

Press Release

20 March 2018

Wairarapa DHB is the handwashing leader

The most recent publication of HQSC's national hand hygiene results placed Wairarapa DHB first in the country in hygiene compliance.

With a 92.5% compliance rate, Wairarapa DHB was top of the table in the “*5 moments of hand hygiene*”, with the remaining DHB's compliance ranging from 67.7% - 87.6%. The target is 80%.

Of particular note was the 95.1% compliance rate attributed to the hospital's Assessment, Treatment & Rehabilitation ward, and 90% to the Medical-Surgical ward.

Chris Stewart, Executive Leader Quality, Risk and Innovation at the Wairarapa District Health Board says that handwashing save lives.

“Healthcare associated infections (HAIs) are a significant problem worldwide but they can be prevented through simple interventions, like practising good hand hygiene,” she says. “In fact, hand washing is considered to be one of the most important measures in the fight against HAIs and we actively encourage and measure compliance at Wairarapa Hospital.”

“It is great to see that the commitment our staff make towards improving the quality and safety of patient care is being recognised,” said Ms Stewart.

The national target for hand hygiene compliance has increased over time, as the programme has successfully gained traction in DHBs. The target was set at 64 percent in June 2012, 70 percent in June 2013, 75 percent in June 2014 and 80 percent in June 2015.

The World Health Organization's (WHO's) ‘*5 moments for hand hygiene*’ framework drives culture change and establishes best hand hygiene practice for every patient, every time. These targeted improvement initiatives aim to reduce the harm and cost of healthcare associated infections within New Zealand's health and disability sector.

The programme is now focused on spreading and embedding good hand hygiene practice to support sustained increases in compliance across DHBs.

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