

# Hand Hygiene

Category: Longing

written by Ross Carne | February 9, 2026

I work in three public hospitals. Each has its own mandatory training process. I completed the hand hygiene modules at two of them and submitted those certifications to the third. I was told that the training is site-specific, that I'd need to also do the training at the third hospital.

At first, I felt frustrated. How can hand hygiene be site specific? Is my flu vaccination site specific?

Then I realized my feelings ran deeper than frustration. They spoke of longing.

I came to this work to help people.

My hope is to be supported by a system that enables care rather than obstructs it.

If I spend twenty minutes repeating a module I've already completed, that's time I can't spend with a patient, time I can't spend shortening a four-month wait to be seen, time I can't give to someone in my waiting room when I'm running late.

Multiplied across a workforce, this small loss of time becomes something larger—an unacknowledged public health concern.

Everyone—clinicians, patients, and administrators alike—has similar examples of systemic friction, of moments where intention is halted by inefficiency.

So what do I long for?

I long to help.

I long for obstacles to fall away.

I long for systems that are thoughtful rather than opaque, for overhead announcements that are less loud and more relevant, for training that is useful, for education that is more about health than about the health system.

I long to care and to be supported in that care.

I long to learn what is not yet known.

I long to reassure.

I long to rest in the miracle of the body—its seamless interplay of incomprehensible systems.

I long to reconcile health and aging.

I long for mentors who see what I want to give.

I long to be part of a team whose intentions I recognize and share.

I could wash my hands of these frustrations and simply complete the hand hygiene module again.

I probably will.

But more deeply, I will still long to belong.

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