

## Instructions on hospital hygiene for staff and students

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These instructions apply to all institutions within the Satakunta Hospital District.

### Hand hygiene

Wash your hands with soap and warm water every time your hands are visibly soiled, when coming to and leaving work, after using the toilet, and before meals. The purpose of hand washing is to remove dirt and discharge from the hands as well as to reduce and prevent the transfer of transient microbial flora. Hands should be washed for at least 30 seconds. After drying your hands carefully, disinfect them with hand sanitiser.

Disinfect your hands with hand sanitiser before and after each patient contact, before aseptic procedures, after contact with objects in the immediate vicinity of the patient, or after possible contact with body fluids or excretions. The purpose of alcohol-containing hand sanitiser is to remove and destroy transient microbial flora, with the exception of *Clostridium difficile* spores (antibiotic-associated diarrhoea) and Norovirus. In those cases, hands must be both washed and disinfected. Apply at least 3 ml hand sanitiser and rub it into your hands for 30 seconds until your hands are dry and the alcohol has evaporated.

Gloves are worn during procedures where the skin comes into direct contact with blood, body fluids, excretions and secretions, contaminated areas, and patients' mucosa or skin lesions. Gloves are also worn when handling contaminated instruments and portals of entry. In compliance with aseptic technique, gloves must be changed when moving from a "dirtier" to a "cleaner" area. Disinfect your hands every time before putting on gloves and immediately after taking them off. Select protective gloves that are suited for the intended purpose.

Keep your hands in good condition. Dry your hands carefully to prevent rashes and infections caused by moisture. On the other hand, try to keep your hands from becoming too dry and chapped. Skin ulcers must be treated, and you should have chronic skin rashes on your hands examined and treated. Infections such as paronychia (infection around the nails) must be treated appropriately before working with patients. Rings, bracelets, watches, long nails, artificial nails, nail extensions and nail jewellery compromise hand hygiene, which is why they must not be worn when working with patients. The use of nail polish is not permitted, either.

### Personal hygiene

Those working with patients must also take care of their own health. Healthcare staff must remember their responsibility for preventing the spread of communicable diseases. Do not come to work when acutely ill.

Those working with patients must make sure that they have full and proper vaccination coverage (e.g. tetanus, measles, whooping cough, hepatitis B, seasonal flu and coronavirus shots. If you have not had chickenpox, you should be tested for antibodies and vaccinated if necessary. For more information, contact Occupational Healthcare.

In wards and outpatient clinics, protective clothing laundered by the employer must be worn. The clothing worn must be clean and changed when soiled, or at least weekly, or daily in the event of an epidemic outbreak. Specific scrubs must be worn in areas that require aseptic technique (e.g. operating theatres). Here, 'scrubs' refers to an outfit of sanitary clothing, including socks and shoes.

During procedures requiring aseptic technique, a surgical mask covering the nose and mouth, sterile scrubs and a disposable hair cover must be worn. The purpose of the hair cover is to protect aseptic areas, particularly the surgical incision, from foreign matter and microbes that may fall from hair. The hair cover must cover all the hair. Disinfect your hands every time after donning and doffing the hair cover. In the hospital, you can wear your own clean work footwear, keeping hygiene and workplace safety in mind. Protective coats or scrubs must not be worn outside the hospital.

The protective clothing should cover the clothes worn underneath. The sleeves of a coat with long arms must be rolled up so that hands and under-arms may be disinfected up to the elbows. While examining and treating patients, the coat must be buttoned up. The use of so-called warm-up jackets is forbidden during point-of-care procedures. Socks must be worn with work shoes. If a student or employee wants to wear a head covering for religious reasons, it must be washable. Personal head coverings are washed at home. Change the head covering when soiled, or at least 3 times a week. Your hair must be clean and tidy, and long hair must be tied up. Wearing piercing jewellery in the mucosa in the face is forbidden in patient work.

## **Persons about to start working with patients or clinical placement**

If the person beginning clinical practice or patient work has been working, been in clinical practice or been a patient in a hospital/nursing facility abroad in the previous year, the following samples are taken before they start working/their clinical practice: **one nasal MRSA swab from the nostrils, and if necessary, from skin lesions on the hands**

For persons entering into employment at Satakunta Hospital District on a permanent or temporary basis, the sampling is arranged by and the results are generally available from Occupational Healthcare of Satakunta Hospital District. The recruiter (Chief Nursing Officer and Head of Division of Satakunta Hospital District) is responsible for making sure that the appropriate samples have been taken. For students, the sampling is arranged by the education institution's public health nurse, who is responsible of making the results known before the start

of the clinical practice. Suitability for work is checked before the onset of work or clinical practice.

### **Patients admitted to hospital**

Samples from members of staff admitted to hospital as patients are taken in accordance with the instructions of Infection Unit.

### **Contact information**

Infection Unit

Tel 044 707 6874

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