Hand Hygiene Initiative

By Shirley Shores, Director Healthcare Epidemiology

According to the CDC, hospital patients in the U.S. acquire nearly 2 million infections each year. That's about 1 infection for every 20 patients. Healthcare-associated infections can be life-threatening and hard to treat. Hand hygiene is one of the most important ways to prevent the spread of infections.

Infection prevention is essential to ensuring our patients do not acquire additional infections while at UTMB Health. Providing a sanitary environment to avoid transmission of infections and communicable diseases is absolutely crucial when one considers approximately 90,000 people die in USA each year because of Healthcare Associated Infections (HAIs)[1]. In addition, although we accept the importance of hand hygiene, many observational studies have shown compliance rates of less than 40%.

Components of UTMB Health’s Hand Hygiene Initiative include:

• Assessment of barriers to compliance. We need to identify specific issues to address, which might include knowledge, beliefs, acceptability of hand hygiene products, inconveniently located products, or reluctance to remind another employee who does not perform hand hygiene at the appropriate time.

• Education. Staff must understand the expectations, including those activities requiring hand hygiene and the technique to assure all surfaces of the hands are clean.

• Data collection and feedback. Data collected by observing staff during patient care activities must be accurate, stratified in a way that renders it actionable, and shared with those involved in direct patient care.

• Product selection and location. Trials are underway to select hand hygiene and hand care products that are acceptable to those who use the products most often. Once the product is selected, input will be sought from each clinical area to determine the number and location of hand sanitizer dispensers that support work flow. We want the right thing to do to be a convenient thing to do.

Improving hand hygiene will clearly require the assistance of many disciplines and departments. Watch for promotional activities and review the data each month. We expect to see compliance steadily increase. Patients deserve to be cared for by staff with clean hands—every patient, every contact, every time.

Every time you walk into or out of a patient room, wash or gel your hands!
Environmental Services initiatives become national models

You may recall in the August issue of the Health System Friday Focus, we shared several initiatives Environmental Services has implemented to dramatically increase patient satisfaction scores. Several of these models have now been adopted as national models!

- SWARM cleaning (employees, supervisors and managers meet for 30 minutes on 4 units and clean patient rooms by removing trash, refreshing the rest rooms and interacting with patients)
- Picture Perfect Room reference manual, which reminds employees where items should be placed and how the room should look after cleaning
- Auditing employees’ performance on programs implemented through video training, role play, etc.
- Congratulations! UTMB continues to lead the way!

UTMB nurses recognized by Good Samaritan Foundation

UTMB nurses were recognized by Good Samaritan Foundation at the 7th Annual Excellence in Nursing Awards Luncheon on Thursday, September 15, 2011 at the Hilton Americas - Houston Hotel.

The Foundation encourages nursing excellence through a variety of supported programs: assisting nursing students with the cost of their professional education, faculty development at nursing schools, continuing education for practicing nurses, innovative nursing research, and recognition and reward programs for nurses who demonstrate excellence in teaching and practice.

Good Samaritan created the Excellence in Nursing Awards to recognize nursing’s “best and brightest.” Nurses are nominated by their peers and selected by a distinguished committee of nursing leaders. Nominated nurses must demonstrate a passion for the nursing profession and exemplify excellence in teaching, mentoring, leadership, and service. By rewarding exemplary teachers and practitioners, Good Samaritan is helping retain quality nurses in this vital profession.

Each year Gold and Silver Medalists are named in each of six award categories and receive an elegant, custom-designed medal. Nominating organizations sponsor table(s) at the annual Luncheon, allowing their nominees and other outstanding nurses to attend. Gold Medalists are also featured in personal tribute videos shown during the luncheon and online.

Congratulations to the 2011 winners of the Excellence in Nursing Awards—UTMB staff won 4 of the twelve awards.

- Gold Winner Nursing Education, Clinician - Catherine Ivash, Nursing Program Development
- Gold Winner Nursing Education, Faculty - Alice Hill, School of Nursing
- Silver Winner Hospice/Home Health/Clinic - Angela Attaway, Pediatrics
- Silver Winner Nursing Admin & Leadership - Dolly Sanares-Carreon, Nursing Education

Morrison Food Services Engage Employees

Morrison Food Services has continued to excel in patient satisfaction. One of their favorite tactics is using data to engage their associates. For example, Bill Robertson, Director Food Service, created a competition in which he broke staff into teams who “compete” against one another for top patient satisfaction scores. Teams even got to choose their own names. Some key points Bill recommends around engaging his employees:

- Know your data
- Communicate results to those involved
- Have fun competition between associates
- Reward great results

AHRQ Culture of Safety Survey

Patient safety is a critical part of health care quality. As health care organizations continually strive to improve, there is growing recognition of the importance of establishing a culture of patient safety. Achieving a culture of patient safety requires an understanding of the values, beliefs, and standards about what is important in an organization and what attitudes and behaviors related to patient safety are supported, rewarded, and expected. It is our belief that everyone plays a role in patient safety, we need your help to identify where we are at this time.

