

Infection Control Micro-Learns User Guide

ABOUT THE MICRO-LEARNS

The Project Firstline Infection Control Micro-Learns are a series of guided infection control discussions that provide brief, on-the-job educational opportunities. Each micro-learn focuses on a single infection control topic and connects infection control concepts to immediate, practical value. Health care workers can easily apply the key points to their daily work and perform the recommended actions to keep germs from spreading.



USING THE MICRO-LEARNS

The micro-learns can be incorporated into existing opportunities where groups of health care workers gather, such as pre-shift “huddles” or team meetings. The sessions should be led or facilitated by an experienced team member with infection control expertise.

Each micro-learn package includes:

- **An adaptable discussion guide for the facilitator:** The discussion guide is not a script. Facilitators are encouraged to adapt the guide for their audience by including relevant and practical questions and ideas.
- **A job aid for the facilitator:** The visual job aid helps to reinforce the key messages of the micro-learn. Facilitators are encouraged to make the job aid available after the micro-learn session, such as in digital or hard copy form.

Notes for Facilitators

- 📌 Before presenting a micro-learn, check the policies and protocols at your facility and adapt the content accordingly.
- 📌 Build on your knowledge, experience, and awareness to connect the content to local context or relevant recent events so your audience can apply the concepts confidently.
- 📌 The micro-learns reinforce infection control concepts when risks are observed in patients or in the patient environment, not necessarily in visitors or other staff members.

"Hand Hygiene" Micro-Learn Discussion Guide

Use the talking points below and accompanying job aid to engage your team in short, focused discussion.
Adapt to meet your needs.



INTRODUCE THE TOPIC

Share information about the topic that your audience should know:

- **Hand hygiene** refers to the act of cleaning hands and includes the use of water, soaps, antiseptics, or other substances including alcohol-based hand sanitizer.
- The most common mode of transmission of germs in the health care setting is from hands.
- Germs are spread either directly (touch) or indirectly (air droplets).
- It is also very important to understand that germs can spread even when a patient does not present as ill. This is called colonization.



EXPAND THE TOPIC

Share additional information about what your audience should know on the job:

- Germs can be found on the hands or gloves of health care workers, on surfaces in the facility and on medical equipment.
- One of the main ways germs spread is by touching other people or surfaces with your hands and not properly cleaning your hands.
- Hand hygiene is a learned behavior that requires:
 - Understanding the need to perform hand hygiene
 - Knowing when to perform hand hygiene
 - Performing the task properly
- Share information such as the facility's process for isolation precautions, recent cases, or other relevant information.
- Share reminders, prompts, and opportunities for further learning as appropriate, including the Project Firstline website at www.cdc.gov/projectfirstline.

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DISCUSS WITH YOUR TEAM

Find out how your audience feels about the topic:

- How long does it take to properly wash your hands?
- Discuss five moments when hand hygiene should be performed?
- Do you feel confident determining whether to wash your hands or use sanitizer?
- Are you familiar with your company's Infection Control Program? If so, can you give one reason why hand hygiene is important in health care?



WRAP UP AND REINFORCE

Reinforce key takeaways:

- Today, hand hygiene remains the key to infection prevention activities and is critical in preventing health care-associated infections.
- Research shows that washing hands with soap and water could reduce deaths from diarrheal disease by up to 50%.
- Researchers estimate that if everyone routinely washed their hands, one million deaths could be prevented annually.
- A large percentage of foodborne disease outbreaks are spread by contaminated hands. Handwashing can reduce the risk of foodborne illness and other infections.
- Help reduce the spread of germs by performing hand hygiene frequently and properly.

How Do Germs Spread?

Direct Transmission

- Direct physical contact with blood or body fluids:
 - Touching
 - Kissing
 - Sexual contact
 - Contact with oral secretions
 - Contact with body lesions



Indirect Transmission

- When an infected person sneezes or coughs, infectious droplets spread into the air.
 - Droplets generally travel between three and six feet and land on surfaces or objects, including tables, doorknobs, and telephones.



Hand Hygiene Methods

Hand hygiene refers to the act of cleaning your hands.

Alcohol-based hand sanitizer

Handwashing

Antiseptic hand wash

Surgical hand hygiene/antiseptics

When to Perform Hand Hygiene

Hand hygiene remains the key to infection prevention activities and is critical in preventing health care-associated infections.



WHEN TO USE:

ALCOHOL-BASED SANITIZER

- Immediately before touching a patient
- Before performing an aseptic task
- Before moving from work on a soiled body site to a clean body site on the same patient
- After touching a patient or the patient's immediate environment
- After contact with blood, body fluids or contaminated surface
- Immediately after glove removal

SOAP AND WATER

- When hands are visibly soiled
- After caring for a person with known or suspected infectious diarrhea
- After known or suspected exposure to spores (i.e. *C. difficile* outbreaks)

