kitchen rolls, is essential when dealing with anyone known to have had diarrhoea within the last 48 hours.

**Check out the Infection Prevention and Control resources on
our website at: www.infectionpreventioncontrol.co.uk**