

## A prospective controlled trial of an electronic hand hygiene reminder system.

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<https://psnet.ahrq.gov/issue/prospective-controlled-trial-electronic-hand-hygiene-reminder-system>

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Hand hygiene remains one of the most basic targets for enhancing patient safety. Poor [hand hygiene compliance](#) persists despite multiple global efforts, and a recent [study](#) showed handwashing rates are likely even lower when there is not a direct observer recording compliance. This prospective controlled trial in two medical intensive care units (ICUs) studied the effect of an electronic reminder system. An audible chime for each room entry and exit initially increased handwashing events in the test ICU, but this effect quickly declined, likely related to [alert fatigue](#). In contrast, a combination of a chime and real-time computer monitor feedback of current hygiene compliance rates resulted in an increase that lasted throughout the study phase. Once the reminder system was turned off, compliance rates returned to the previous baseline. Overall hand hygiene compliance rates were quite low: recorded handwashing occurred in only about one-third of room entries or exits. A prior AHRQ WebM&M [perspective](#) reviewed innovations in promoting hand hygiene compliance.