

## Contact Us

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## Frequently Asked Questions

Below are some frequently asked questions Hand Hygiene Australia have received from health care workers.

**Q: Do I still need to perform hand hygiene if my hands are clean?**

A: Even when our hands look clean many germs may be still present which could transmit disease or other infections. Alcohol based hand rub (ABHR) is effective against many types of bacteria and viruses, which are invisible to our eyes.

**Q: When should I wash my hands?**

A: If hands are visibly soiled, or contaminated with blood or body fluids, then hand washing with plain or anti-microbial soap is

recommended. The same is advised following known or suspected exposure to bacterial spores (e.g. *Clostridium difficile*), non-enveloped viruses (e.g. norovirus), or parasites. Washing hands with soap and water is preferred because it guarantees a mechanical removal effect.

**Q: Can I wear artificial fingernails when having direct contact with patients?**

A: Health Care Workers with artificial nails are more likely than those with natural nails to harbour gram-negative pathogens on their fingertips. HHA recommend that Health Care Workers be prohibited from wearing artificial nails.

**Q: Will it matter if my hands are wet when I apply the ABHR?**

A: Yes, having wet hands dilutes the solution thus decreasing its effectiveness. The product must be applied to dry hands.



# The National Hand Hygiene Initiative Newsletter

## Save Lives: Clean your Hands Day, 5 May 2009

On Tuesday 5 May 2009 Australia participated in the World Health Organization's (WHO)

ing out alcohol based hand rub samples, developing screen savers for computers, on hold messages, guessing and colouring in competitions, t-shirts, badges and stickers all raising awareness and spreading the word of the importance of hand hygiene.

There was also media and print coverage about the day with a number of metropolitan, regional and rural newspapers printing



Hand Hygiene display at The Canberra Hospital, ACT

SAVE LIVES: Clean Your Hands Day. WHO's aim of the day was to have all WHO member states pledge their commitment to hand hygiene by 2010 and to have 5000 hospitals registered to take the message of "hand hygiene at the point of care" to as wide a global health-care audience as possible. The day was supported by the Minister for Health and Ageing, the Hon Nicola Roxon MP.

Australia used the day to promote the National Hand Hygiene Initiative across the country. Each state and territory participated in the event with hospitals and area health services putting on a range of activities such as BBQs, foyer displays, giving



Clinical Excellence Commission, Sydney staff at the stall in Martin Place

articles about the initiative. Radio stations from across the country also interviewed experts on the importance of hand hygiene.

Professor Lindsay Grayson, Director of Hand Hygiene Australia has produced a vodcast demonstrating an effective hand hygiene technique which is available for viewing at: [www.hha.org.au](http://www.hha.org.au)



David Koch and Natalie Barr from the Sunrise breakfast TV program learn how to use alcohol based hand rub



We would like to thank all the hospitals, areas health services and departments of health who participated in this global event to raise awareness and spread the word on the importance of hand hygiene.



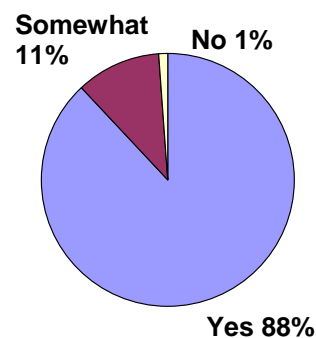
Hand Hygiene online learning participation certificates of staff at the Royal Hospital for Women, Sydney

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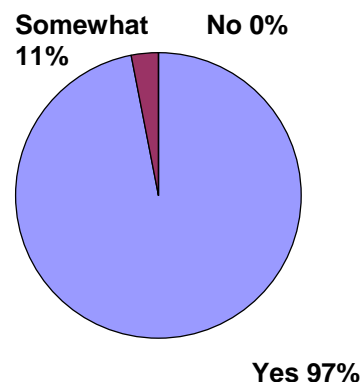
## Hand Hygiene Australia Update

Did the workshop provide you with an understanding of the practicalities of implementing the 5 Moments HH program?



“Over 13,000 healthcare workers have undertaken the online learning package”

Did the workshop provide you with a good understanding of the 5 Moments for Hand Hygiene?



**New Appointments within the Hand Hygiene Australia team**  
To ensure the ongoing successful roll out of the National Hand Hygiene Initiative (NHHI) across the country, HHA have recently appointed two new team members, Ms Sally Havers and Mr Paul Simpson. Both Sally and Paul will play a large role in the implementation of the NHHI into the private hospitals sector in their roles as HHA Project Coordinators. We welcome Sally and Paul to the team.

**HHA Manual**  
The review of the draft version of the HHA Manual, which was released in late 2008, is almost complete. The final version of the HHA Guidelines will be released in the second half of 2009. The manual is a major resource for participants in the NHHI, and is available on the HHA website. The completion of the final version of the HHA Manual follows the release of the final version of the WHO Guidelines on Hand Hygiene in Healthcare document in May 2009. This document is an excellent resource and provides an excellent review of the literature relating to hand hygiene. It can be accessed by following the links on the HHA website.

