

Medication Administration and Hand Hygiene in Healthcare

Contaminated hands of healthcare providers are the primary way of spreading germs in healthcare. Proper hand hygiene decreases the spread of germs, thus reducing infection risk, impact to patients/residents/clients, and overall healthcare costs, including length of stay⁴. Medication administration is considered a clean procedure, so it is very important staff clean their hands immediately before preparing and administering medications to their patients/residents/clients. "Perform hand hygiene before preparing meds and after administration to reduce the risk of transmitting microorganisms"¹.

How do we decrease the risk of transmission related to medication administration?

- ✔ Staff need to clean their hands prior to contact with medication rooms, Pyxis machines, and medication carts so these spaces/surfaces stay clean and staff can remove freely within these areas^{3, 5}
- ✔ Staff need to adhere to the medication administration policy regarding hand hygiene when administering medications²



RECOMMENDATIONS

- Clean medication rooms, medication carts, and Pyxis machines on a regular schedule and immediately when contaminated. For example, if a resident in a PCH is seen touching the medication cart, staff must immediately disinfect the cart to ensure it is clean again.
- Ensure [IP&C approved disinfectant](#) wipes are easily accessible so spaces/carts can be wiped down if contaminated.
- Place signs outside of medication rooms/Pyxis spaces and on medication carts to remind staff their hands need to be clean prior to any contact with these rooms/carts.
- Ensure alcohol - based hand rub is available for easy access for hand hygiene.
- When not in use or supervised, store medication carts in a safe place.

1. Clinical Procedures for Safer Patient Care. (2018). Safe medication administration. Retrieved <https://pressbooks.bccampus.ca/clinicalproceduresforsaferpatientcaretrubscn/chapter/6-2-safe-medication-administration/>
2. Deer Lodge Center. (2021). Safe medication administration. Retrieved <https://policies.wrha.mb.ca/policy/209/007-medications/4996/dlc-80-007-034-safe-medication-administration.pdf>
3. Government of Canada. (2021). Hand hygiene practices in healthcare settings. Retrieved [Hand Hygiene Practices in Healthcare Settings - Canada.ca](#)
4. Toney-Butler, T., Gasner, A. and Carver, N. (2023). Hand hygiene. Retrieved <https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/books/NBK470254/>
5. World Health Organization. (2012). Hand hygiene: Why, how and when. Retrieved [Hand Hygiene: Why, How & When? \(who.int\)](#)