During the week of SEPT 19, 2011 we will be distributing to UTMB Health System faculty and clinical staff an Agency for Healthcare Research and Quality (AHRQ) survey, a tool to help us evaluate how well established the culture of safety is at UTMB. The AHRQ tool has an established track record and will also offer us the ability to compare findings with other hospitals nationally. The Performance Improvement, Risk Management and Patient Safety (PIRMS) Committee are asking all clinically focused UTMB employees to complete the survey to help us evaluate our culture of safety.

The survey was designed to assess hospital staff opinions about patient safety issues, medical error, and event reporting. The survey includes items that measure areas or composites of patient safety culture throughout our clinical campuses.

Thank you for your time in completing the survey. It should take no more than 10-15 minutes to complete and your responses will be submitted with full anonymity. You will have 14 days to complete this survey. If you have any questions or concerns regarding this survey please contact: Stephanie Ramos, PT in the Department of Patient Safety at 772-1701 or stramos@utmb.edu.

Once all results are returned we will be working with individuals, departments, etc to address opportunities for improvement uncovered in the findings and will share results broadly as we work to make UTMB the safest hospital in the region.

Thank you for your continual commitment to patient safety.

For employees who work in the Medical Office Setting please complete this survey: https://sandbox.utmb.edu/survey/TakeSurvey.aspx?SurveyID=78KK9p8

For employees who work in the Hospital Setting please complete this survey: https://sandbox.utmb.edu/survey/TakeSurvey.aspx?SurveyID=78KK8p8
FY12 Budget Memos to be distributed

Departmental budget memos will be provided to Health System VP’s for distribution next week. Adjustments have been entered in EPSI and the budget for FY12 is complete. If any changes were made to your department budget, the memo will provide you with an reconciliation between the returned and final budget. We would like to thank everyone for the hard work and effort that went into this year’s budget.

Sidewalks near demolition site to be closed

On August 29, the first phase of demolition of the old Jennie Sealy and Shriners Hospital began with construction of fencing around the work area. The sidewalks on the north side of Texas Avenue and on the west side of University Boulevard, both north of the Plaza Parking Garage will be closed. The sidewalks on the south side of Texas Avenue and the east side of University Boulevard will remain open at this time.

Health System team secures capital equipment purchases!

Toward the close of the FY11 budget year, the UTMB Health System had the good fortune of receiving a special, favorably rated capital allocation from the UT System totaling nearly $15 million specifically for capital equipment purchases.

UTMB staff received the go ahead to purchase items in mid-June with the caveat that items must be purchased, delivered and invoiced by August 31, 2011. This “rush order” took a tremendous amount of coordination and collaboration on behalf of individuals from Clinical Equipment Services, Purchasing, Legal, Accounts Payable, Asset Management and Hospital Financial Management. They were successful in the endeavor and able to make a huge dent in upgrades and replacements for our physicians, staff, and patients!

Thank you and congratulations to the following individuals for making this venture a success:

Bill Willison – Clinical Equipment Services
Rhonda Greene – Clinical Equipment Services
Mark Garcia – Purchasing
Cheryl Evans – Purchasing
Ken Hall – Accounts Payable
Craig Elmore – Finance/Accounting
Bhavin Divecha – Asset Management
Glenn Caskey – Health System Finance

Access Center takes record number of calls for the month of August

The Access Center took a record number of calls for the month of August, answering over 43,200 calls with an abandoned call rate of only 2.4%. The Access Center team continues to work very hard to provide the type of service that all of our UTMB patients deserve and to ensure all of their customers are Satisfied. Great job!

24/7 Access Center
Your UTMB Connection to Care
(800) 917-8906 • (409) 772-2222

TDCJ employees donate time and effort to serve community

By Pamela White, RN-BSN, Clinical Operations Nurse
Manager HG OPD

We had a great time at the Salvation Army on Friday. I greatly appreciate everyone for donating their time, money and skills for this project. Special thanks to Mr. Kevin Tillmon for both his cooking and photo skills!

