

HOSPITAL CHARACTERISTICS

BRONSON  
METHODIST  
HEALTH

- ▶ Kalamazoo, MI
- ▶ 370 beds
- ▶ www.bronsonhealth.com

S.T.E.E.E.P.



SAFE

Hand hygiene reduces the risk of health care-acquired infections.

TEAM MEMBERS

**Kathy Courtney, RN**

Emergency Department Nurse Manager

**Krista Hinz**

Administrative Extern and Hand Hygiene Auditor Coordinator

**Mary LaVoy, RN**

Infection Control Coordinator

**Cheryl L. Knapp**

Vice President, Quality and Safety, Executive Sponsor

**Richard A. Van Enk**

Director, Infection Control and Epidemiology

## WASHING HANDS/SAVING LIVES

### The Problem

Hand hygiene is the single most important way to prevent the spread of infection in a hospital. Most health care personnel do not perform hand hygiene as often as they should. To improve the performance of health care staff in hand hygiene, it first must be measured accurately. Bronson designed a program to consistently and accurately measure hand hygiene performance in a hospital setting using a minimum resources.

### The Solution

The optimal way to measure health care worker hand-hygiene performance is through direct observation, comparing individual behavior against the established policy or standard. Direct observation can be costly, labor-intensive and biased by the observer. Bronson partnered with Western Michigan University Department of Psychology to use psychology research methods practicum students as observers. Observers are extensively trained and monitored, accuracy and inter-observer variability is measured and audit results are distributed to the health care staff regularly and frequently to allow for rapid feedback and performance improvement.

### Results

- » Initial health care worker hand hygiene compliance with the current CDC guidelines was below 40 percent. After implementation of the current auditing program and monthly feedback to all hospital leaders, our monthly performance across the entire hospital exceeds 80 percent, and we have exceeded 90 percent in some months.
- » Performance has been sustained for over two years.