



**County of Los Angeles  
Department of Health Services**

# **INPATIENT**

## **Annual Core Competency Study Guide (Nursing)**

**2012**

**Unlicensed Staff  
(NON-Patient Care Area)**



**2012 DHS INPATIENT ANNUAL CORE COMPETENCY STUDY GUIDE  
(NURSING): UNLICENSED -- NON-PATIENT CARE AREA  
PREFACE**

This study guide is designed to update unlicensed nursing department workforce members who do not work in a patient care area on important issues that assist them in providing safe and competent patient care. Unlicensed care providers required to complete the competencies identified in this study guide are unlicensed workforce members who do not work in a patient care area. Unlicensed workforce members who work in a patient care area complete the competencies identified in the “Unlicensed – Patient Care Area” packet.

The following table describes which workforce members must complete the study guide and testing components.

	<b>Testing Requirements</b>
<b>Workforce Member</b>	<b>Written Test</b> (Safety: Hand Hygiene, Customer Service)
<b>Non-direct care unlicensed staff who do not work in a patient care area including:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Clerks</li> <li>• Secretaries</li> <li>• Student workers</li> <li>• Nursing Attendants</li> </ul>	X

If your position is not listed in the table or you are not sure in which category you belong, consult your immediate supervisor.

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**INSTRUCTIONS FOR COMPLETING THIS STUDY GUIDE**

1. Review the content of the study guide.
2. Complete the study questions at the end of each section.
3. Clinical Nurse Specialists, Clinical Nurse Educators, Nursing Instructors, and Nurse Managers are available to answer questions you may have regarding the content.

## SAFETY: HAND HYGIENE

### Objectives:

Upon completion of this section, the workforce member will be able to:

1. Identify the single most important factor for preventing the spread of infection in the healthcare setting.
2. Discuss two acceptable methods of routine hand hygiene in the healthcare setting.
3. Identify at least two (2) situations in which hand hygiene must be performed by washing hands with soap and water rather than using an alcohol-based hand rub.
4. Identify at least two (2) situations in which hand hygiene with an alcohol-based hand rub may be used.
5. State the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) recommended duration of time hands should be rubbed together when washing with soap and water.

### I. Definitions

*Hand hygiene.* A general term that applies to either handwashing, antiseptic handwash, antiseptic hand rub, or surgical hand antiseptics.

*Antiseptic agent.* Antimicrobial substance that is applied to the skin to reduce the number of microbial flora. Examples include alcohols, chlorhexidine, chlorine, and hexachlorophene.

*Antiseptic handwash.* Washing hands with water and soap or other detergents containing an antiseptic agent.

*Antiseptic hand rub.* Applying an antiseptic hand-rub product to all surfaces of the hands to reduce the number of microorganisms present.

*Decontaminate hands.* To reduce bacterial counts on hands by performing antiseptic hand rub or antiseptic handwash.

*Surgical hand antiseptics.* Antiseptic handwash or antiseptic hand rub performed preoperatively by surgical personnel to eliminate transient and reduce resident hand flora.

### II. Meeting hand hygiene guidelines

- A. According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), millions of people acquire a healthcare-associated infection each year.
- B. Frequent handwashing is the single most important factor for preventing the spread of infections in healthcare settings.
- C. The Joint Commission requires healthcare organizations to implement a program following CDC or World Health Organization hand hygiene guidelines that consist of developing policies, fostering a "culture of hand hygiene", and monitoring compliance.
- D. Nursing staff shall use appropriate hand hygiene practices to reduce the transmission of harmful organisms to patients, personnel, and visitors.
- E. Hand hygiene may be done by either washing the hands with soap and water or cleansing the hands with an alcohol-based hand product.

- F. According to the CDC, healthcare workers should use an alcohol-based hand rub (a gel, rinse, or foam) to routinely clean their hands between each patient contact, unless hands are visibly soiled.

### III. CDC guidelines for hand hygiene

- A. Hands must be washed with soap and water in the following situations:

1. When visibly soiled or contaminated with blood or body fluids
2. Before eating
3. After using the restroom
4. After caring for patients with *Clostridium difficile* (commonly referred to as ‘C. Diff’) or *Bacillus anthracis*
5. After taking off gloves if gloves are visibly soiled with blood or body fluids
6. Some alcohol-based hand rub manufacturers recommend washing hands with soap and water after every 5-10 applications of alcohol-based hand rub. Follow facility specific policy/procedure.

