



News Release

May 5, 2010

STOP! Clean Your Hands Day

'focus on reducing the spread of healthcare related infections in Canada'

Toronto, Canada – The Canadian Patient Safety Institute (CPSI), Accreditation Canada and the Community and Hospital Infection Control Association-Canada (CHICA-Canada), have joined forces to support the practice of optimal hand hygiene in healthcare.

The first ever national **Stop! Clean Your Hands Day** takes place today on May 5, 2010. CPSI is leading the Canadian initiative in conjunction with the World Health Organization's global initiative.

“Each year in Canada, 8,000 to 12,000 patients die as a result of complications of healthcare-associated infections. Through the simple act of practicing optimal hand hygiene, you can help reduce that number,” says Hugh MacLeod, CEO, CPSI. “It is our role through awareness and promotion to help reduce the spread of healthcare related infections to our patients who have entrusted us by encouraging optimal hand hygiene.”

Resources are now available for healthcare providers and patients to assist with optimal hand hygiene in the healthcare environment. These resources can be found at www.handhygiene.ca

“The intent of Accreditation Canada’s Required Organizational Practices in hand hygiene is to encourage the education, training and monitoring of compliance with accepted hand hygiene practices,” says Wendy Nicklin, President and CEO, Accreditation Canada. “North York General Hospital is an example of a hospital that has had great success with hand hygiene compliance.”

Since the hospital first launched their hand hygiene campaign almost two years ago, they have improved their rate of compliance from just below the national average of 40% to above 80% and have sustained the improvement for more than 18 months.

“We encourage all healthcare facilities to implement effective hand hygiene programs using the resources that are readily available through provincial and national organizations,” says Anne Bialachowski, President, CHICA-Canada.

“After watching my mother-in-law’s death from a *Clostridium difficile* infection and the six courses of powerful antibiotics given, unsuccessfully, to combat it – I have a strong message for caregivers, patients and loved ones – WASH YOUR HANDS,” says Johanna Trimble, Patients for Patient Safety Canada.



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