

For Immediate Release

October 20, 2006

Carleton Place & District Memorial Hospital Foundation
Carleton Place, ON

Carleton Place Hospital Participates in Patient Safety Week

For the second year in a row, the Carleton Place & District Memorial Hospital (CPDMH) is participating in *Canadian Patient Safety Week* during October 20 – 27, 2006. The theme for this year, ***Patient Safety: It's in Your Hands. Clean them well. Clean them often***, is dedicated to the importance of proper hand hygiene and the valuable role it plays in reducing healthcare-acquired infections.

“During *Canadian Patient Safety Week*, the hospital will highlight the importance of proper hand hygiene”, stated Toni Surko, AED of Patient Services at CPDMH. “We all know that hand washing is the simplest and most effective way to prevent infections and the spread of dangerous germs throughout the hospital.”

In June of this year, CPDMH was praised for its achievement in meeting all 21 required organizational practices related to safety by the Canadian Council of Health Services Accreditation. The hospital's commitment to safety has also led the organization to participate in a national campaign know as Safer Health Care Now. The goal of this campaign is a collaborative effort among health care organizations to reduce injuries and improve care.

“The safety of our patients, and of course our staff, is our number one priority and over the past few years our hospital has taken a number of steps to minimize any potential risks to the wellbeing of both of these groups”, Stated Mike Gagne, CEO of CPDMH. “As we grow as an organization, we will constantly monitor how health care is being delivered and where applicable, make the necessary changes to reduce the possibility of injury to our patients and staff.”

For effective hand washing, follow these steps:

- Remove any rings or other jewellery,
- Rub all parts of the hands and wrists with soap and warm water or with an alcohol-based hand sanitizer such as Purell
- Scrub your hands thoroughly including between your fingers, up to and including your wrists with soap for 10 to 20 seconds (about the time it takes to sing your A-B-Cs),
- Don't forget to scrub under your nails,
- Rinse thoroughly until they are free from soap and dirt
- Turn off the taps/faucets with a paper towel,
- Dry your hands with a single use towel or air dryer,
- Protect your hands from touching dirty surfaces as you leave the bathroom. (use the paper towel to open the door and discard it afterwards).

Other tips include:

- Cover cuts with bandages and wear gloves for added protection (cuts are very vulnerable to infections).
- Artificial nails and chipped nail polish have been associated with an increase in the number of bacteria on the fingernails. Be sure to clean the nails properly.
- Keep your hands away from your eyes, nose or mouth.
- Assume that contact with any human body fluids is infectious.
- Liquid soap in disposable containers is best. If using reusable containers, they should be washed and dried before refilling. If using a bar of soap, be sure to set it on a rack that allows water to drain or use small bars that can be changed frequently.

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