

Your resource for the latest news in effective infection control program development and best practices.

# HAND HYGIENE TIMES



## The Secret to a Successful Hand Hygiene Product Transition?

## Keep Healthcare Workers Involved Every Step of the Way!

Lori Moore,  
MPH, BSN, RN, CPPS  
Clinical Educator, GOJO Industries

Hand hygiene is one of the most important measures for reducing germs that may cause illness within healthcare facilities.<sup>1</sup> Hand hygiene products are a critical component of a hand hygiene program and include alcohol-based hand rub, soap, and the often forgotten important player, lotion.

The need to change hand hygiene products can be prompted for many reasons including superior product quality, cost savings, advanced dispensing systems, and compatibility of dispensers with automated hand hygiene monitoring systems.<sup>2</sup> Selecting and implementing new hand hygiene products can be a difficult task, and healthcare facilities will need to anticipate and address a number of logistical, organizational, and human factor elements throughout the process to ensure a smooth transition.

Human factor elements often do not get the attention that they warrant. While a major emphasis in the selection process is efficacy and cost, a major determinant of hand hygiene compliance is acceptance of the products by healthcare workers (HCWs).<sup>3</sup> The behavioral aspects of hand hygiene are complex and must be considered as part of the equation when selecting products. Even the best well-formulated hand hygiene products will be inherently limited in their ability to reduce germs if healthcare workers don't like to use them. Thus, the "best" products are those that meet the required efficacy and cost criteria while optimizing product acceptance to ensure maximum product usage.

So how do we increase the likelihood of acceptance and maximal usage of new hand hygiene products? We keep frontline HCWs involved and engaged in the process.

Increasingly, frontline HCWs are being left out of product trials and selection and are thereafter encouraged to "buy in" to a decision that has been externally imposed. Conversely, a frontline ownership approach advocates for HCWs to be apprised early on of the rationale of desired change efforts and be actively involved in developing ideas, making decisions, and acting on the plans.<sup>4</sup> Thus, it is recommended that facilities ensure that frontline HCWs are a part of the multidisciplinary team that is responsible for product trials and decision making.<sup>1</sup>

Product transition is a great time to revisit placement of alcohol-based hand rub (ABHR) dispensers. While this can be time consuming, dispensers act as visual cues for hand hygiene behavior, and involving HCWs in performing workflow mapping of dispensers can ensure strategic placement for frequent use.<sup>5</sup> This is also a great time to re-educate HCWs on the appropriate product and technique for each moment of hand hygiene. ABHR should be used for the majority of hand hygiene moments, reserving soap and water for only those moments when hands are visibly soiled or after caring for those with norovirus, infectious diarrhea, or per facility policy. Finally, make sure lotion is part of the transition plan and is readily available for HCWs at the time of new product installation.

Transitioning to new hand hygiene products is not something that facilities do very often, and it is always a challenging endeavor. Ensuring that frontline HCWs are involved every step of the way will go a long way in ensuring a smooth transition and optimizing product acceptance and usage.

<sup>1</sup> World Health Organization. WHO Guidelines for hand hygiene in health care. Geneva, Switzerland: World Health Organization; 2009.

<sup>2</sup> Amirov CM, Candon HL, Jacob L. Making change easy: a peer-to-peer guide on transitioning to new hand hygiene products. *Am J Infect Control* 2017;45:46-50.

<sup>3</sup> Larson E, Girard R, Pessoa-Silva CL, Boyce J, Donaldson L, Pittet D. Skin reactions related to hand hygiene and selection of hand hygiene products. *Am J Infect Control* 2006;34:627-635.

<sup>4</sup> Zimmerman B, Reason P, Rykert L, Gitterman L, Christian J, Gardam M. Front-line ownership: generating a cure mindset for patient safety. *Healthc Pap* 2013;13:6-22.

<sup>5</sup> Bush K, Mah MW, Meyers G, Armstrong P, Stoesz J, Strople S. Going Dotty: a practical guide for installing new hand hygiene products. *Am J Infect Control* 2007;35:690-693.



# PRODUCT FEATURE

## Online Resources for Product Transition Education

Transitioning to new products represents a pivotal element of your ongoing commitment to hand hygiene improvement. At GOJO, we recognize that change can be difficult, and we are here to help you every step of the way. GOJO has developed a toolkit that contains critical information and education for you to utilize throughout your healthcare facility during the pre-installation, installation, and post-installation phases.

With the extensive experience GOJO has transitioning customers, the importance of education cannot be overstated. Many of the challenges associated with changing hand hygiene products can be minimized via proactive efforts.

### Keep Staff Informed

A smooth product transition begins with good communication. Choose from customizable posters that will help create excitement and awareness around the new products and dispensers soon to be installed at your facility.

### Keep Hands Healthy

Proactively providing education and tips for skin care during this time will help ensure a smooth transition and increase acceptance of the new products. We have a variety of resources to help you specifically address skin health with your staff.

### Formulation and Dose Counts

Product formulation and dose (volume) are critical variables influencing the effectiveness of hand sanitizers. Choose from a variety of resources to help you and your healthcare workers understand the importance of rubbing the full dispensed dose onto hands every time.

### Apply Correctly

Proper technique is important when it comes to effective hand hygiene. Product transitions are an ideal time to re-educate staff and reinforce good hand hygiene practices. We have resources on hand hygiene technique and product selection based on the WHO recommendations for you and your staff.



Contact your healthcare sales director for your personalized installation and care materials.