Paramedic hand hygiene and gloving practices require substantial improvement to lower potential transmission of pathogens and improve patient safety and clinical care” Barr et al (2017).

Abstract:

Background: Noncompliance with recommended hand hygiene and gloving practices by workers in the emergency medical services may contribute to the transmission of health care-associated infections and lead to poor patient outcomes. The aim of this study was to explore the self-reported behaviors and perceptions of Australian paramedics in relation to their hand hygiene and gloving practices in paramedic-led health care.

Methods: A national online survey (n = 417; 17% response rate) and 2 semistructured focus groups (6 per group) were conducted with members of Paramedics Australasia.

Results: Although most of the study participants perceived hand hygiene and gloving to be important, the findings suggest poor compliance with both practices, particularly during emergency cases. All participants reported wearing gloves throughout a clinical case, changing them either at the completion of patient care or when visibly soiled or broken. Hand hygiene was missed at defined moments during patient care, possibly from the misuse of gloves.

Conclusions: Paramedic hand hygiene and gloving practices require substantial improvement to lower potential transmission of pathogens and improve patient safety and clinical care. Further research is recommended to explore how to alleviate the barriers to performing in-field hand hygiene and the misuse of gloves during paramedic-led health care.

Reference:


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