

A new automated hand hygiene compliance system (HHCS) was trialed as an alternative to human observers in an intensive care unit and an intensive care stepdown unit at a hospital facility in the northeastern United States” McCalla et al (2017).

Abstract:

Background: Consistent hand hygiene is key to reducing health care-associated infections (HAIs) and assessing compliance with hand hygiene protocols is vital for hospital infection control staff. A new automated hand hygiene compliance system (HHCS) was trialed as an alternative to human observers in an intensive care unit and an intensive care stepdown unit at a hospital facility in the northeastern United States.

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Methods: Using a retrospective cohort design, researchers investigated whether implementation of the HHCS resulted in improved hand hygiene compliance and a reduction in common HAI rates. Pearson χ^2 tests were used to assess changes in compliance, and incidence rate ratios were used to test for significant differences in infection rates.

Results: During the study period, the HHCS collected many more hand hygiene events compared with human observers (632,404 vs 480) and ensured that the hospital met its compliance goals (95%+). Although decreases in multidrug-resistant organisms, central line-associated bloodstream infections, and catheter-associated urinary tract infection rates were observed, they represented nonsignificant differences.

Discussion and conclusions: Human hand hygiene observers may not report accurate measures of compliance. The HHCS is a promising new tool for fine-grained assessment of hand hygiene compliance. Further study is needed to examine the association between the HHCS and HAI rate reduction.

Reference:

McCalla, S., Reilly, M., Thomas, R. and McSpedon-Rai, D. (2017) An automated hand hygiene compliance system is associated with improved monitoring of hand hygiene. American Journal of Infection Control. January 27th. .

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