



Media Advisory for Immediate Release  
October 20, 2008

**G&M Hospital Launches *JUST CLEAN YOUR HANDS* Program**  
*Province-wide Initiative Aimed At Improving  
Health Care Provider Hand Hygiene*

**Collingwood, Ontario**

The Collingwood General & Marine Hospital is introducing a program called *Just Clean Your Hands* as part of a province-wide initiative to improve hand hygiene by health care providers. "Our hospital and other hospitals in Ontario are leading the way in a worldwide movement to improve patient and health care provider safety by improving hand hygiene," said Linda Davis. "We are increasing our focus on hand hygiene to ensure that every team member knows that part of doing the right job is working with clean hands at every point of contact with our patients and equipment."

The *Just Clean Your Hands* program includes:

1. leadership teams setting the example
2. hand hygiene education for staff, physicians, patients, volunteers and visitors
3. facility improvements to make it easier to clean your hands
4. the right hand-cleaning products at the right point of care
5. a hand skin care program
6. visual reminders to just clean your hands (i.e. posters, stickers, signs) and
7. hand hygiene surveys and audits before and after program implementation that measure improvement in hand hygiene knowledge and practice.

*Just Clean Your Hands* is an evidence-based program developed by the Ontario Ministry of Health and Long-Term Care that builds on work done by the World Health Organization. It is specifically designed for Ontario hospitals and was successfully pilot tested in 10 Ontario hospitals. 100% of provincial hospitals have signed up to participate in this vital program.

"When our health care providers clean their hands before and after touching each patient, it helps stop germs from spreading," says Dr. Mark Quigg, Family Physician and Chair of the G&M's Infection Prevention & Control team. "We want to prevent our patients from getting these infections in the first place, and good hand hygiene will work towards that."

In Canada, about 250,000 people – or one out of every nine patients each year – pick up infections while being treated for something else. Every year these infections contribute to more than 8,000 deaths across Canada.

At the G&M Hospital, volunteers, staff and physicians are working hard at being excellent role models for hand hygiene. In fact, hand hygiene is the focus for the

Hospital's Infection Prevention & Control Week (October 20-26<sup>th</sup>). Loretta Urban-Kew, Infection Prevention & Control Program Co-ordinator at the G&M says, "Our goal is to create a culture for our patient care providers, patients, volunteers and visitors to establish the healthy habit of cleaning their hands without thinking. It's just like buckling up in your vehicle; we want to create the habit of always cleaning your hands."

The community is asked to also do its part. When visiting the Hospital please use the hand hygiene pumps when entering the Hospital, before and after contact with any patient and again when leaving the Hospital. These simple practices help reduce the spread of germs.

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For more information, contact Linda Davis, CEO, Collingwood General & Marine Hospital at 444.8601 ext. 8200.