

WHO Alliance for Patient Safety Hand Hygiene Survey

Results from Phase One

October 2007

In March 2007 the First Global Patient Safety Challenge of the World Alliance for Patient Safety, in collaboration with the Patients for Patient Safety Programme and Dr. Maryanne McGuckin, USA, initiated an international survey on Hand Hygiene to determine:

- The availability of hand hygiene products (soap and water and/or alcohol-based handrubs.)
- The extent of patient empowerment in hand hygiene.
- What programmes exist within respondent's countries and communities to promote hand hygiene and infection control, and what approaches were considered most useful to educate people in regard to hand hygiene.
- Personal experiences of health-care associated infections.

The survey was made available through a link on the World Health Organisation website and was distributed by Patient Safety Champions throughout the world to people within their communities.

This report presents the findings from the 238 respondents, from 43 different countries, who completed the survey between March and August 2007. The analysis is presented for the total data set, and is then subdivided by region, and by whether respondents identified themselves as healthcare workers.

A second survey will commence in November 2007 (Phase 2), and will encompass:

- The collection of further responses to the survey, with an effort to contact a greater proportion of people who are not healthcare workers or healthcare policy makers, and who are from countries outside North America or Europe.
- Qualitative Research will be undertaken, conducting interviews with respondents who have stated that they know a person who contracted an infection while they were in hospital, after surgery, or visiting a clinic, office or other healthcare facility.

Summary Analysis

Availability of Hand Hygiene Products

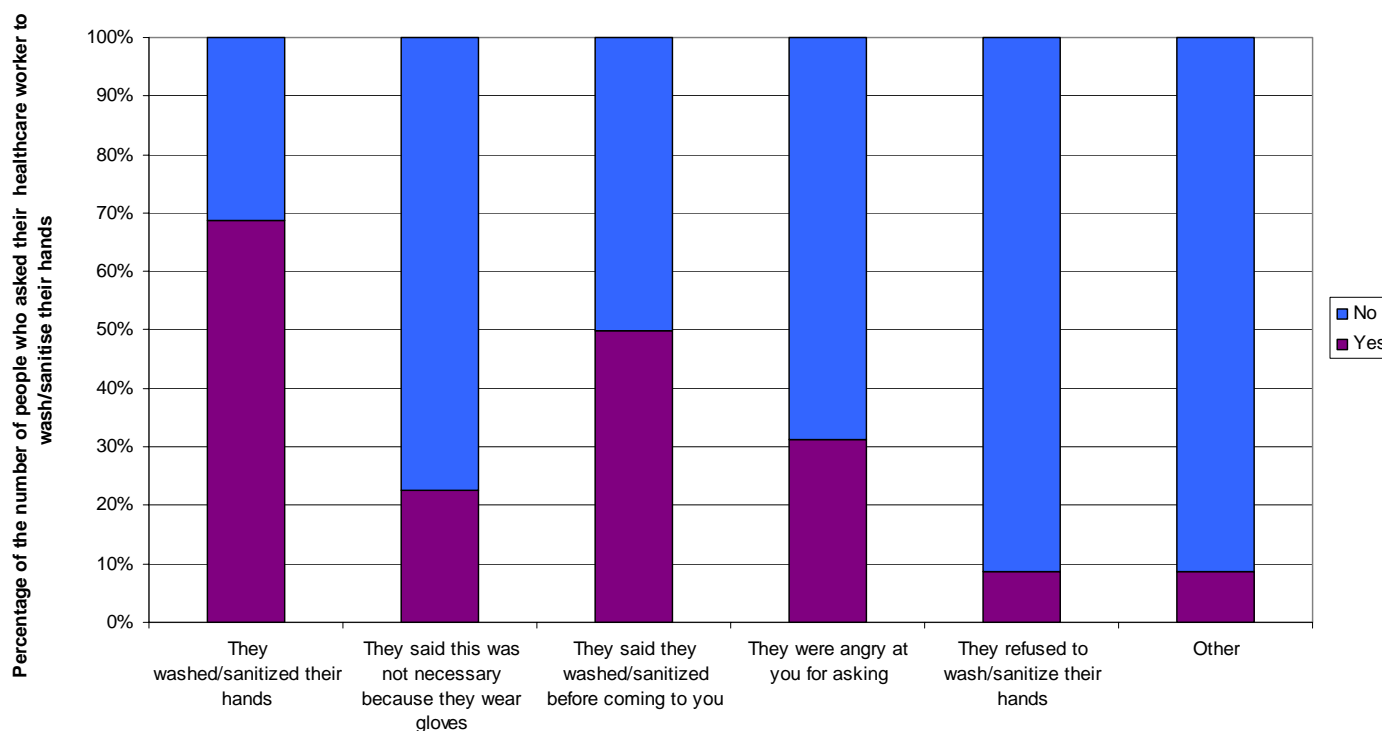
Table 1: Availability of Hand Hygiene products	Yes	Sometimes	No	No Response
Are hand cleaning products (e.g. soap, water or alcohol-based handrubs) readily available for staff, patients, and visitors to use in your hospitals and clinics?	74%	4%	19%	4%

Patient Empowerment

Table 2: Patient Experiences of patient empowerment	Yes	No	No Response
Have you ever asked your healthcare worker to wash/sanitize their hands before they examined you?	33.5%	66%	0.5%

Those who answered 'yes' to this question were asked what response they received from their healthcare worker:

Graph 1: When you asked your healthcare worker to wash/sanitize their hands, what response(s) did you receive?



Graph 1 shows that, of the 80 people who asked their healthcare worker to sanitize their hands, in 69% of cases, healthcare workers proceeded to sanitize their hands.

Thirty-one percent of respondents reported that their healthcare worker became angry, and 9% reported that their healthcare worker refused to wash or sanitize their hands.

