

Developing a Multimodal Hand Hygiene Program in Long-Term Care by Understanding Resident Experiences

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Introduction

The WHO Guidelines on Hand Hygiene in Health Care provide an evidence-based framework to improve hand hygiene compliance through a multimodal approach that includes quality improvement.

Resident inclusion in hand hygiene campaigns is critical in complex care environments like long-term care (LTC), where residents have direct contact with one another and their care environment through communal living activities [1,2].

Context

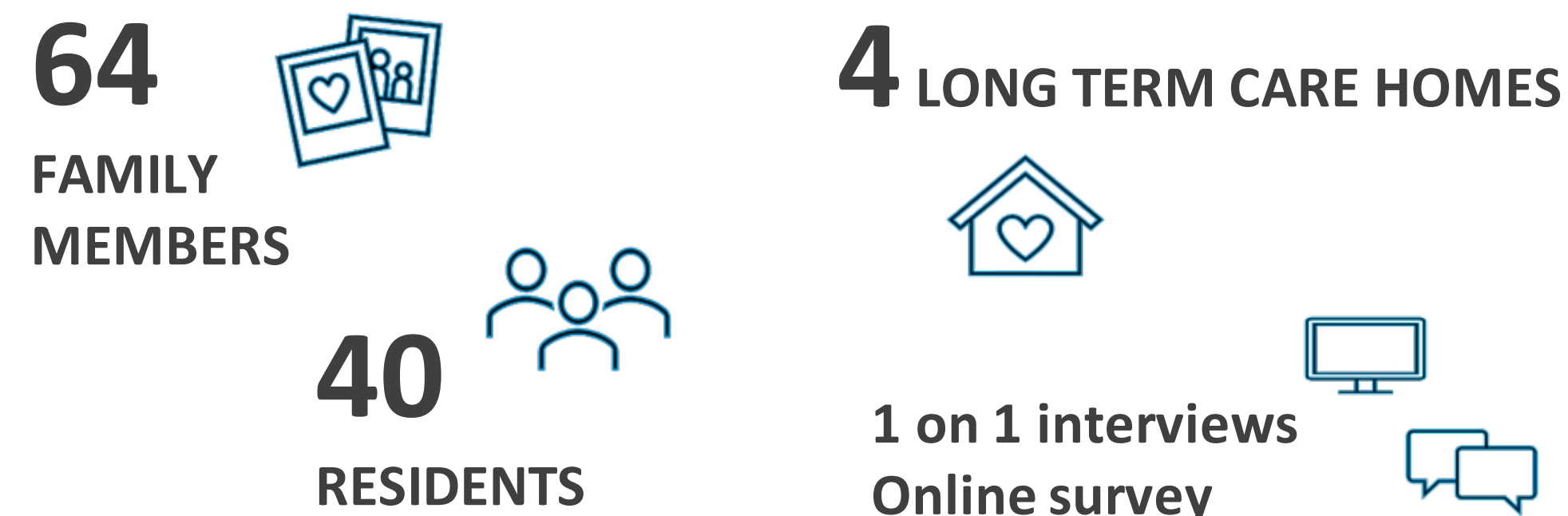
Hand hygiene programs in LTC has been met with some resistance where the acceptability and impact of these interventions on a resident's care experience remain undiscovered.

Person-centred care in LTC shifts the resident to the centre and supports their preferences and autonomy, which can enhance resident well being and their emotional and social needs [3].

This project aimed to understand the resident and family experience with hand hygiene measures in LTC, to learn how to promote safety and comfort through their experiences, and to include what matters to them in pursuing this balance when developing hand hygiene programs.

Methods

The Vancouver Coastal Health (VCH) Experience in Care team engaged residents and families through in-person interviews and online surveys, including Likert-scale ratings and open-ended questions, to better understand their experiences with the current hand hygiene measures in their LTC homes.



Results

Overall, 77% (27/35) of residents and 79% (49/62) of families felt that their LTC home was doing a good job with hand hygiene.

When asked if they agreed that hand hygiene would help protect them or their loved one from getting sick, 79% (30/38) of residents and 86% (54/63) of families responded 'Extremely' or 'Quite a bit'.

