

Alcohol-based Hand Rub Dispenser Placement Recommendations

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If you have any questions or comments regarding this information, please contact the Infection Prevention & Control Hand Hygiene Program at: hand.hygiene@ahs.ca.

Background

Installing alcohol-based hand rub (ABHR) dispensers at the point-of-care improves adherence to hand hygiene. The goal is to place ABHR dispensers within the pattern of workflow to improve convenience while reducing opportunity for misuse.

A workflow assessment and point-of-care risk assessment helps determine appropriate placement of ABHR dispensers in areas where patients (includes clients or residents) may not have the capacity to understand the negative effects of ingestion or misuse. These include, but are not limited to pediatrics, units with cognitively impaired individuals, addiction and mental health units, and care spaces inhabited by patients assessed as at risk to ingest. Placement should be assessed by an interdisciplinary team familiar with the program and patient population.

General considerations for ABHR dispenser placement

- Adjacent to all points of care in all situations, except where the presence of ABHR would compromise patient safety.
- Locations close to clinical care areas where monitoring is easy to achieve and opportunities for intentional ingestion, vandalism and theft are minimal.
- Locations where personal protective equipment is donned or doffed.
- At facility entrances and on walls immediately adjacent to the entrance to patient care areas and patient rooms.
- Outside elevators but limited to one dispenser along the wall adjacent to the elevators.
- Housekeeping carts should store ABHR dispensers in a locked drawer/cabinet.
- Contact your facility Fire Marshal or Protective Services Officer for ABHR fire safety guidelines at your facility.

Where NOT to place ABHR dispensers

- At or adjacent to handwashing sinks.
- Over or directly adjacent to an ignition source – electrical outlet or switch.
- In or around parkades, stairwells, and connector hallways and other minimally supervised areas.

Wall-mounted ABHR dispensers

- Located so that splashing or dripping onto adjacent wall and floor surfaces is minimized.
- Located 1.1-1.32 m above the floor to the base of the ABHR dispenser to keep it away from small children.
- Minimum of 1.2 m distance between each ABHR dispenser.

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- Located where they are not likely to be bumped into by stretchers, wheelchairs or people.
- Include a drip tray with a narrow gap between the tray and dispenser that prohibits the easy fit of a cup or other small container underneath.
- In high-risk areas, use a stainless-steel dispenser with stainless steel lock.

Portable ABHR dispensers

- Limit the use of portable ABHR dispensers to monitored staff areas.
- Portable ABHR dispensers should not exceed 400 ml.
- Portable ABHR dispensers must be secured to the cart or surface with a locking device and must be visible to staff at all times.

Personal ABHR dispensers

- Used where wall-mounted or portable ABHR dispensers cannot be installed or when point-of-care hand hygiene is required.
- Should be attached with a belt clip or carried in a pocket.
- Should be of sufficient volume to last through a shift, must be disposable and never refilled.

ABHR dispensers available through CPSM



Wall-mounted ABHR dispenser with drip tray



Portable ABHR dispenser with locking device



Personal ABHR dispenser



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