

AHCA/NCAL Clinical Scenario Teaching Tool – Hand Hygiene

Clinical Scenario – Hand Hygiene

Claire is the Staff Development nurse and the Infection Preventionist (IP), in a 95-bed long-term care facility. They have 80 beds designated as long-term care, however, due to their proximity to the small-town hospital, they also have a 15-bed short stay unit, that quickly moves residents in/out, depending on their reason for admission. She is preparing her orientation for the following week. Looking at the surveillance from her last month's infection control record, she notes that they have seen an increase in the number of infections and colonization especially in Methicillin-resistant Staphylococcus aureus (MRSA). There are no trends or patterns per se, however, the long-term care side has had an increase in overall infections. She looks at what may be a root cause, and she wonders if it could be due to inappropriate hand hygiene since she has observed staff forgetting to use alcohol-based hand rubs before or after caring for residents or after taking off their gloves.

Claire utilizes the shift coach program that develops staff to be an extension of the infection prevention program. In this program, designated staff on each unit on each shift help observe and provide non-penalizing guidance to their co-workers. They meet with the IP for short regular huddles to report their observations as well as challenges they are finding to the IP and discuss potential solutions.

During a huddle, one shift coach on the rehab unit described an observation of one of the nurses – Amy. Amy is an LPN and has worked in the facility for 5 years. She is very skilled, knowledgeable and just as importantly, loved by all the residents. The shift coach watched Amy pass medications to several residents. She notes that prior to setting up the medication, Amy uses the alcohol-based hand sanitizer to clean her hands. She dispenses the product onto her hands and rubs all areas of hand surfaces together until they are dry. Claire timed Amy and noted that it took her 10 seconds to do this. She dispensed the medication into the medication cup, and again, used the hand sanitizer rubbing until it was dry. She did not touch anything in the resident's environment, as she brought a glass of juice with her for residents to take the pills with. After administering the medications, she returns to the cart, and before signing off on them, uses the hand sanitizer one more time to clean her hands for about 5 seconds. She does this for all five residents.

Questions

1. **What was the error that the shift coach observed the LPN making?**
 - a. The LPN should have washed her hands with soap and water.
 - b. She should have worn gloves to carry the water glass.
 - c. 11 seconds is not sufficient time to clean hands with ABHR.
 - d. None of the above.

2. **Why did Claire intervene and stop the culinary staff before opening the refrigerator?**
 - a. The culinary staff could have cross contaminated by not changing gloves and performing hand hygiene before touching the refrigerator handle.
 - b. Gloves are not indicated in dietary.
 - c. Vegetables cannot carry bacteria when washed so it doesn't matter.
 - d. None of the above.

3. **What was the problem with the housekeeper's actions that were identified by the shift coach?**
 - a. She did not clean the room long enough.
 - b. She failed to use hand sanitizer or hand washing after removing her gloves.
 - c. She does not need to use gloves when cleaning a resident's room.
 - d. None of the above.

Finally, a third shift coach from the long-term care unit reported observing the nursing assistants during meal service while the IP took a short break in the common room where meals were being served. The shift coach notes that she offered the residents the ability to wash their hands prior to meal service from a covered bin with warm washcloths in it. She also notes that in between tray deliveries, the nursing assistant uses alcohol-based hand sanitizer. As the nursing assistant passed a tray to a resident that requires assistance with eating, she set the tray down, used the alcohol-based hand sanitizer one more time, and then proceeded to help the resident with their meal. The shift coach notes the nursing assistant offered to wash the resident's hands, as there are times the resident would reach out and pick up some food items from the plate to feed themselves. While with the resident, the nursing assistant only spoke with the resident and kept them engaged and on task throughout the meal service. Once she was done assisting the resident, she got a washcloth from the bin to wash the residents' hands, then used the alcohol-based sanitizer to rub her own hands before removing the resident from the dining room to the activity area.

Questions

4. What errors did the shift coach observe?
 - a. She used ABHR too often.
 - b. She should have used ABHR for the resident's hands.
 - c. There was no need for as much ABHR use in this scenario.
 - d. None of the above.