Infection Prevention News You Can Use

Environmental Cleaning

Environmental cleaning and disinfection are essential for interrupting the transmission of infectious diseases in healthcare and community settings. In general, environmental cleaning consists of the following:

- **Visual Assessment**: Evaluate areas to be cleaned, the amount of visible organic material, and potential microorganisms that might be present.
- **Cleaning**: Remove visible organic matter such as blood or tissue. Residual material can interfere with the effectiveness of disinfectants.
- **Disinfection**: Apply agents to eliminate most microorganisms except bacterial spores.

Environmental Cleaning Assessment

Environmental cleaning is such an essential process that it's good practice to assess your hospital's environmental cleaning procedures to ensure they are effective. There are various methods available for assessment including those listed below.

Method	Additional Information	Advantages	Limitations
Direct Observations	Observers use a standardized checklist to monitor cleaning practices in care areas.	Objective evaluation; Identifies improvement opportunities	Observer presence may influence behavior.
Fluorescent Markers	A UV-detectable agent (gel, powder, or lotion) is applied to surfaces before cleaning. After-cleaning, UV light reveals remaining residue.	Fluorescent gel is transparent and provides objective feedback.	Fluorescent powder and lotion are visible; limited published evidence on effectiveness.
ATP Bioluminescence	Measures adenosine triphosphate (ATP) to detect organic material before and after cleaning.	Widely used; tracks cleaning effectiveness over time.	Lack of standardized thresholds for "clean" surfaces.
Environmental Cultures	Swabs are taken from cleaned surfaces and cultured to detect microorganisms.	Easy to implement; provides direct microbial data.	Costly and resource-intensive for large-scale monitoring.

Upcoming Events

AHRQ Program for CAUTI Prevention

The Agency for Healthcare Research and Quality (AHRQ) is recruiting adult intensive care units (ICUs) and non-ICUs to participate in a free, nine-month program aimed at reducing catheter-associated urinary tract infection (CAUTI) rates in acute care hospitals. *Click here* for more information about the program and to sign up for an upcoming informational webinars.

Champions of Change: Celebrating Stewardship Success

In recognition of U.S. Antibiotic Awareness Week (USAAW), observed from November 18 – 24, IHA will partner with the Illinois Department of Public Health (IDPH) to celebrate antimicrobial achievements across Illinois.

Join us on **Tuesday, November 18 at 12:00pm** for a one-hour webinar that will provide updates around IDPH's Antimicrobial Stewardship Initiatives, recognize the 2025 Acute Care Antimicrobial Stewardship Honor Roll Awardees, and highlight recipients of the Collaboration Distinction Awards. Click here to register now!

Resources

1) CDC Environmental Infection Control Guidelines: https://www.cdc.gov/infection-control/hcp/environmental-control/index.html#toc
2) CDC Options for Evaluating Environmental Cleaning: https://www.cdc.gov/infection-control/php/evaluating-environmental-cleaning/index.html

MAPS Patient Safety Organization

IHA's Midwest Alliance for Patient Safety (MAPS) is leading efforts to prevent medical error through resource sharing, education and data collection/analysis. As a certified Patient Safety Organization (PSO) since 2010, MAPS provides full legal privileges, confidentiality and protections for reported patient events. Click here to learn more about MAPS benefits and how to become a member today.