

PRESS RELEASES

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Ecolab Hand Hygiene Compliance Monitoring Program Helps Hospitals Reduce Infection

ST. PAUL, Minn., Jun 25, 2007 (BUSINESS WIRE) -- Ecolab Inc. announced today a new Hand Hygiene Monitoring Compliance Program for hospitals and healthcare facilities. The program provides a multi-intervention approach that combines effective hand hygiene products, a step-by-step implementation process, patient empowerment education and training materials, ongoing measurement, and benchmarking to increase and sustain hand hygiene compliance. According to the Centers for Disease Control, proper hand hygiene is the single most effective method for preventing healthcare-associated infections (HAIs) in hospitals, which account for an estimated 99,000 deaths annually in the United States.

"Simply put, proper hand hygiene enables hospitals to provide better patient care and to reduce costs," said Tim Mulhere, vice president and general manager of Healthcare at Ecolab. "The Ecolab Hand Hygiene Compliance Monitoring Program provides all the tools and resources hospitals need to drive hand hygiene compliance and reduce healthcare-associated infections."

Elements of the Ecolab Hand Hygiene Compliance Monitoring Program include:

-- Patient empowerment - Patient empowerment programs increase awareness of the importance of hand hygiene and encourage patients and their families to ask their healthcare provider to wash or sanitize their hands prior to any direct contact. Ecolab has developed a comprehensive set of materials, including brochures, posters, buttons, and a video, under a program entitled "It's OK To Ask," that encourage patients to actively participate in their care. According to recent studies (1999-2006) in the American Journal of Infection Control and Journal of Hospital Infection Control, patient empowerment and measurement have been shown to increase and sustain compliance on average 56 percent.

-- Measurement - Measurement of compliance data establishes an accurate, current baseline compliance rate against which progress can be tracked. Ongoing measurement and reporting further supports compliance by enabling hospitals to objectively measure the progress of programs and promote improvements.

-- Benchmarking - Confidential reporting of data and analysis helps hospitals to validate their hand hygiene program as it grows. In addition, ongoing compliance can be compared against data from similar sized hospitals and units including in-patient/out-patient sites from Acute Care, Pediatrics, ER, ICU and NON-ICU.

Ecolab has partnered with Dr. Maryanne McGuckin, a leading authority in the measurement of hand hygiene compliance, for the design of the program, baseline measurement and ongoing reporting analysis services.

"Comprehensive hand hygiene compliance monitoring programs like that created by Ecolab enable healthcare facilities of all sizes to assess compliance rates at their facility and help meet the guidelines and recommendations for improving patient safety set by the Joint Commission (JC) and World Health Organization," said Dr. McGuckin.

Studies show that improved hand hygiene compliance and the associated reduction in HAI rates lower hospital operating costs. According to data from the Pennsylvania Hospital Cost Containment Council, the average hospital charge without a healthcare-associated infection is nearly six times less (\$31,389) than for patients who experienced HAI (\$185,260).

With sales of \$5 billion and more than 13,000 sales-and-service associates, Ecolab Inc. (NYSE:ECL) is the global leader in cleaning, sanitizing, food safety and infection prevention products and services. Ecolab delivers comprehensive programs and services to the foodservice, food and beverage processing, healthcare, and hospitality markets in more than 160 countries. More news and information is available at www.ecolab.com.

(ECL-P)

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