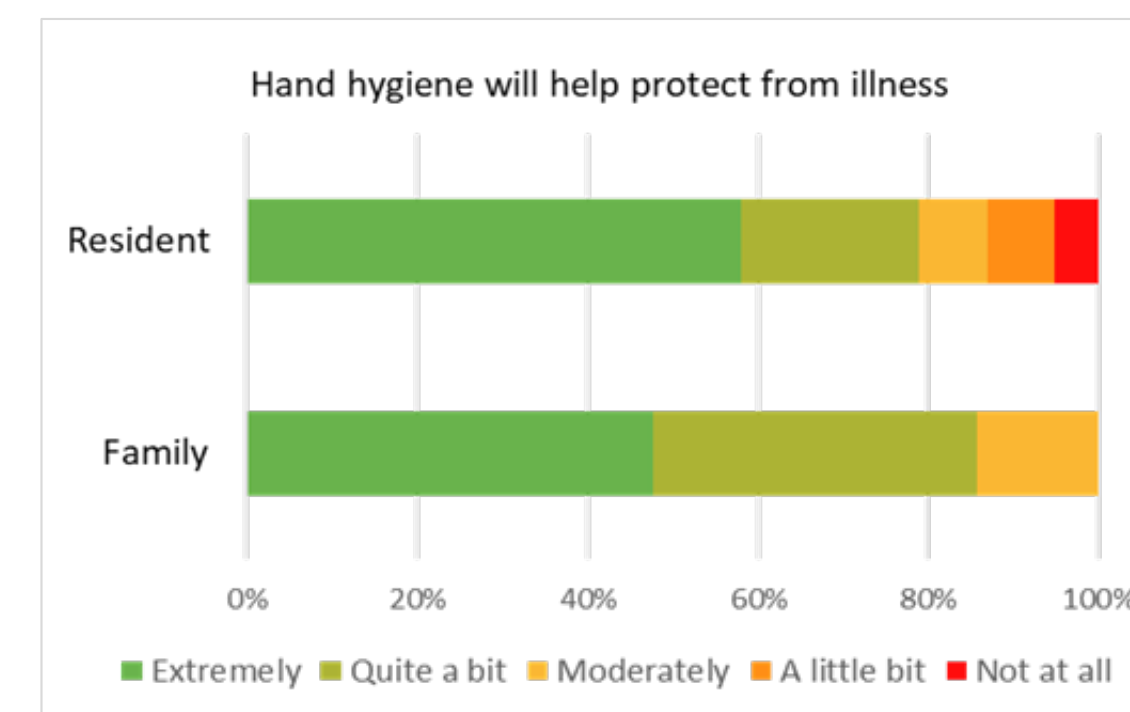


Figure 1. Residents' and families' level of agreement that hand hygiene will keep them or their loved one from getting sick

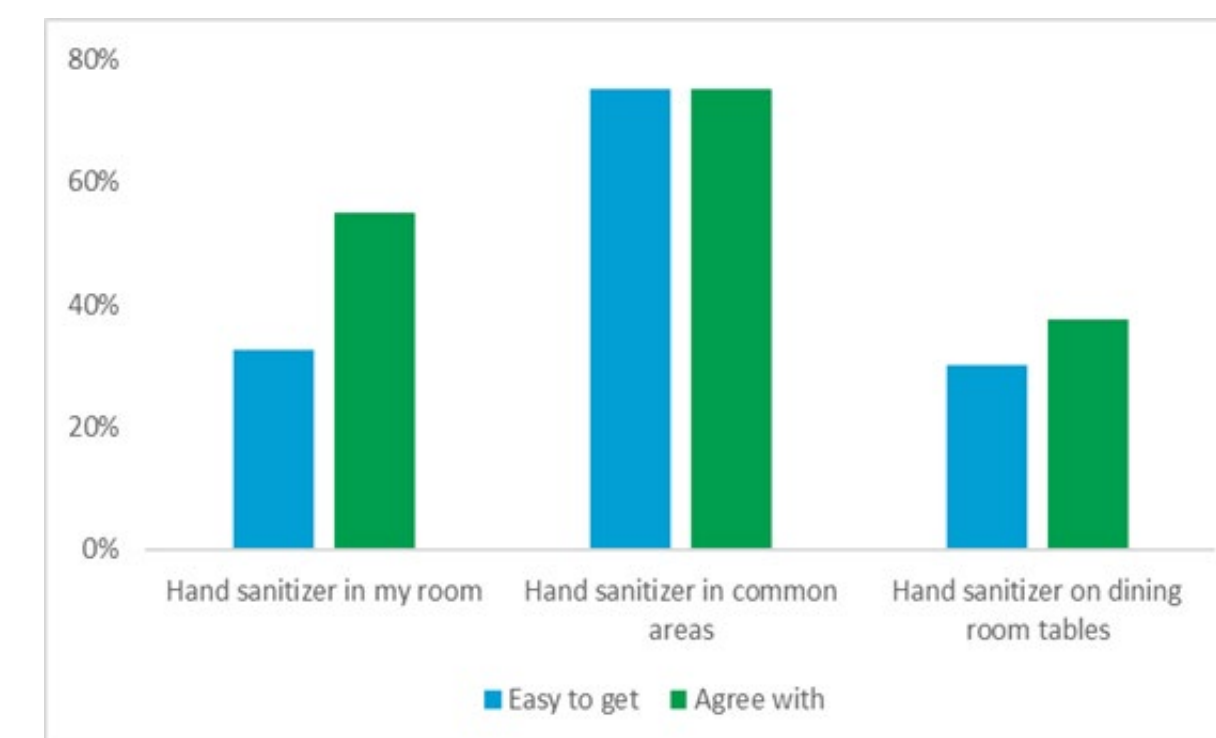


Figure 2. Residents' responses to accessibility and agreement with alcohol-based hand rub placement

