

## **HSE AMRIC guidance for promoting the importance of hand hygiene and infection prevention and control (IPC) measures when visiting HSE services**

### **For: HSE/DoH/Government representatives visiting healthcare facilities and residential care**

HSE senior managers, DoH representatives / government ministers regularly visit a wide variety of health services across Ireland. It's important that everyone who visits health care and residential care facilities observes good hand hygiene and infection prevention and control (IPC) practice.

One of our key clinical priorities is to protect patients, visitors and staff from the risk of healthcare-associated infections.

This short guidance document will help those who visit all healthcare facilities and residential care facilities to take a proactive approach when arriving on site.

*It is important that we lead by example.* We all have a role to play in reducing the spread of infection in our health services. Demonstrating your understanding of the importance of hand hygiene and IPC on your arrival to a site sends a strong leadership message.



**To comply with good infection prevention and control practice please follow the healthcare and residential care facility's IPC guidance.**

It can be very powerful to actively demonstrate and reinforce the importance of good hand hygiene and IPC practices, as appropriate, on these visits.

### *All areas*

- ☐ Clean your hands either with alcohol based hand rub or wash with soap and water. Please see the illustrations overleaf.

### *Clinical / Patient Areas*

- ☐ Demonstrate that you understand being “bare above the wrists” in clinical and patient settings. This means no long sleeves. Removing any suit jackets and rolling up long sleeved shirts/tops or wearing short sleeved clothing will show your understanding of infection prevention and control practice. Should you wish to cover your forearms, the minimum requirement is that the forearm is bare for about 5 to 10cm above the wrist.
- ☐ Bare above the wrist also means no hand/arm jewellery apart from 1 plain gold band – no wristwatches, bracelets, rings with stones etc. It is good practice to not wear nail polish, remove jewellery /watches and have hair neat and off the shoulder before entering clinical areas.
- ☐ Ties can be a source of infection and should be removed or tucked inside the shirt in clinical settings.

## How to handrub

Rub hands with hand sanitiser for hand hygiene. Wash hands when visibly dirty.

Length of time to use handrub: 20-30 seconds



Apply a palmful of the product in a cupped hand, covering all surfaces



Rub hands palm to palm



Right palm over the back of the left hand with interlaced fingers and do same on other hand



Palm to palm with fingers interlaced



Backs of fingers to opposite palm with fingers interlocked



Rotational rubbing of left thumb clasped in right palm and do same on other hand



Rub in a circle with clasped fingers of right hand in left palm do same on other hand



Once dry, your hands are safe



[www.hse.ie/infectioncontrol](http://www.hse.ie/infectioncontrol)

Full information on hand hygiene can be found on [www.hse.ie/handhygiene](http://www.hse.ie/handhygiene)

If you would like further information or advice on infection prevention or hand hygiene please contact the HSE's AMRIC team [hcai.amr@hse.ie](mailto:hcai.amr@hse.ie)



## How to hand wash

Wash hands when visibly soiled. Otherwise, use handrub with hand sanitiser.



Length of time to spend washing: 40-60 seconds



Wet hands with water



Apply enough soap to cover all hand surfaces



Rub hands palm to palm



Right palm over the back of the left hand with interlaced fingers and do same on other hand



Palm to palm with fingers interlaced



Backs of fingers to opposite palm with fingers interlocked



Rotational rubbing of left thumb clasped in right palm and do same on other hand



Rub in a circle with clasped fingers of right hand in left palm do same on other hand



Rinse hands with water



Dry hands thoroughly with a clean towel or single use towel



For non-clinical hand wash basins turn off the tap with a tissue



Your hands are now safe



[www.hse.ie/infectioncontrol](http://www.hse.ie/infectioncontrol)

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