

# Nurses attitudes are key to better compliance with infection control practices

June 20 2018, by Mike Addelman

---

A study in the United States has shown that attitudes among community nurses are important for their compliance with infection control practices.

The study, by researchers at The University of Manchester, Columbia University, the Visiting Nurse Service of New York and Appalachian State University in the US, is published in the *American Journal of Infection Control*.

The survey of 359 community nurses analysed knowledge, attitudes and reported compliance with practice guidelines looking at the relationship between attitudes to [infection](#) and actual compliance to infection control norms.

The study is led by Dr. Jingjing Shang from Columbia University School of Nursing, with Dr. David Russell from the Visiting Nurse Service of New York and Department of Sociology, Appalachian State University.

The survey revealed that attitudes and organisational culture, rather than knowledge base was much more likely to inculcate greater compliance with infection control.

Older nurses were more likely to report self-compliance as were Non-Hispanic black nurses—a cultural designation specific to the United States- who were 24 percent more likely than other groups to self-report compliance

The percentage of community nurses in the survey who reported [compliance](#) with infection control practices exceeded 90 percent for most of the measured behaviours.

However, 81.9 percent said they wear a disposable face mask whenever there is a possibility of a splash or splatter, and 79 percent said they wear a gown if soiling with blood or bodily fluids is likely.

And 78.8 percent - 69.6 percent said they wear goggles or an eye shield when of exposed to bloody discharge or fluid.

Slightly more than two-thirds of respondents said that the influenza vaccine is safe (68.5 percent), and 60.4 percent of them felt it was easy for them to stay at home when they are sick.

And almost all the respondents failed to identify that hand hygiene should be performed after touching the nursing bag, which may transport infectious pathogens between patients.

Professor Dawn Dowding, from The University of Manchester is on the research team.

She said: "Infections such as urinary tract, respiratory, wound, and sepsis are one of the major reasons why patients are admitted to hospital. But we know very little about controlling it in the community

"In fact, the community is a place where control is more difficult as patients may live in a variety of circumstances, with varying degrees of hygiene and knowledge."

"We find most of the nurses said they were compliant with infection control protocols, but some said they were not."

She added: "We're not entirely sure why older nurses are more likely to comply with infection control protocols, but it's probably a combination of factors.

"One possibility could be that older nurses have probably spent more time in the same organisation and whose infection [control](#) practices have become second nature to them

"But our key message is that [infection control](#) is not necessarily about knowledge- as most of the nurses surveyed had been working for some time.

"So more training, for example, might not necessarily change behaviour; we felt from this research that inculcating good practice into the organisational culture is likely to be more effective."

**More information:** David Russell et al. Factors for compliance with infection control practices in home healthcare: findings from a survey of nurses' knowledge and attitudes toward infection control, *American Journal of Infection Control* (2018). [DOI: 10.1016/j.ajic.2018.05.005](https://doi.org/10.1016/j.ajic.2018.05.005)

Provided by University of Manchester

Citation: Nurses attitudes are key to better compliance with infection control practices (2018, June 20) retrieved 23 April 2024 from <https://medicalxpress.com/news/2018-06-nurses-attitudes-key-compliance-infection.html>

This document is subject to copyright. Apart from any fair dealing for the purpose of private study or research, no part may be reproduced without the written permission. The content is provided for information purposes only.