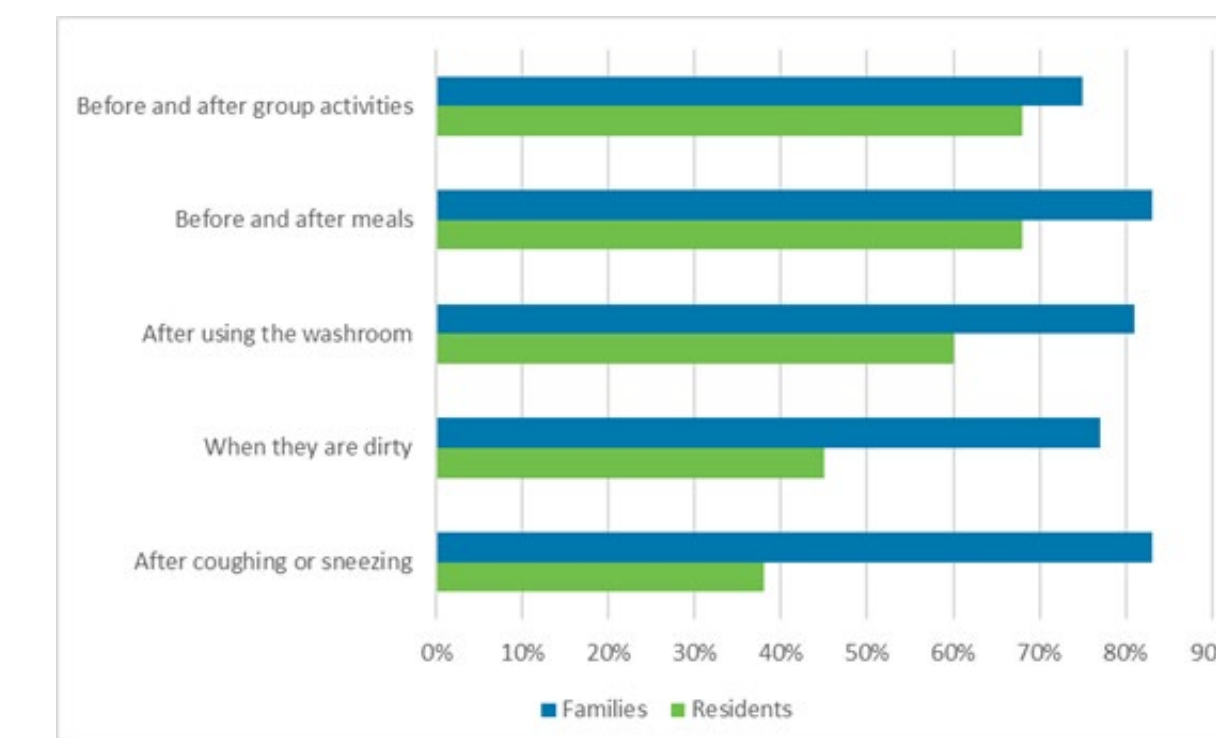


Figure 3. Residents' and families' level of agreement with hand hygiene reminders

What We Heard From Residents and Families

Residents and families shared sincere gratitude for LTC staff and recognized their contributions towards their positive experiences. A resident shared, "Staff are marvelous, kind and understanding" and another family member commented, "The staff are really wonderful in spirit and really care about the residents."

"It is difficult to reach the sink with soap and water. It is difficult to balance while washing hands. It is difficult to reach the hand sanitizer. I want to be able to wash my hands right before eating."
- Resident

"My loved one has dementia and never remembers to use sanitizer, but the facility is very good with reminding him."
- Family

"I'm really lucky to have a good group of staff helping me when I can't wash my hands."
- Resident

"Watching staff clean [their] hands is a good example for residents to learn."
- Resident

Lessons Learned

- Maintain an approach to hand hygiene in LTC that centers on the resident and family
- Support and assist residents with hand hygiene before meals
- Continue modeling good hand hygiene in front of residents
- Continue hand hygiene reminders at entrances
- Support improvements in hand hygiene infrastructure

Acknowledgements

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