EVS Micro-Learns: Essentials for Infection Control

User Guide

About the EVS Micro-Learns

Environmental services (EVS) workers are vital members of the healthcare team and are crucial to stopping the spread of germs in health care. Project Firstline's *EVS Micro-Learns: Essentials for Infection Control* are a series of guided discussions that provide brief, on-the-job educational opportunities on infection control topics relevant to EVS tasks.

Using the EVS Micro-Learns

The micro-learns can be incorporated into existing opportunities where EVS workers gather, such as pre-shift "huddles" or team meetings. The sessions should be led or facilitated by an experienced team member with infection control expertise specific to EVS.

Each EVS micro-learn package includes an adaptable discussion guide for the facilitator and a job aid, which facilitators are encouraged to review prior to presenting.

Discussion Guide. The discussion guide is not a script. Facilitators are encouraged to adapt the guide for their audience by incorporating relevant and practical questions and ideas. For instance, facilitators can connect the content to the audience's job duties, facility-specific cases or issues, resources and points of contact, and other information.

Job Aid. The one-page, visual job aid helps to reinforce the key messages of the micro-learn. Facilitators are encouraged to make the job aid available after the micro-learn session in digital or hard copy form.

Use the QR code to provide feedback on this training.

Micro-Learn Discussion Guide:

Contact Time for Environmental Services (EVS)

Prepare:

Environmental services (EVS) workers are the first line of defense in stopping harmful germs from spreading in the healthcare environment. EVS workers are experts in understanding and using the contact times of disinfectants to kill germs on healthcare surfaces. As you present the information below, provide examples relevant to your team and any facility-specific guidance related to this topic.

Share key information:

- Harmful germs can survive on surfaces for weeks or months, which is why disinfecting surfaces correctly is so important.
- Contact time is the amount of time you leave the surface wet with a disinfectant to effectively kill germs. If you don't keep the surface wet for the right contact time, you will leave live germs behind after wiping.
- This is also why dried-out wipes don't work.
  - **Facilitator note:** *Describe specific ways that your facility makes sure disinfection is done correctly (e.g., ATPase testing, audits).*
- How to disinfect surfaces:
  1. **Check the surface** to see if it is visibly dirty and needs to be cleaned before disinfecting.
  2. **Read the disinfectant label** and review contact time instructions before use, because some germs may require different contact times.
     - **Facilitator note:** *Demonstrate where to find contact times on disinfectant containers.*
  3. **Apply the disinfectant** according to the disinfectant label instructions.
  4. **Re-check the surface** to make sure it has not dried too quickly. If the surface is no longer visibly wet and the contact time has not passed, reapply the disinfectant.
- The surface is disinfected once the contact time has passed.
- When using disinfectant wipes, be sure to close the lid so the wipes do not dry out, which makes them ineffective.

Reinforce key points:

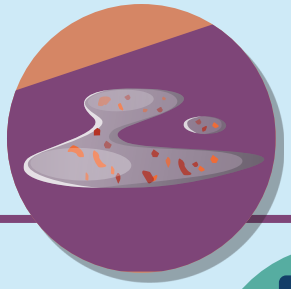
- Keep surfaces wet with the disinfectant long enough for it to work.
- Following the right contact time helps kill germs in healthcare settings.

EVS Disinfecting Done Right: Killing Germs on Surfaces

PROJECT FIRSTLINE

Germs can live on healthcare surfaces for weeks to months, which is why disinfecting surfaces correctly is so important.

1. **Check the surface to make sure it does not need to be cleaned first.**



2. **Read the label of the disinfectant to find out its contact time.**
   - **When using disinfectant wipes, be sure to close the lid so they don't dry out.**

3. **Apply the disinfectant according to the label's contact time instructions.**

4. **Reapply if needed to make sure the surface remains wet for the full contact time.**

Once the entire contact time has passed, the disinfectant has done its job!

Learn More

Dry Surfaces Infographic: https://bit.ly/3NsoUtV
How to Read a Disinfectant Label: https://bit.ly/4bxqVy7