**Website statistics**  
The HHA website is the first port of call for resources on HH activities. All content is managed by the HHA team which enables updates to be posted in a timely manner.

Between November 2008 — June 2009, there were 32,985 visits to the website with 537,220 page views. Visitors spent an average of 9.5 minutes on the site. Analysis of the website data also demonstrates that visitors from ninety seven different countries have accessed the website.

**Online learning package (OLP) design**  
Over 13,000 healthcare workers have undertaken the OLP. In some hospitals and regions, all healthcare workers are expected to complete the package on commencement of employment. The OLP is an integral part of making hand hygiene ‘Core Business’ for health care workers, and HHA recommend all healthcare facilities encourage their staff to undertake the program.



**Workshops**  
Up to the end of May, a total of 37 workshops attended by 534 participants have been conducted in all major cities except Brisbane. This number will continue to grow in the last half of 2009 as workshops for public hospitals across NSW, and in the Private sector nationally, are conducted.

The HHA team are constantly reviewing the content and delivery method of the workshops. To assist this process, evaluations are undertaken to provide feedback to the HHA team. Results from two of the evaluation questions are presented in graphs on the left of the page.

On the 23<sup>rd</sup> April HHA conducted a special workshop for industry representatives. The objective of the workshop was to inform industry on the aims of HHA and the NHHI, to dispel any myths regarding HHA and NHHI, and to discuss guidelines and recommendation. Twenty two representatives attended and feedback was extremely positive. Those in attendance indicated they would like HHA to conduct a similar workshop next year.

## The National Hand Hygiene Coordinators and Advisory Committee Members

**Lindsay Grayson and Philip Russo** represent **Hand Hygiene Australia** on the Hand Hygiene Advisory Committee

**Katherine McGrath** is the **Chair** of the Hand Hygiene Advisory Committee

**Chris Baggoley, Marilyn Cruickshank, Jenny Stackelroth and Wendy Beckett** represent the **Commission** on the Hand Hygiene Advisory Committee

**Clifford Hughes** is the **Medical Officer** on the Hand Hygiene Advisory Committee

**Robin Smith** represents the **Northern Territory** on the Hand Hygiene Advisory Committee

**Jenny Firman** represents the **Department of Health and Ageing** on the Hand Hygiene Advisory Committee

**Robert Fletcher** is the **West Australian** Coordinator for Hand Hygiene Australia. Robert has a nursing background with clinical experience in spinal, trauma and orthopaedics. Rob coordinated the Royal Perth Hospital's hand hygiene improvement program before becoming the state coordinator.

**Scott Mayoh** represents **Queensland** on the Hand Hygiene Advisory Committee

**Maree Connolly** is the **New South Wales** Coordinator for Hand Hygiene Australia. Maree is a registered nurse and a midwife. Maree worked as a project officer in the "Clean Hands Save Lives" and the Bloodwatch campaign before becoming the state coordinator.

**Rebecca McCann** represents **Western Australian** on the Hand Hygiene Advisory Committee



**Annette Pantle** represents **New South Wales** on the Hand Hygiene Advisory Committee

**Wendy Peacock** is the **South Australian** Coordinator for Hand Hygiene Australia. Wendy is a registered nurse and has been working as an Infection Control Professional for the last 7 years before becoming the state coordinator.

**Paul Simpson** is one of the **Private Sector** Coordinators for Hand Hygiene Australia. Paul has a nursing background and served as a nurse in the navy. He was working as a Clinical Nurse Consultant in an Infection Prevention and Surveillance Service before becoming a coordinator.

**Lucy Sargent** is the **ACT's** hand hygiene coordinator. Lucy completed her nursing training in the UK and The Netherlands. Lucy worked in the Emergency Department for a period of 9 years in the UK and Canberra before becoming the state coordinator.

**Linda Henderson** represents South Australia on the Hand Hygiene Advisory Committee

**Jacqui Bear** represents the **ACT** on the Hand Hygiene Advisory Committee

**Kel Heard** is the **Victorian** Coordinator for Hand Hygiene Australia. Kel has a nursing background and worked as a project officer for the Victorian Quality Council's Hand Hygiene Project before becoming the state coordinator.

**Libby Limmer** is the **Tasmanian** Coordinator for Hand Hygiene Australia as well as the Infection Control Coordinator at Calvary Healthcare Tasmania, Southern Campuses. Libby was the Clinical Nurse Manager of the Endoscopy Unit before becoming the state coordinator.

**Sally Havers** is one of the **Private Sector** Coordinators for Hand Hygiene Australia. Sally has a nursing background and was working in a Service Improvement, Education & Infection Control role before becoming a coordinator.

**Kaye Bellis** is a Hand Hygiene Australia Coordinator. Kaye has a nursing background and has been working in Infection Control for 10 years. Kaye was the state educator for Hand hygiene Victoria becoming a coordinator.

**Brett Mitchell** represents **Tasmania** on the Hand Hygiene Advisory Committee

**Christine Gee, Nikki Robinson and Bernie Lyons** represent the **Private Sector** on the Hand Hygiene Advisory Committee