

# Variation in Hospital Cleaning Practice and Process in Australian Hospitals: A Structured Mapping Exercise

## Aim

1. To highlight the variation of cleaning practices and processes in 11 Australian hospitals
2. To discuss the challenges this variation poses to the implementation of clinical trials and or changes to cleaning practice in hospitals.

## Background

The Researching Effective Approaches to Cleaning in Hospitals (REACH) study involved the use of a novel cleaning bundle to enhance hospital ward cleaning practices in 11 Australian hospitals in 2016-2017. To support tailoring of the cleaning bundle and prior to the trial commencing, the study team worked with each hospital to review and identify existing hospital cleaning policies, processes and people.

## Methods

The study team used:

- a cross-sectional study design to determine the cleaning practices and processes in participating hospitals
- a standardised data collection template and approach to collect information.

Data collection activities included:

- structured on-site discussions
- a review of hospital practices
- a review of policy and procedural documents related to cleaning.



**11** Australian hospitals in 2016-2017

### Audits



- 11 do visual audits
- 3 also do UV gel dot audits

### Documentation



- 6 have some level of documentation about cleaning frequent touch points
- 2 have full documentation about cleaning frequent touch points

### Product use



- 3 had standard use of a particular product across the whole hospital
- 7 used disinfectant for standard discharge cleans
- 9 used disinfectant for daily precaution room cleans

### Staff training



- 11 do this on induction
- 5 do regular updates

### Communication



- 5 some mechanism for this on the ward
- 5 well established mechanisms for this within the environmental or hotel services team

### Workforce



- 4 Single workforce: cleaning duties only
- 2 Single workforce: cleaning and patient related duties
- 2 Two workforces: one cleaning duties only, one cleaning & patient duties
- 3 Two workforces: one cleaning duties only; one with clinical duties that include cleaning

## Conclusion

The variation identified in cleaning across the 11 hospitals provided challenges in conducting the REACH trial research activities. More broadly, this variation has implications for monitoring cleaning, achieving standards for cleanliness and for implementing multi-site cleaning practice change.



RESEARCHING EFFECTIVE APPROACHES TO CLEANING IN HOSPITALS  
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