

The [New Jersey Health Care Quality Institute](#) is a nonprofit, membership organization working to improve the safety, quality, and affordability of health care for everyone. As the New Jersey Regional Leader for The Leapfrog Group (Leapfrog), we serve as a voice in the community to help drive change, encourage participation in the [Leapfrog Hospital and Ambulatory Surgery Center Survey](#), and support quality improvement efforts across the state.

Proper hand hygiene is the single most effective and simplest way to prevent the spread of infections in health care facilities. However, across the nation, adherence to adequate hand hygiene practices can vary. This has a significant impact on patient outcomes.



The Leapfrog Survey's hand hygiene standard, adapted from the World Health Organization's [Hand Hygiene Self-Assessment Framework](#), focuses on five domains: monitoring, feedback, training and education, infrastructure, and culture. There are various ways to ensure good hand hygiene in your facility. We reached out to 3 of the top performing systems and asked them to share their strategies:

- [Jefferson Health](#) uses direct observations to monitor hand hygiene compliance.
 - o They collect, analyze, and share data across the system using a computer-based reporting system.
 - o Data is stratified by different populations (i.e., physicians, nurses, allied health professionals, etc).
- [Inspira Health Network](#) is moving from direct observations to an electronic hand hygiene monitoring system.
 - o This will help them comply with Leapfrog Survey standards, which in turn ensures they are following evidence-based practices.
 - o Electronic data will give them a new perspective on how they can improve and allow them to better serve their staff and patients.
- [Atlantic Health System](#) has been using electronic hand hygiene monitoring combined with direct observations for 5+ years.
 - o The transparency of data has been a tremendous benefit. Capturing data 24 hours a day provided an immediate awareness of overall hand hygiene behavior, allowing them to better focus prevention and improvement efforts.
 - o The increased level of data transparency combined with multi-disciplinary efforts to improve that data was a key contributor to their overall decrease in hospital acquired infections.



All 3 Health Systems Agree:

- o They saw the Leapfrog Survey as an opportunity to enhance their hand hygiene programs, using it to identify best practices, evaluate outcomes, and develop performance improvement plans.
- o Commitment from leadership is key.
 - ◇ Leadership must acknowledge their role in responding to data quickly and setting staff up for success. Little actions made for staff convenience can impact patient safety. For example, Leadership can expedite a solution if staff are not using hand sanitizers because they are far away.
- o Quality improvement impacts many disciplines, departments, and units so you want to have the right people at the table.
- o Ensure all levels of staff, clinical and nonclinical, feel comfortable bringing forward their experiences – good or bad.

One Health System Shared this Story

While discussing a hospital “good catch”, a patient transporter highlighted the importance of hand hygiene. He discussed how many people he touches on any given day and all the different places he travels within the hospital. Sharing this experience reenergized staff, served as a model of behavior to others, and reminded leaders and staff of the obligation we all have in this important work.



Contact Us



As you work to improve safety and quality in your facility, reach out to [Adelisa Perez-Hudgins, Director of Quality](mailto:aperez@njhcqi.org), at aperez@njhcqi.org, to connect with other health systems on hand hygiene best practices or other topics.