Patient-Based Surveys to Better Understand Patients’ Perceptions of Healthcare Providers’ Hand Hygiene Practices and If Patient Responses Validate Secret Observers’ Hand Hygiene Compliance Reporting

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Background

- Hand hygiene (HH) is one of the simplest and most effective methods to decrease healthcare-associated infections (HAIs).
- However, in outpatient settings it is difficult to audit HH practices as patient-healthcare provider (HCP) interactions take place behind closed doors.
- Within our system, secret observers (SO) monitor HCPs HH, which is routinely reported at near 100%.
- We wished to determine patient’s perception of their HCP’s HH and see how well it matched SO HH observations.

Purpose

- We developed an anonymous two-question survey which queried patients if their HCP performed HH upon entering and exiting the room.
- Both questions had a three-choice/one answer categorical responses choices: (yes)(no)(I didn’t notice/I do not remember). The survey took place at two large outpatient facilities with multiple medical subspecialties, primary care groups, and surgical specialties.
- The facilities were surveyed in October 2017 and March 2018 respectively. No patient or HCP-specific identifiers were obtained through the surveys.

Figure 1

Results

- 1268 surveys were collected over two separate time periods.
- Overall, HCP HH compliance was high both upon room entry and exit (90.4% and 87.4% “YES” responses, respectfully).
- Our SO HH observation compliance was 96% during these periods.
- Orthopedics was the top performing subgroup (289/301, 96.0% and 285/301, 94.7% HH on room entry and exit).
- The immediate care center was the lowest performing subgroup (135/171, 79.0% and 132/171, 77.2% HH on room entry and exit).
- Other groups’ (primary care medicine, subspecialty medicine, women’s health, Ears-Nose-Throat, ophthalmology, rehabilitation, psychology, and pain clinic) HH practices were found to fall somewhere in between (Fig 1A & 1B).

Conclusion

- HH is a cornerstone for preventing HAIs and our survey revealed that ambulatory care HCP HH practices are perceived by patients to be quite high, and to a large extent supports reported HH observations by SO.
- Service-based variability in HH practices can be used as for positive reinforcement for the highest achieving practices, and to challenge poorer performing groups to improve their HH practices.
- Using patient-based audits of HCPs HH practice is a viable alternative method of HH compliance data collection/monitoring.

Disclosures

- None