



Supporting resource CM/01: Overview of the cleanyourhands campaign

Since its launch in 2004, the National Patient Safety Agency (NPSA) cleanyourhands campaign has been adopted by all acute NHS trusts in England and Wales and has been successful in changing the hand hygiene behaviour of healthcare workers in acute hospitals. The DHSSPS and the HSC have now linked into the campaign as it is entering its third year.

The four main components of the campaign toolkit are:

- **alcohol handrubs** – these are the cornerstone of the campaign and enable healthcare workers to clean their hands at the right time, quickly and effectively;
- **prompts to remind healthcare workers to clean their hands** – these include posters that convey powerful messages about hand hygiene and signs that direct people to hand-cleaning facilities;
- **involving patients in improving hand hygiene** – the phrase *it's OK to ask* is used on some campaign materials to raise awareness among patients of the importance of hand hygiene and encourage their involvement;
- **tools and resources to support implementation locally** – providing guidance on implementation plus templates, scripts and other materials that can be used to raise awareness, engage and educate staff at all levels across the trust.

The campaign

In developing the new materials for Year Three, the NPSA undertook extensive research including interviews with staff, visual audits of a number of hospitals, and a survey of 300+ healthcare workers in England and Wales.

The result was new campaign materials that are much stronger and harder hitting:

- Bold black posters stand out in the hospital environment.
- The use of red and green draws on the recognisable traffic light system.
- Hand gestures provide immediate impact and strengthen message.
- They convey bold statements with facts to reinforce messages.

There is also a much wider range of materials, which incorporate some educational information and ensure prominence within the hospital environment and capture the attention of staff, including:

- posters that are sent out in two stages. These include two new larger format posters with the second stage of posters designed to refresh and replenish rather than replace the first;
- signs to highlight where the hand-cleaning facilities are located;
- a leaflet providing information to healthcare workers on why, when, and how to clean their hands.

Evaluating effectiveness

The National Observational Study to Evaluate the cleanyourhands Campaign (NOSEC) **on behalf of the NPSA**, is an ongoing programme of independent research to evaluate the campaign. This has already shown that the campaign has been effective in England and Wales in changing many aspects of healthcare workers' hand hygiene behaviour in hospitals, with a significant rise in the use of alcohol handrub and the majority of trusts rating cleanyourhands as a top priority. Further information is available from: www.idrn.org/nosec.php

