



Infection Prevention and Control

# Hand Hygiene Competency Tool

Version 2.6 (November 2020)



**Government  
of South Australia**

SA Health

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## Version control

Version	Effective from	Effective to	Change summary
V 2.6	27/11/2020	current	Minor changes
V 2.5	5/09/2018	2/01/2020	Reviewed
V 2.4	22/02/2017	5/09/2018	Reviewed, no change
V 2.3	26/10/2015	22/02/2017	Reformatted and references added
V 2.2	07/04/2014	26/10/2015	Minor changes
V 2.1	07/02/2014	07/04/2014	Minor changes
V 2.0	23/01/2013	07/02/2014	Reformatted
V 1.0	2012	23/01/2013	Original version

## Instructions

This tool has been developed to assess staff competency in carrying out effective hand hygiene rub or wash.

Complete the relevant competency assessments in front of an appointed auditor according to your organisational procedures. The competency assessment tools provided are designed to audit practice of the staff member performing hand hygiene, and are to be used in conjunction with the appropriate local organisational clinical procedure.

There are two competency assessment tools provided:

1. Routine hand washing
2. Use of alcohol-based hand rub

### Hand hygiene assessment sheet reference guide

1. During the assessment, the assessor assigns a category corresponding to the performance level for each of the performance criteria (*see below key*).
2. If the performance falls into the category “NYC”, comments must be included; comments are optional if category “C” is demonstrated / achieved.
3. A copy of the completed assessment tool is provided for the nurse, the original is filed in the health care worker’s personnel file.

Category	Performance Level	Action Required
<b>C</b> (Competent)	Standard of practice is at or above the performance criteria outlined	Aspects of performance that are satisfactory are documented and positive feedback given to the nurse.  Positive feedback is given when appropriate.
<b>NYC</b> (Not Yet Competent)	Standard of practice is below the performance criteria outlined	All areas in which the standard of performance is below the criteria and discussed & documented through the use of examples of actual & expected practice.  The staff member is provided with a learning program and times may be arranged for further practice so that the expected standard can be achieved within a prescribed timeframe.

## Routine hand washing

**Objective:** To assess staff competency in performance of hand washing using soap and water.

**Evaluation:** To be deemed competent a “yes” score must be achieved in all Action Criteria boxes.

### Competency Assessment - Details

Please complete the details below:

**Employee Name:** .....

**Unit/Department:** .....

**Signature:** ..... **Date:** ..... / ..... / .....

**Assessor Name:** .....

**Signature:** ..... **Date:** ..... / ..... / .....

### Competency Assessment

Action criteria	Action performed correctly Y/N	Comments
1. Remove all hand and wrist jewellery from hands and fingers as per the SA Health Hand Hygiene Clinical Guideline		
2. Wet hands with water.		
3. Apply enough soap to cover all hand surfaces.		
4. Rub hands palm to palm.		
5. Right palm over left dorsum with interlaced fingers and vice versa.		
6. Palm to palm with fingers interlaced.		
7. Backs of fingers to opposing palms with fingers interlocked.		
8. Rotational rubbing of left thumb clasped in right palm and vice versa.		
9. Rotational rubbing, backward and forwards with clasped fingers of right hand in left palm and vice versa including the wrists.		
10. Rinse hands with water.		
11. Pat dry thoroughly with a single-use towel ie paper towel.		
12. Use towel to turn off tap (if not hands free tap)		
<b>NOTE:</b> Entire procedure should take 40 – 60 seconds		

Action criteria	Action performed correctly Y/N	Comments
<p><b>Overall comments:</b> <b>Note:</b> If the performance falls into the category “NYC”, comments must be included. Comments are optional if category “C” is demonstrated / achieved.</p>		

## Use of alcohol-based hand rub

**Objective:** To assess staff competency in carrying out effective use of alcohol-based hand rub.

**Evaluation:** To be deemed competent a “yes” score must be achieved in all Action Criteria boxes.

### Competency Assessment - Details

Please complete the details below:

**Employee Name:** .....

**Unit/Department:** .....

**Signature:** ..... **Date:** ..... / ..... / .....

**Assessor Name:** .....

**Signature:** ..... **Date:** ..... / ..... / .....

### Competency Assessment

Action criteria	Action performed correctly Y/N	Comments
1. Remove all hand and wrist jewellery from hands and fingers as per the SA Health Hand Hygiene Clinical Guideline.		
2. Apply 1 squirt (1-3mls) to the palm of the hand and spread over hands, ensuring that the finger nails are well covered.		
3. Rub hands palm to palm.		
4. Right palm over left dorsum with interlaced fingers and vice versa.		
5. Palm to palm with fingers interlaced.		
6. Backs of fingers to opposing palms with fingers interlocked.		
7. Rotational rubbing of left thumb clasped in right palm and vice versa.		
8. Rotational rubbing, backward and forwards with clasped fingers of right hand in left palm and vice versa.		
9. Allow the entire product to dry.		
<b>NOTE:</b> Entire procedure should take 20 – 30 seconds		
<b>Overall comments:</b>		
<b>Note:</b> If the performance falls into the category “NYC”, comments must be included. Comments are optional if category “C” is demonstrated / achieved.		

## References

1. SA Health Alcohol-based hand rub fact sheet  
Found  
at: <http://sahealth.sa.gov.au/wps/wcm/connect/public+content/sa+health+internet/clinical+resources/clinical+topics/healthcare+associated+infections/prevention+and+management+of+infections+i+n+healthcare+settings/hand+hygiene+in+the+healthcare+environment>
2. SA Hand Guidelines for Hand Hygiene  
Found  
at: <http://sahealth.sa.gov.au/wps/wcm/connect/public+content/sa+health+internet/clinical+resources/clinical+topics/healthcare+associated+infections/prevention+and+management+of+infections+i+n+healthcare+settings/hand+hygiene+in+the+healthcare+environment>
3. SA Health Hand Hygiene Policy Directive  
Found  
at: <http://sahealth.sa.gov.au/wps/wcm/connect/public+content/sa+health+internet/clinical+resources/clinical+topics/healthcare+associated+infections/prevention+and+management+of+infections+i+n+healthcare+settings/hand+hygiene+in+the+healthcare+environment>
4. Australian Commission on Safety and Quality in Health Care (ACSQHC) National Hand Hygiene Initiative (NHHI) Webpage, <https://www.safetyandquality.gov.au/our-work/infection-prevention-and-control/national-hand-hygiene-initiative>



## For more information

**Infection Control Service  
Communicable Disease Control Branch  
Department for Health and Wellbeing  
Telephone: 1300 232 272  
[www.sahealth.sa.gov.au/HandHygiene](http://www.sahealth.sa.gov.au/HandHygiene)**

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