Exploring the “Urgh Factor”

To what extent can behavioural theory (Inherent/Elective) contribute to improving processes of hand hygiene measurement and education?

Results from Phase 1

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Introduction

Research suggests the type of task being performed (categorised as Inherent (I) or Elective (E)) affects likelihood of hand hygiene (HH) occurring.1,2 (Fig. 1) Setting may also affect HH performance, with regular blood exposure reducing I HH through desensitisation.3

Our two-phase study aims to determine whether using I/E theory can generate meaningful data to improve future HH measurement and education. (Fig. 2)

Phase 1 aimed to establish a method for collecting I/E HH data, and explore effect of (i) task and (ii) setting on HH level.

Method

Two settings were selected; (i) a renal-haemodialysis unit (RH), considered to have higher blood exposure, and (ii) a cardio-thoracic ward (CT) considered to have lower blood exposure

Researchers categorised clinical tasks as I or E.

A powered sample of 40 (N=20 Nurses/Healthcare Support Staff from each unit) were each observed for up to one hour.

The first 15-mins were discarded to reduce Hawthorne Effect/Observer Bias.

Task (IE) and HH performance was recorded.

Semi-structured staff interviews (N=13) explored current HH measurement and preference for future feedback.

Results and Discussion

369 observations were conducted over 9-days (between 3rd -24th Dec 2015). For analysis a random number generator selected one I and one E task from each participant.

A McNemar test of difference found I tasks generated significantly higher likelihood for HH (RH: p=0.045; CT: p=0.003), supporting an effect of task on HH performance. Setting also affected HH performance, as seen by the smaller difference in likelihood of I/E HH on the RH.

Interviews suggested staff saw HH “data” as related to training levels not performance. Measurement and reporting of HH performance based on I/E tasks was seen to hold potential for enhanced meaning. This hypothesis forms the basis of Phase 2.

References


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