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Background

- ▶ Infection Prevention and Control (IPC) programs look for novel approaches to reduce *Clostridium difficile* (CD) infections and their associated morbidity and costs
- ▶ In 2016, Vancouver Coastal Health (VCH) developed an innovative Canine Scent Detection (CSD) program to detect environmental reservoirs of CD in healthcare settings
- ▶ Fraser Health (FH) contracted with VCH to deploy the dogs two days a week in FH acute care sites

Results

Between December 2016 and April 2019

- ▶ 16 acute care sites were visited in the two health authorities
- ▶ > 1200 searches have been conducted in areas/units
- ▶ > 3,000 total alerts across both health authorities

Top 6 Alerted Locations

Hallways
Nursing Stations
Clean Storage
Staff Rooms
Patient Rooms
Washrooms

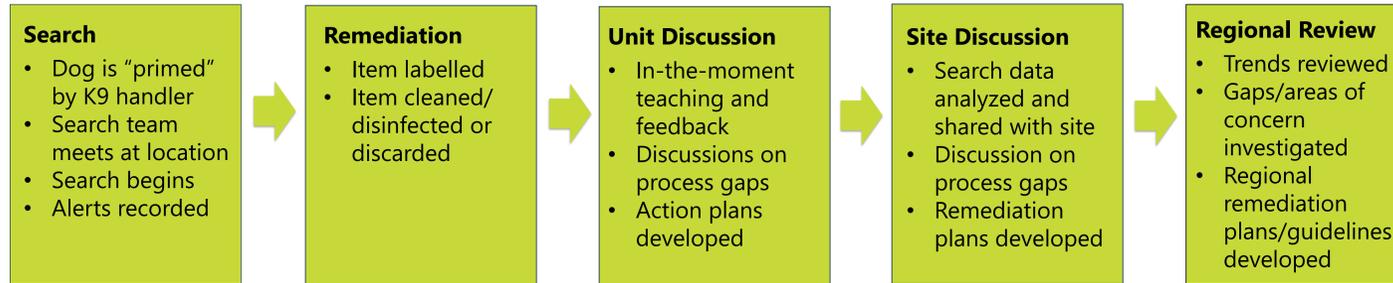
Top 6 Alerted Objects

PPE Cart
Vitals Monitoring Equipment
Wheelchairs
Charts and Chart Rack
Linen Cart
Patient Beds

Examples of improvement initiatives stemming from the CSD program include

- ▶ Daily cleaning and disinfection of patient charts
- ▶ Cleaning and disinfection of shoe racks in staff locker rooms
- ▶ A VCH/FH joint quality improvement project regarding linen and linen carts

Program methods



Angus in Action

The K9 Teams

Dodger in Action

Dodger and Angus

Common, weird and wacky findings



Medicine Cart

Glove Boxes

PPE Cart

Stethoscopes

Ripped Couch

Staff Locker

Charts

Paper Towel Holder

Tube Station

Birthing Ball & Breast Pump

Toilet Paper Holder

Patient Bed

Toys

Pill Crusher

Discussion

The alerts have

- ▶ Reinforced the importance of hand hygiene, de-cluttering and replacing damaged equipment
- ▶ Engaged front-line staff and unit management in discussions regarding infection control
- ▶ Provided opportunities for collaboration in addressing joint areas of concern across health authorities

The CSD program has helped shift the conversation regarding infection prevention and control by

- ▶ Providing visual reminders of IPC best practices
- ▶ Highlighting the modes of CD transmission in a non-punitive way
- ▶ Engaging and empowering front-line staff, unit managers, environmental services staff, as well as other stakeholders

The CSD program has identified

- ▶ Reservoirs of contamination, in both expected and unexpected locations
- ▶ Gaps in existing processes for cleaning and disinfection
- ▶ Issues with equipment design and location

Lessons learned

- ▶ The success of the program is dependent on a team approach
- ▶ Stakeholders at the unit, site and regional level need to be engaged prior to the first search
- ▶ The program has been well received by staff and been the catalyst for multiple improvement initiatives
- ▶ There is a growing demand for the program, and in order to meet that demand, program capacity and resources must also grow