We served a total of 179 meals. The residents were very appreciative of the meal. After the meal, we socialized with the Major, and he provided us with facts about the current building and the new building that is under construction. He also gave us a tour of the living quarters.

After hearing about the other “regular” volunteers, we decided that we would like to make this a monthly commitment from our group. Seeing the energy, enthusiasm, and dedication amongst us, I know that this is something that we can do!

A very special thank you to those who volunteered, working together to work wonders in our community.
Dear UTMB Health…

“As a lifelong resident of Northern California, I was recently here in Galveston purchasing a sail boat. I found myself in your Emergency Department early one Saturday morning. My husband had injured his back on Friday afternoon. Waking up with an elevated pain level, my husband said, “Take me to UTMB Emergency.” Once there, he was treated with concern, thorough care and was treated in an efficient manner. Every employee we dealt with was an excellent representative – “ambassadors of good will.”

As a non-patient, I asked a nurse where I might find a vending machine to get a cup of coffee. Instead, he actually brought me a cup of freshly brewed coffee complete with sugar! This would be unheard of in the California hospitals I’ve done business with—some very good private ones, I might add.

More impressive, from my point of view, the doctor even listened to me when I felt my husband had forgotten a couple of symptoms. In my experiences, doctors don’t want to be bothered by spouses or bystanders, but your doctor listened!”

Congratulations to Dr. Matthew Hay (CBC Pediatrician)! He will be the new GISD School Board Member!

“Please pass along my sincere thanks for the excellent service I received during my visit to UTMB last Friday. My appointments in Radiology and Pulmonary went like clockwork – everyone I encountered was professional and very compassionate. The parking attendants who helped me with a wheelchair couldn’t have been nicer.”

“Victory Lakes has the best doctors I’ve ever been to. They are incredibly caring and much to my surprise, each doctor I’ve been to remembered just who I am! I’ve even received person calls from those doctors, not just their assistant or nurse! I really appreciate how I am greeted at the front door and rarely have to wait for someone to check me in. I usually get Brandon Bahn, and if he is there and they want me to go to someone else, I prefer to wait for him. He not only remembers me, but my husband, and I consider him a friend. Thanks to everyone at Victory Lakes and the entire UTMB family.”

“All the staff on 7B and were very friendly, professional, and pleasant during my husband’s stay. Thanks to Donna Britton, Beverly Penson, Chelita Thomas and many others. Tell your staff to KEEP up GOOD WORK. We thank you all for you support and services.”

“There is an employee who works in the Financial Assistance Department, Mark Torres. Mark is very professional, and goes beyond the duty to help patients like myself in applying for the financial program, as well as following through with helpful assistance.”

“Thanks to staff in ER they all were very nice friendly and pleasant. Thanks to Lisa and nurse that took care my husband. Thanks to Dr. Darrell Reed and staff for their support; Dr. Leah Low, and all of the physicians and medical team for their support doing my hospital stay. Keep up the good work.

“Dr. Sharad Sharma was very attentive and seemed genuinely concerned about all questions. His detail in explanation and bedside manner were excellent!”

“Thanks to Dr. Guillermo Gomez, MD and his staff for doing such a wonderful job. Everyone took very good care of me. I felt very well-informed.”

“Eli Walker (Morrison Food Services) was very good and kind; he took very good care of my daughter.

Jill Kelley and Machele Chaljub (PICU) The patient was very grateful to you for taking such good care of her daughter and said you were wonderful nurses!

“Pamela Powers (Family Medicine) is an excellent nurse!”

Other positive mentions:

Dr. Catalin Jurnalov (Gyn/Onc); Holly Dunn, Dr. Gary Hankins, Julia Carey (Ante-Partum); Erika Zamora, Rachel Murphy, Autumn Paignt (CT/Vascular Surgery); Jason Ziegler (Transplant/ICU); Linda Chua (5D – Medicine); Lilie Baygent, Stacy Cargill (Ante-Partum); Juliet McKee, Dr. Ryan Casey (6C – Pedi); Susan Harper, Judy Ramirez, Kathleen Denke, Lilian McGrew (HCS – Clinical Staffing Solutions), Mary Beth Farmer, Sharron Kittrell, Russell Vanarsdale, Shea LeDuc, David Josiah (Surgical Operating Suite)( 9A – Surgery); Dr. Sidney Worsham

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