

# MEDIA RELEASE

## Clinical Excellence Commission

May 5, 2019

### **World Hand Hygiene Day May 5, *Clean Care For All – it's in your hands***

NSW health workers are striving to reduce the spread of healthcare associated infections by striving toward excellent hand hygiene rates in NSW public hospitals.

Clinical Excellence Commission Medical Director of Patient Safety Dr James Mackie said patients deserved safe care when they visited hospitals and hand hygiene was a fundamental part of this.

“This World Hand Hygiene Day, May 5, 2019, it's important to note NSW has hand hygiene rates above the national average, with NSW facilities at 86.6% compared with 85.4% nationally,” Dr Mackie said.

“Hand hygiene is a simple and highly effective way to ensure patient safety and we know improving the hand hygiene of health workers is the single most effective way to reduce the risk of healthcare associated infections.

“At the Clinical Excellence Commission, we are continually looking for new opportunities and methods to improve patient safety and improving hand hygiene and reducing infections has been an important part of our patient safety commitment across NSW hospitals for many years.”

Key strategies rolled out in NSW include:

- o Education for health workers in the World Health Organisation 5 Moments for Hand hygiene – when and how to clean your hands using soap and water or alcohol-based hand rub when in contact with the patient
- o Making it as easy as possible for healthcare workers to perform hand hygiene by ensuring availability of alcohol-based hand rub within the patient care area
- o Training and validation of observers to audit healthcare workers' adherence with hand hygiene when providing patient care.

In NSW, there are more than 230 facilities that regularly submit data as part of the [National Hand Hygiene](#) Initiative to audit each hospitals commitment to hand hygiene. Correct hand hygiene involves [5 Moments for Hand Hygiene](#)

They moments for hand hygiene are:

1. Before touching a patient
2. Before a procedure
3. After a procedure or body fluid exposure risk
4. After touching a patient
5. After touching a patient's surroundings.

“In NSW we have broad strategies to reduce health care associated infections and the hand hygiene program is one of several initiatives which helps hospitals reduce infections and implement consistent infection control processes and surveillance,” Dr Mackie said.

Many NSW hospitals will celebrate World Hand Hygiene day in May. The CEC supports NSW facilities with hand hygiene [resources](#).

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