Hand Hygiene Guidelines for Health Care

It is the policy of the facility to follow CDC recommendations for hand hygiene. CDC recommends decontaminating hands (either use of alcohol gel or hand washing) after contact with patient’s intact skin, including taking a pulse or blood pressure, or lifting a resident. Also, decontaminate hands after contact with body fluids or excretions, mucous membranes, non-intact skin, or wound dressings. Decontaminate hands before putting on gloves and after removal of gloves.

(These guidelines are intended to replace the 1985 CDC Hand Washing Guidelines for Health Care.)

Three options for hand sanitation (listed in order of preference):

1. Use of alcohol-based sanitizing gel. A sufficient amount of the gel should be poured on the hand in order to take 15 to 25 seconds to dry. An amount of 50-80% alcohol content is recommended rather than a higher amount of alcohol. Employees are encouraged to have pocket carriage of alcohol-based hand rub solutions along with the availability of bedside dispensers. The availability of free skin care lotion is recommended by CDC for health care workers.
2. The second most preferred method is hand washing with antimicrobial soap and warm water with a lathering of at least 15 to 20 seconds.
3. The third most preferred method is hand washing with plain soap and warm water with a lathering of at least 15 to 20 seconds.