

NEWSLETTER

Infection Prevention and Control for Care Homes across Cumberland

World Hand Hygiene Day 5th May

World Health Organization 2026 message is: Action saves lives

Why does this matter?

- Health care-associated infections (HCAIs) remain a constant risk in all health care settings
- HCAI's fuel antimicrobial resistance causing significant suffering and preventable deaths
- Hand hygiene is one of the most effective ways to prevent infections and protect residents, visitors and staff.

Approximately 70% of healthcare workers do not routinely practice hand hygiene.

Soap and water or alcohol hand rub?

Soap and water when:

- Hands are visibly dirty/soiled
- After using the toilet
- During outbreaks of spore-forming organisms such as gastrointestinal infections including *Clostridioides difficile* and Norovirus.
- **If in doubt use soap and water**

Alcohol handrub:

- Should only be applied to visibly clean skin
- **Maybe less effective if used immediately after the application of a hand cream or moisturiser.**

Your 5 moments for hand hygiene at the point of care



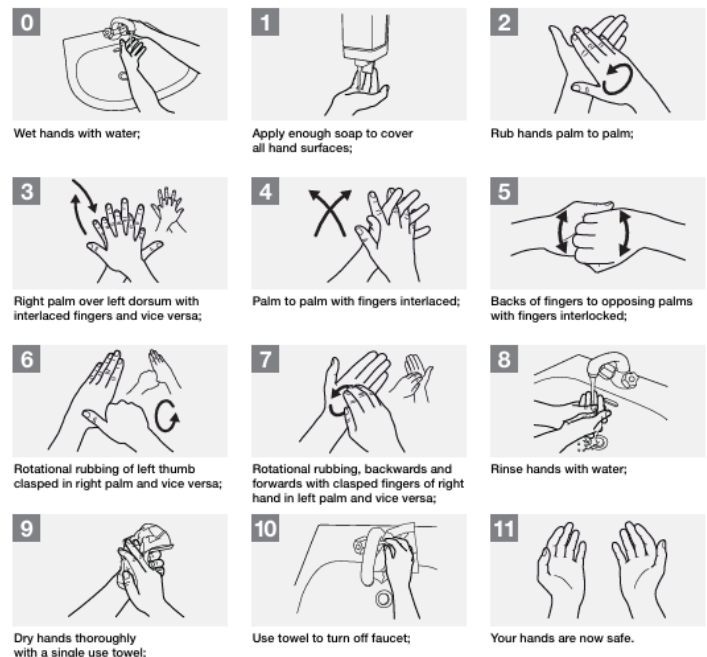
Useful links

- [World Hand Hygiene Day](#)
- [How to wash your hands - NHS](#)
- [Infection prevention and control](#)
- [Hand hygiene](#)

How to Handwash?

WASH HANDS WHEN VISIBLY SOILED! OTHERWISE, USE HANDRUB

⌚ Duration of the entire procedure: 40-60 seconds



Action saves lives: quick actions you can do:

- Check soap, alcohol hand rub and paper towel dispensers are full and at the point of care.
- Remind each other: 'Handwash before we begin' at the start of shift or after a break.
- Nominate a Hand Hygiene Champion on each shift
- Do a 5-minute mini-audit and share results.
- Set a target, for example, of 100% compliance of all staff being 'Bare below the elbow'.
- Encourage your residents to wash their hands, especially prior to eating & after using the toilet.