



Supporting resource CM/04: Syndicated article

Format:

- The text below can be used for the basis of an article to inform staff and other relevant groups about the campaign.
- Publications that it may be suitable for use in include an organisational newsletter, staff bulletin, intranet or local authority magazine.
- You may need to change the style and content of the article to ensure that it is appropriate for your organisation and the publication in which it will be used. You may particularly wish to add details of the timing of implementation and any special events.
- If the article is to be used in a publication aimed at patients, you will need to make sure that all staff are aware of the campaign, particularly the patient-focused elements (*It's OK to ask*) described in the last two paragraphs below.

Tackling healthcare associated infection is key priority for the HSC and here at **<add trust name>** we are doing something about it. To help the improvement of staff hand hygiene and to help prevent the spread of infection, we have joined the regional hand hygiene campaign which the DHSSPS is launching.

The new materials we will be using are bolder and more serious than previous years, as a response to feedback from healthcare workers and patients in England and Wales who have been taking part in the National Patient Safety Agency's (NPSA's) national **cleanyourhands** campaign.

The NPSA undertook extensive research when developing the materials including interviews with staff, visual audits of a number of hospitals, and a survey of 300+ healthcare workers in England and Wales. Findings included a desire for harder-hitting materials; the need for the campaign materials to stand out more in the hospital environment; continued misunderstanding and lack of information about why it is so important for healthcare workers to clean their hands as well as when and how; and that it would be useful to highlight where hand-cleaning facilities are located.

The new campaign materials you'll see around the trust have been developed in response to this research, using eye-catching visuals and bold messages to communicate the importance of hand hygiene. The black background gives a strong, distinctive look that stands out in the hospital environment and emphasises the seriousness of the campaign message, while the use of hands in all the materials makes a consistent and immediate impact. The materials also use red and green to convey positive and negative statements, tying in with the traffic light system that everyone is so familiar with elsewhere.

There is a wide range of materials for the campaign, including signs that highlight the location of the alcohol handrubs. Ensuring that alcohol handrubs are available for staff to use at the point of





patient care is the cornerstone of the clean**your**hands campaign. This is not about replacing soap and water – there will always be a need for this when caring for someone with diarrhoea and vomiting or when hands are visibly dirty – but alcohol handrub enables healthcare workers to clean their hands at the right time and in the right place, when and where care is being provided.

Patients play a key role in the campaign by supporting our improvement efforts and there is a leaflet that informs them about the role of hand hygiene in preventing infection and the campaign. However, patients and visitors are unlikely to touch patients in susceptible areas of their body and are even less likely to touch another patient similarly. Therefore, the focus of the campaign remains on the hand hygiene of healthcare workers as this is where we can have the greatest impact in preventing infection.

The phrase *it's OK to ask* is used in the campaign materials to encourage patients to feel comfortable reminding staff if they think they've forgotten to clean their hands. Infections are a real concern for patients and not talking about it won't make them worry less. So giving them a copy of the patient leaflet and talking to them about why hand hygiene is so important and what we're doing as part of the campaign to improve it can help reassure them and increase their confidence in the care they are receiving.

