The Effectiveness of Educating RNs On Stethoscope Disinfection

Amanda S. Berg BSN, RN
Lehigh Valley Health Network, amanda_s.berg@lvhn.org

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Amanda Berg, BSN, RN
Lehigh Valley Health Network, Allentown, Pennsylvania

BACKGROUND / INTRODUCTION

Current State
Stethoscope disinfection is a task that should be occurring between each patient use. Observations revealed that RNs do not routinely disinfect their stethoscopes between patient use.

This places our patients at higher risk for:
- Infection
- The stethoscopes are used as a vector for transmission.
- The nurse’s hands touching the infected stethoscopes are used as a vector.
- Longer patient length of stay
- Development of resistant infections (MRSA, VRE) (Merlin, et.al, 2009)

METHODS

- A team was formulated to observe night shift RNs on whether disinfection of stethoscopes was occurring
- A short survey was asked to inquire about stethoscope disinfection
  - How often do you clean your stethoscope?
    - After each patient
    - After each shift
    - When I have time
    - I don’t remember the last time I cleaned it
  - Education was given during Safety huddles and observation was performed after education.

PICO QUESTION:
In the Medical – Surgical setting, does RN education on stethoscope disinfection compared to no education increase compliance of stethoscope disinfection?

P: Nurses Medical - Surgical
I: Education on stethoscope disinfection
C: Compared to no education on stethoscope disinfection
O: Increase compliance of stethoscope disinfection

OUTCOMES

- Nurses clean their stethoscopes more frequently when they know they are being audited.
- Nurses clean their stethoscopes more frequently when alcohol wipes are readily available on their workstations.

CONCLUSIONS

- Nurses clean their stethoscopes more frequently when they know they are being audited.
- Nurses clean their stethoscopes more frequently when alcohol wipes are readily available on their workstations.

References: