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## **“Assessment of Knowledge and practice of hand washing among staff nurses”**

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### **Abstract**

Hand washing is regarded as the single and the most effective way of controlling health care associated infections. A descriptive study to assess the knowledge and practice of handwashing among staff nurses working in selected units of Bombay Hospital, Indore was conducted with the objectives to assess the level of knowledge of the staff nurses regarding hand washing and to assess the level of practice of staff nurses regarding hand washing. An explorative research approach was used, 50 staff nurses were selected using convenience sampling. Data was collected using structured knowledge questionnaire and observational checklist. Data was analysed using descriptive and inferential statistics. The mean knowledge score of hand washing among staff nurses was 12.68 which indicates that nurses were having good knowledge regarding hand hygiene. 72 % of staff nurses were in the category of good knowledge score. The mean practice score was 12.8 which indicates that nurses had good practice related to hand washing. 44% were in the category of good practice score.

Key Words : Staff Nurses, hand washing, assessment, practice, knowledge

### **Introduction**

Hand Washing is considered as the single, most effective way of controlling health care associated infection. It is the simplest measure for preventing the spread of bacteria, pathogen and viruses. Inadequate hand washing facilities had have been the major barrier to hand washing. So there is a need to improve the availability and accessibility of hand washing facility and supplies of hand washing agents in a health care facility or hospitals. Nosocomial infection rate are often higher for ICU than other units of hospital. Despite widespread of knowledge of the importance of hand washing health care workers wash their hands less often and this is the cause for prevalence and incidence of nosocomial infections. The most common ways germs spread is by peoples hands. Germs can cause illness ranging from colds , flu to major infections. Medical hand hygiene pertains to the hygiene practices related to administration of medication and medical care that prevents or minimizes disease and the spreading of disease. The overall

hand hygiene compliance rate of 64% was higher than the average baseline rates for hand hygiene compliance of 40% although the methods used for defining adherence and those used for conducting observations vary considerably between studies (Boyce and Pittet, 2001). These results show that inappropriate hand washing may be a component of poor hand-hygiene compliance. Thus by knowing the results of the previous studies and the inadequacy of hand washing in various health care settings all over the world, this study was conducted in order to assess the hand washing knowledge and practice among the staff nurses in Bombay Hospital ,Indore.

### **Problem Statement**

An explorative study to assess the of knowledge and practice of hand washing among staff nurses in a selected hospital at Indore.

### **Objectives :**

To assess the level of knowledge of the staff nurses regarding hand washing.

To assess the practice of staff nurses regarding hand washing.

### **Research Methodology :**

In this study a non experimental descriptive research design was used .The setting used for the study was Bombay Hospital, Indore which includes a population of 50 staff nurses. The samples were selected using convenience sampling technique. Data was collected in two sections i.e. Section A consists of Socio Demographic Performa and Sec. B consists of Self Structured Questionnaire Checklist. Permission was taken from the management of Bombay Hospital ,Indore to conduct the study and also written consents were obtained from the participants. Also written permission was obtained from the ethical and research committee of Bombay Hospital College of Nursing, Indore. The reliability coefficient was found to be 0.89, which proved that the tool was highly reliable.

### **Results**

84% of the subjects were in the age group of 21-30 years , 16% were in the age group of 13-40 years and none of them in the age group of 41-50 and 51-60 years. For educational qualification 50% were GNM , 38% were B.Sc. Nursing and only 12% had done Post Basic Nursing. In terms of designation 98% were staff nurses and only 2 % were Ward In charges.

All 100% had exposure of working in general ward and also 100% of them worked for 8-10 hrs. per day. In years of experience 38% were freshers and 38% had 2 years of experience and remaining 24% had 5 years of experience and none of them had more than 10 years of experience.

The mean knowledge score of hand washing among staff nurses was 12.68 which indicates that nurses were having good knowledge regarding hand hygiene. 72 % of staff nurses were in the category of good knowledge score , 8% in excellent knowledge score, 20% in average knowledge score and none of them were in the poor knowledge score category.

The mean practice score was 12.8 which indicates that nurses had good practice related to hand washing. 28% each were in the category of excellent and average practice score and 44% were in the category of good practice score.

### **Conclusion**

Overall the study concludes that the nurses had good knowledge and practice related to hand hygiene.

### **Implications**

The study findings revealed that the study helped to identify the problem regarding hand washing knowledge and practice. It has its implications in Nursing Practice, Nursing Education, Nursing Research and Nursing Administration.

### **Nursing Practice**

- The nurses working in various departments should have the knowledge of hand washing to control the rate of infection.
- Nurses play a vital role in the health care delivery system and hand washing is a way to prevent the risk of getting an infection while treating patients.

### **Nursing Education**

- Hand washing techniques must be taught to nursing students as they are posted in clinical areas right from the 1<sup>st</sup> year.
- Nursing Students should be taught proper hand washing techniques as it will help them to prevent infection spread of infection among themselves as well as others.

- Demonstrations could be organised for students as it will help them to enhance their practice .

### **Nursing Research**

- A similar study can be conducted on a larger scale.
- Many more research studies such as comparative study between demonstration and planned teaching prog. can be done .
- The present study is just an initial attempt and it will encourage and motivate health personnel to do many more research studies.
- Also studies to assess the knowledge ,practice and attitude could be done on the other members of health care team.

### **Nursing Administration**

- Nurse administrators are in a key position to organize, implement and evaluate educative programs which will in turn helps improve the knowledge and practice of hand washing among staff nurses.
- Nursing supervisor should actively participate in learning experience of junior nurses.
- Need to talk about nurses to know what is needed to improve regarding hand washing.
- Nursing administrator should improve the community education and practice of hand washing by continuing education intervention.

### **Limitations**

- The findings of the study could not be generalized as the study was conducted on small sample.

### **Recommendation**

- A similar study can be conducted on larger scale.
- An experimental study can be conducted on a larger scale.
- Qualitative, Quantitative or mixed method research study could be conducted on the effectiveness of hand washing in reducing the rate of infection control.

### **References**



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