

# Hand Hygiene Observations... Not So Secret Anymore

Mary Ehly, BSN, RN, CIC; Courtney Mitchell, MPH, CIC; Charlotte Sacksteder, BA; Kelly Zabriskie, BS, CIC

Thomas Jefferson University Hospital

## Background

- Approximately 80% of communicable diseases are transmitted by human hands (CDC)
- Tracking hand hygiene compliance (HHC) is an important function in healthcare to monitor compliance and validate accountability.
- Using a covert approach to monitoring hand hygiene limits the ability to collect a sufficient number of observations that are non-biased and highly reliable.

## Objective

To create a hand hygiene surveillance program to reduce bias, be more reliable, yield a greater number of observations, and provide real time feedback

## Methods

- Implementation of an overt observation program to collect data and provide real-time feedback to staff at a 900-bed multi-facility academic medical center.
- Key Elements of the Program
  - Paid overt observers
  - Uniform blue vests
  - Mobile tablets with an electronic survey tool
  - Two-way observation (entry and exit)
  - Immediate verbal feedback
  - Weekly data distribution

## Results

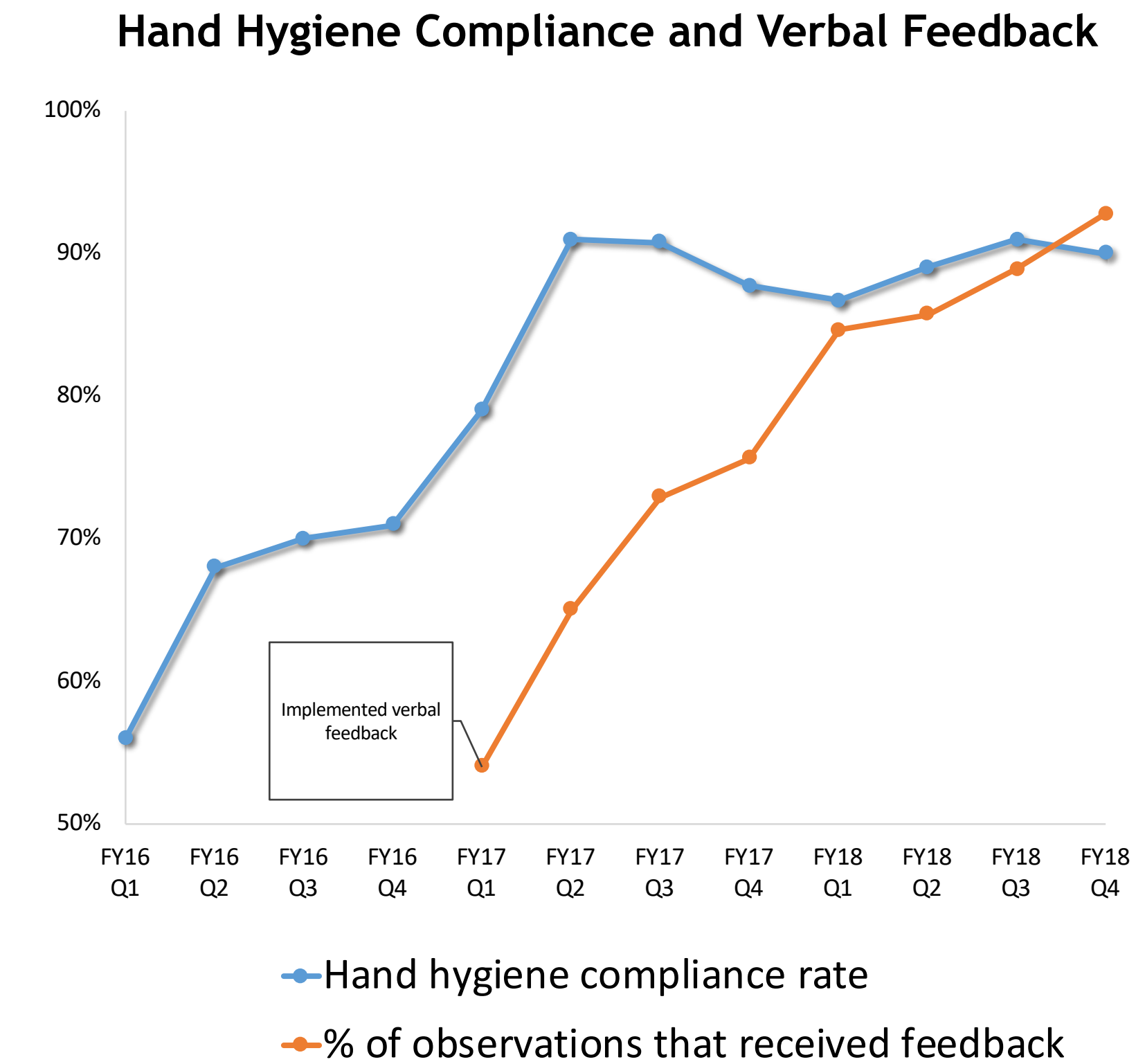


Figure 1. Graph depicts the hand hygiene compliance from fiscal year 2016 to 2018 and the verbal feedback given during that time period.

	Covert FY 2015	Overt FY 2016	Overt FY 2017	Overt FY 2018
Hand hygiene compliance	78%	68%	88%*	89%*
Total observations	8548	24598	38051	44756
% staff who received verbal feedback	N/A	N/A	67%	88%

Table 2. Hand Hygiene compliance and number of observations by fiscal year. \*statistically significant increase in compliance from FY16 to FY17 and FY16 to FY18, p-value <0.001.

## Results (cont'd)

Sample Survey Tool	
Campus Key	Abc123
Title of Observed	Physician
Date/Time of Observation	4/1/19 13:01
Service (if physician)	Cardiology
Patient Contact	Yes
Environmental Contact	Yes
Hand Hygiene Before	Yes
Hand Hygiene After	No
Enteric Precautions	No
Nursing Unit	10 West
Room	1095
Comments	Reminded physician to use alcohol gel when leaving the room.
Was Feedback Given?	Yes

Table 1. Sample entry for a hand hygiene observation

## Conclusions

- Overt observers are not unit specific - provide an unbiased perspective when gathering observations
- Statistically significant increase in the number of observations collected, improved compliance, and the ability to give and track feedback.
- Regularly scheduled observer competencies to ensure accuracy and consistency of each observer.

## Disclosures

Nothing to disclose