

CLEANERS' CRUCIAL INFECTION CONTROL ROLE

Given the inherent risks to patients and residents in hospitals and aged care facilities it is hard to understand why all cleaners do not undergo formalised training in the appropriate qualification for their role. In light of recent and ongoing infection control scares, this makes no sense. This needs to be taken seriously and it would be prudent for employers to up-skill cleaners and with some urgency.

Hospital acquired infection is an ongoing and topical issue. Appropriate cleaning has been clearly identified as one of the major weapons to combat this problem. Providing appropriate and effective training for staff makes a significant contribution to make sure everything possible is being done to meet 'duty of care'.

There is little point in implementing an infection control program without including a crucial link in the Infection Control Chain - the cleaners.

Lennox Institute has been active in the delivery of Certificate II and III in Health Support Services (Cleaning) for many hospitals and aged care facilities. As a preferred training provider at a number of NSW hospitals, Lennox Institute is competent to extend delivery and provide this service to cleaners in other facilities.

Certificate II and III in Health Support Services (Cleaning) has been customised for cleaners working in the healthcare and aged care industries. The materials have been reviewed by respected industry consultants, are monitored for currency and updated on an ongoing basis. The resources have been well received by management, infection control personnel and students.

The training is delivered over a period of 10 formal sessions to maximise the intake of knowledge and facilitate the transfer of skills to the workplace.

Topics include, Comply with Infection Control Procedures; Work Effectively within the Health Industry; and Handling Waste in Health Care.

Additional units focus on the hands on activities specific to a cleaner's role. The formal qualification gives people a level of

It is constantly being brought to public attention that hygiene standards are compromised in many areas of our society be it hospitals, aged care facilities, restaurants or even airlines. In spite of this, it is surprising that many employers are still not taking advantage of the opportunity to put training programs in place to improve skills.

recognition and professionalism which has not previously been achievable.

The training attracts government financial assistance for eligible workers enrolled in the course.

We have had an excellent response by many facilities and Government departments and employers have been enthusiastic in their feedback to Lennox. Typically they say, 'this is the best thing we have ever done for our employees', 'this training provides enormous benefits for the Area Health Service in that it assists in increasing awareness of OH & S issues in the workplace, infection control and the importance of maintaining proper

cleaning standards' and 'the improvement in staff morale and the interest and excitement generated amongst the staff by the training has been incredible'.

Feedback from infection control managers and nurses has been positive too with a typical comment being, 'infection control at our site has examined the learning resources Lennox Institute has developed for the training. We rate the content and currency as extremely comprehensive and the cleaners are looking forward to the training with great excitement'.

A corporate member of the Infection Control Association NSW, Lennox Institute is working closely with many members who have been extremely supportive of the training program, encouraging Infection Control Managers to take advantage of the comprehensive training which supports and assists them in meeting their goals in their respective areas of work.

One of the many rewards of undertaking this training program is that most employees,

having received formal training for the first time, are now asking 'what next?' In response to this, Lennox Institute has added Supervisory and Management training to its scope and will soon be delivering Certificate III and IV in Frontline Management and a Diploma in Business Management.



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Specific healthcare training includes critical infection control topics

