
Evaluation of the Educational Booklet,
Prevention of Hand Dermatitis
in the Health Care Setting

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List of Acronyms

- CHG: Chlorhexidine Gluconate – used in certain anti-bacterial hand washing agents
- OSHA: Occupational Safety and Health Administration
- SHARP: Safety and Health Assessment and Research for Prevention

Executive Summary

We evaluated the educational booklet titled, *Prevention of Hand Dermatitis in the Health Care Setting* with the aims of determining whether the booklet was a valuable tool for health care personnel and to assess the opinion of the health care worker population on the optimal length and method of dissemination for future informational materials on workplace safety and health.

We developed and sent the educational booklet to 601 health care facilities, including 93 hospital infection control personnel, as well as the nursing supervisor at hospices, nursing homes, rehabilitation centers, and home health care agencies. We mailed a one-page feedback survey using the same mailing list. The survey assessed whether six pre-defined objectives were satisfied. In a subset of the surveyed population, we used a before-and-after analysis to determine whether the booklet contributed to awareness of two issues involved in the selection of moisturizers for health care workers. A survey to the 93 hospital infection control personnel conducted in 2000 assessed “pre-intervention” awareness of these two key issues, while the current survey assessed “post-intervention” awareness.

We received a response rate of only 27%, hindering our ability to generalize the findings. Criteria for five of the six objectives used to evaluate the effectiveness of the educational booklet were exceeded. All respondents stated that the document was clearly written and easily understood and 99% believed that it provided practical tips for preventing hand dermatitis. In the before-and-after analysis, a statistically significantly greater proportion of individuals were aware of the moisturizer incompatibility issues after receiving the booklet than before its receipt. Limitations to this analysis exist including the inability to conclude that the increase in awareness resulted solely from the educational booklet. Nevertheless, the booklet appears to have prompted at least initial steps toward positive change. More than 50% of the respondents indicated that they had checked the compatibility or considered making changes to the products used in their facilities since receiving the booklet.

Lessons were learned regarding the preferred length and methods of distribution for future educational materials to health care professionals. Respondents overwhelmingly prefer brief (1-2 page) written materials in the mail.