- B. While washing hands with soap and water is always appropriate, an alcohol-based hand rub may be used in the following situations:

1. Before and after having direct contact with a patient
2. Before donning sterile gloves to handle central intravascular catheters
3. Before inserting indwelling urinary catheters, peripheral vascular catheters, or other invasive devices that do not require a surgical procedure
4. After contact with a patient’s intact skin (e.g., when taking a pulse or blood pressure, and lifting a patient)
5. After contact with mucous membranes or non-intact skin if hands are not visibly soiled
6. If moving from a contaminated body-part to a clean-body site during patient care
7. After contact with inanimate objects (equipment, bed, etc.) in patient’s immediate area
8. After removing gloves

### IV. Hand hygiene techniques

- A. Handwashing

1. Wet hands, wrists to mid-arm
2. Apply soap
3. Create lather with friction
4. Rub hands vigorously for at least 15 seconds (recommended by CDC), covering all surfaces of wrists, hands, and fingers
5. Rinse with water and dry thoroughly using a disposable towel

- B. Alcohol-based hand hygiene products

1. Apply to palm of one hand
  - a. Hands should be dry when applying alcohol

- b. Volume of product should be based on manufacturer's recommendation
2. Rub both hands together covering all surfaces of hands and fingers until dry

NOTE: The effectiveness of alcohol-based hand hygiene products is affected by several factors, including the type and concentration of alcohol, contact time, amount of alcohol used, and whether the hands are wet when alcohol is used.

V. Fingernails/Rings

- A. Long nails, extenders, and artificial fingernails are not permitted for those who have direct contact with patients (who touch the patient as part of their care or service), handle instruments or patient care equipment, or for those who have contact with food.
- B. Natural nails must be clean and should extend no more than ¼ inch beyond the tip of the finger.
- C. Fingernail polish should be in good condition, free of chips, and preferably clear in color.
- D. Wearing rings with stones should be avoided because they can harbor bacteria and also tear gloves.

**PLEASE COMPLETE THE STUDY QUESTIONS ON THE NEXT PAGE**

## HAND HYGIENE Study Questions

Select the best answer to each question.

1. Which of the following is the single most important factor for preventing the spread of infections in healthcare settings?
  - a. Washing hands
  - b. Wearing gloves
  - c. Wearing a mask
  - d. Having annual TB skin tests
  
2. Which of the following are two acceptable methods of routine hand hygiene in the healthcare setting?
  - a. Wearing gloves and using an alcohol-based hand rub
  - b. Washing hands with warm water and double gloving
  - c. Washing hands with soap and water and using an alcohol-based hand rub
  - d. Using an alcohol-based hand rub and washing hands with waterless soap
  
3. According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), in which of the following situations may hand hygiene with an alcohol-based hand rub be used instead of soap and water?
  - a. After using the restroom
  - b. Before and after having direct contact with a patient
  - c. When hands are visibly soiled with blood or body fluids
  - d. After caring for a patient with *Clostridium difficile* (*C. diff*)
  
4. According to the Centers for Disease Control (CDC), when washing hands with soap and water hands should be vigorously rubbed together for:
  - a. 10 seconds
  - b. 15 seconds
  - c. 30 seconds
  - d. 60 seconds
  
5. How must hands be cleaned if they have blood or body fluids on them?
  - a. By washing with soap and water
  - b. By using an alcohol-based hand rub
  - c. By soaking in bleach for 30 seconds
  - d. By placing under an ultraviolet light

**PLEASE CHECK YOUR ANSWERS TO THE STUDY QUESTIONS**

**HAND HYGIENE**  
**Answers to Study Questions**

1. a
2. c
3. b
4. b
5. a

If you answered all of the questions correctly, go on to the next section. If you missed one or more, read the content again and repeat the study guide questions.

## CUSTOMER SERVICE

### Objectives:

Upon completion of this section, the workforce member will be able to:

1. List three ways to provide excellent customer service.
2. State three ways to demonstrate polite telephone manners.
3. Identify the Department of Health Service's customers, both internal and external.
4. Identify correct and incorrect appearance related factors for in-patient DHS workforce members.



### I. Importance of Customer Service

Healthcare is the fastest changing industry in the world today. Hospitals continue to undergo changes in payments, and there is increased competition among healthcare providers for patients.

- A. Hospitals are shifting from provider-centered, where people made choices in the best interest of the hospital, to patient centered, where choices are in the best interest of patients.



- B. Employers buying healthcare for their workers make decisions based on a hospital's ratings and reputation.
- C. Managed care is leading healthcare delivery in the U.S., making hospitals compete with each other for managed care contracts. Customer satisfaction is one area considered by HMOs when deciding which hospitals to include in their contract.
- D. Without customers, we would not have jobs.

### II. Definitions

- A. ***Customer service:*** The degree of help and courtesy granted to those you interact with and serve in your facility.
- B. ***Customers*** are much more than patients and their families; customers are anyone you meet in your hospital.
- C. ***External customers:*** People who come to us from outside the hospital for a service: patients, families, vendors, students, speakers, etc.
- D. ***Internal customers:*** Those who work at the facility: doctors, nurses, therapists, custodians, administrative staff, etc.

### III. Telephone Manners

- A. Telephone manners are a polite response to telephone callers. Manners are important in forming first impressions and set the tone for future interactions. Often, a caller's first contact is with a receptionist, clerk, or operator, making their role very important.

