

29 April 2015

KwaZulu-Natal Department of Health Joins the World Hand Hygiene Campaign to Save Lives

Health care associated infections (HCAI) remain a concern for the KwaZulu-Natal Department of Health. However, hand hygiene is the simplest and most effective intervention in reducing HCAs. For healthcare workers, there are five recognised moments for hand hygiene within a healthcare setting within the health environment - before patient contact, before performing a aseptic task, after exposure to body fluids, after patient contact and after contact with patient surroundings.

“Hand hygiene is the most fundamental principle of infection prevention. When correctly practised, this basic and cost effective intervention saves lives,” says KwaZulu-Natal MEC for Health, Dr Sibongiseni Dhlomo. “There are many factors that influence compliance to hand hygiene in the clinical setting. However, the availability of alcohol hand rubs, hand wash basins and soap and hand drying materials is not in itself sufficient to improve hand hygiene practise. For improved compliance, these basics must be coupled with educational activities aimed at creating hand hygiene awareness. Every healthcare worker must make an individual commitment to consistently adhere to the 5 moments for hand hygiene.”

World Hand Hygiene Day, which is being commemorated on 05 May 2015, is an initiative by the World Health Organization (WHO) to underscore the importance of hand hygiene in the health sector and to create awareness of this practice. SAVE LIVES: Clean Your Hands - is WHO's global call to action for all healthcare workers this commemorative day.

Around the world, in participating facilities, healthcare workers will pass a 'baton' of alcohol hand rub to fellow healthcare workers. The number of participants per facility will be submitted to the WHO for tallying and it is hoped that this initiative will win a place in the Guinness World Records for the relay with the most participants. Public and private healthcare facilities in KZN will join in this activity. Register now at <http://www.who.int/gpsc/5may/register/en/> and be part of the global movement to improve hand hygiene.

Individual healthcare workers may enter the design a poster competition. A public and a private health care facility with the most interesting activity in support of world hand hygiene day will each receive the Hand Hygiene floating trophy for 2015.

Individual Activity: Design a poster that best encompasses the essence of hand hygiene in healthcare facilities.

1st prize: 2 x R500 hamper
2nd prize: 2 x R300 hamper
3rd prize: 2 x R150 hamper

Closing date for submissions is 12 May 2015. Email submissions to: kaloshnee.ganas@kznhealth.gov.za or eswarlal@ukzn.ac.za The onus is on you to ensure that the applications are received. Separate draws will be done for public and private healthcare facilities.

Facility Activity: Send us videos or photographs with a narrative of original activities that your institution will undertake on 5 May to promote hand hygiene.

Winner for the best initiative will receive the hand hygiene floating trophy for 2015/2016. **Closing date for submission is 12 May 2015.** Winner will be announced on this website. Email submissions to: jesst08@gmail.com or reshma.misra@kznhealth.gov.za The onus is on you to ensure that the applications are received.

For further information please contact:

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Please tell us of your activities planned for the day. Follow [the link and share your plans by clicking on Add Comment](#). Please enter the Name of your facility and your activities.

ENDS

Issued by the KwaZulu-Natal Department of Health