

## ShowCase

### cleanyourhands

**Topic:** Infection control

**Organisation:** National Patient Safety Agency (NPSA)

**Location:** England and Wales

**Dates:** 2004 to 2010

**Budget:** £712,000 (development, piloting and first year roll-out across England and Wales)



### Overview

The cleanyourhands campaign was a national initiative in England and Wales to combat preventable healthcare associated infection by improving the hand hygiene of healthcare staff.

The programme used a marketing mix to educate, prompt and enable healthcare staff to clean their hands at the right time, every time, during their care of patients. The key message of the campaign was for staff to clean their hands at the point-of-care, using either alcohol handrub or soap and water.

An evaluation prior to national implementation suggested that even if infection rates were reduced by 0.1 per cent, the campaign would result in an overall cost saving for the NHS.

### Results:

- Threefold increase in procurement of soap and alcohol handrub
- Alcohol handrub at point-of-care (by the bedside) in most wards in 94 per cent of acute trusts
- Considered a top priority by 84 per cent of acute trusts
- Audit and feedback occurred in most wards in 75 per cent of trusts
- Declines in MRSA bacteraemia incidence rates

## 1. BEHAVIOUR

- Improve the hand hygiene behaviour of healthcare workers, so they clean their hands more frequently and at key moments during patient care

## 2. CUSTOMER ORIENTATION

- Studies of work carried out in Oxford, Lewisham, Geneva and Pennsylvania
- Questionnaire circulated to all infection control teams in acute trusts in England and Wales
- Interviews with NHS staff
- Visual audits of hospitals
- Toolkit and marketing materials pretested and piloted in 6 acute trusts prior to national rollout
- NPSA worked with a range of individuals and agencies previously involved in improving hand hygiene to develop the campaign

## 3. THEORY

- **Habit Forming Theory:** cleanyourhands worked on the principle that if staff are prompted repeatedly to clean their hands, the action will eventually become habitual

## 4. INSIGHT

- Belief that hand hygiene is time-consuming and inconvenient
- Too few sinks available to wash hands before every patient contact
- Skin problems associated with frequent hand washing
- Negative influence of colleagues – it is not the social norm
- Low internal motivation and general low prioritisation of hand hygiene – if hands do not look visibly dirty, they are probably ‘clean enough’

## 5. EXCHANGE

### NHS trusts

- Campaign looks expensive – Hand hygiene improvement is very cost effective
- Financial burden of purchasing alcohol handrub locally – NPSA worked with NHS to establish national contracts
- Staff become desensitised to posters – Posters changed monthly for first 2 years

### Healthcare staff

- Prefer gloves – Gloves do not replace need for hand hygiene
- Alcohol dries out hands – Modern handrub contains skin softeners

## 6. COMPETITION

- Other eye-catching health and safety information – Implemented stronger images and black and white campaign
- Other campaigns aiming to improve hospital hygiene

## 7. SEGMENTATION

### Primary audience

- Healthcare workers
- Nurses, doctors, care assistants, allied health professionals, dentists, physiotherapists, paramedics

### Secondary audience

- Patients and visitors

## 8. METHODS MIX

- Alcohol handrub at point-of-care
- Posters and other materials acted as prompts
- Campaign handbook and guidance video available to all NHS trusts
- Templates, briefing documents, press releases
- Each trust had a lead campaign coordinator
- cleanyourhands ‘champions’ to create role models
- Patient and visitors encouraged to remind staff about hand hygiene