Always remember to:

- Speak slowly, clearly, and directly into the mouthpiece held two-finger widths away from your mouth.
- Use your normal tone of voice when answering a call. Lower your voice volume if you tend to speak loudly.
- Do not eat, drink, or chew gum while talking on the phone.
- Try to answer on the second ring.
- Include a friendly greeting, your name, location, and an offer to help when answering the telephone. (Example: "Good Morning, Nursing Administration, this is Mary Brown. How may I help you?")
- Never use slang or swear words.
- Listen to what the caller has to say.
- Be patient and helpful.
- Ask permission before putting the caller on hold. (Example: "May I put you on hold while I check if Dr. Millett is available?")
- Thank the caller for holding when taking the call off hold. (Example: "Thank-you for holding Mr. Choi. The nurse will speak to you in just a minute.")
- When transferring a call, tell the caller to whom they are being transferred. (Example: "Let me give you Dr. Millett's office phone number... Please hold; I will transfer you to Dr. Millett's office.")
- When transferring a call, announce the caller to the person receiving the call. (Example: "Good Morning, this is Mary Brown from nursing administration. I am transferring a call from Mr. Choi.")
- Address all questions and concerns before hanging up the telephone. (Example: "Mr. Choi, Is there anything else I can do for you today?")
- Let the caller hang up first. This lets the caller know you are not in a hurry to get off the phone with them.



## IV. Important Key Phrases:

## A. What you say is as important as how you say it!

**Don't Say:**

- No, or I can't
- I don't know
- That is not my job
- You're right, that stinks
- We are short staffed
- I'm busy right now
- It's over there

**Instead Say:**

- What I can do is...
- I will find out for you
- I will get someone to help you
- I understand your concerns
- We may be busy, but we are never too busy to help you
- I'll be with you in just a moment
- I'll take you where you need to go

## B. Helpful Patient Comfort and Communication Strategies

- Check that each patient is covered and comfortable
- Do an environmental assessment: Can the patient reach the telephone, water, food tray, TV controls, and trash?
- Tell the patient that you regularly make rounds to check comfort levels
- Tell the patient when you will be returning
- Tell the patient when you are leaving and name of nurse who will be following you
- When possible, bring relieving nurse into room and introduce the nurse to the patient

A+

## V. Environment: Appearances Matter

When our workplace and staff appear neat and clean, we show respect for our customers and give them confidence in our ability to care for them.

## A. Workplace:

- Store equipment in its proper place
- Clean up spills and dispose of trash in a timely manner
- Keep patient care and employee work areas, hallways, and conference rooms clean, neat and clutter free



## B. Workforce members:

- Wear identification badges in a visible location above your waist
- Ensure visitors wear visitor passes. If not, refer them to security for visitor pass
- Wear appropriate, clean, neat clothing following the hospital's dress code
- Avoid wearing fragrance/scents; many people have fragrance allergies
- Use good personal hygiene
- Hair is to be clean, neat, safely secured, and not to compromise patient care
- Jewelry must be consistent with the work assignment, not injurious to the patient, nor pose a potential safety problem to the employee
- Fingernails must be clean and short, not to extend greater than ¼ inch beyond the fingertips. No artificial nails
- Wear clean shoes with enclosed heels and toe

## VI. Practice principles of CUSTOMER SERVICE

### A. Compassion



#### 1. Courteous

- Welcome customers
- Acknowledge customer's presence
- Make eye contact and smile
- Use a pleasant tone of voice
- Be polite and helpful
- Do things right the first time
- Provide customers with choices, when possible

#### 2. Concerned

- Take time to listen
- Give the customer your full attention
- Ask if you are unsure whether someone needs help
- Be willing to explain delays
- Know where to direct the customer for service
- If you cannot help, find someone who can
- Respond quickly to customers' needs

### B. Communication

- Check customers' understanding
- Clarify using questions
- Give clear instructions
- Speak clearly
- Do not use jargon/slang
- Use the customers' language, if possible

**PLEASE COMPLETE THE STUDY QUESTIONS ON THE NEXT PAGE**

## **CUSTOMER SERVICE**

### **Study Questions**

Select the best answer to each question.

1. One of the reasons customer service is important in healthcare facilities is so that:
  - a. We have lower patient satisfaction
  - b. Our patients seek service elsewhere
  - c. Fewer people require health services
  - d. We can compete with other hospitals
  
2. Which of the following is good customer communication?
  - a. Talk as loud as you can
  - b. Look away when talking to a customer
  - c. Hang up the phone before the caller does
  - d. Thank customers and ask, "Is there anything else I can do for you?"
  
3. How can we provide excellent customer service?
  - a. Store equipment in hallways
  - b. Do tasks right by the fifth time
  - c. Wear name badge below your waist
  - d. Give the customer your full attention
  
4. A customer is anyone you meet at your facility.
  - a. True
  - b. False
  
5. Custodians are the only work force members who must maintain a neat and safe environment.
  - a. True
  - b. False
  
6. When using the telephone speak slowly, clearly, and directly into the mouthpiece.
  - a. True
  - b. False
  
7. Which of the following phrases is most appropriate?
  - a. "I'll take you where you need to go"
  - b. "No I can't"
  - c. "I'm busy right now"
  - d. "That is not my job"

**PLEASE CHECK YOUR ANSWERS TO THE STUDY QUESTIONS**

**CUSTOMER SERVICE**  
**Answers to Study Questions**

1. d
2. d
3. d
4. a
5. b
6. a
7. a

If you answered all of the questions correctly, go on to the next section. If you missed one or more, read the content again and repeat the study guide questions.

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