Respondents were asked a set of hypothetical questions on patient empowerment on hand hygiene issues:

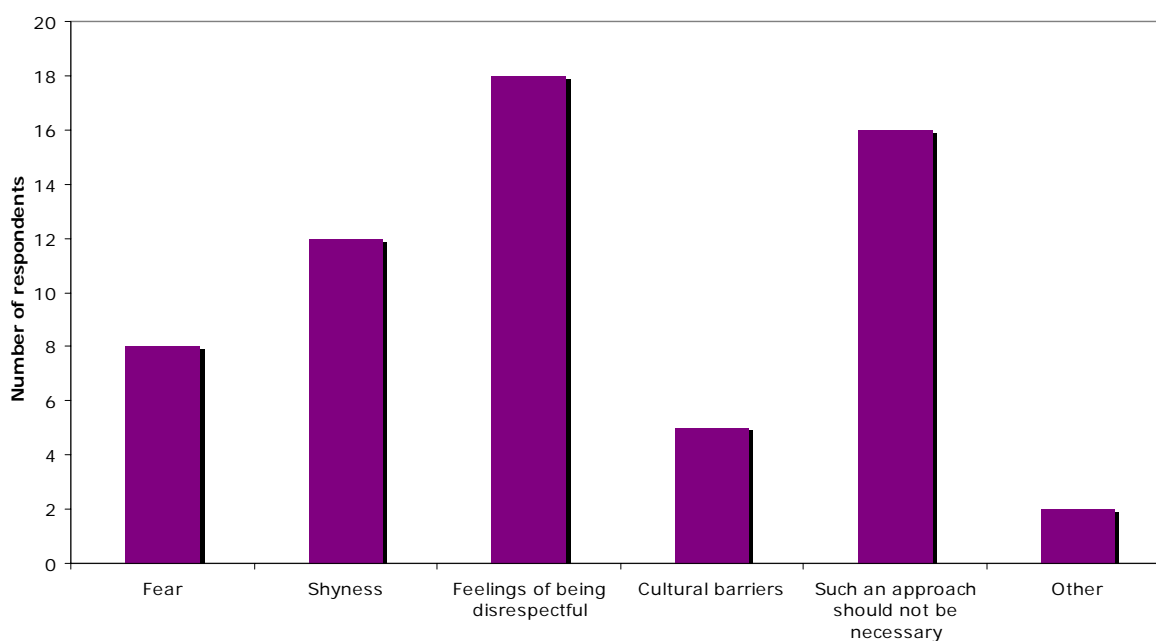
Table 3: Patient expectations in hypothetical situations	Yes	No	No Response
If your doctor, nurse, or other person providing healthcare to you, ASKED or invited you to remind them to wash their hands before examining you would you feel able to do this?	84%	14%	2%
If your doctor, nurse, or other person providing healthcare to you, DID NOT ASK or invite you to remind them to wash their hands before examining you would you feel able to do this?	56%	41%	3%
If you saw a doctor or nurse taking care of the patient next to you and then coming to you without washing or sanitizing their hands, would you ask them to do so?	76%	21%	3%

Table 3 illustrates that 56 percent of respondents expected that they would feel able to remind their healthcare provider to wash their hands if they had not been asked to do so, but this increased to 84 percent if they had been ASKED or invited to do so.

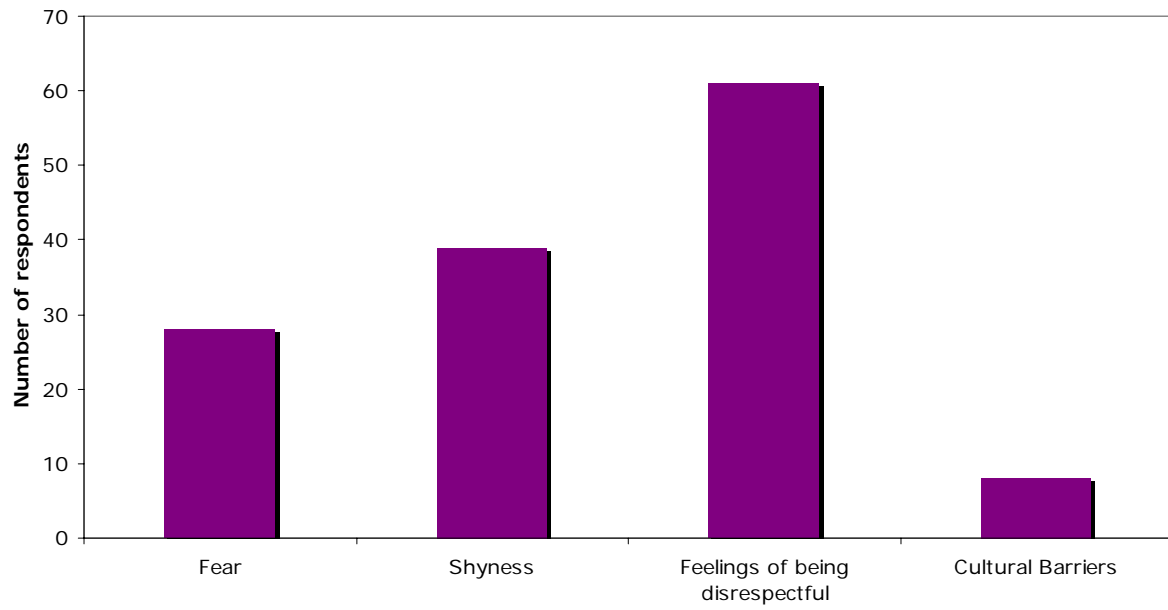
Table 3 also suggests that where patients can see that their healthcare worker had not complied with hand hygiene they feel more empowered to question their healthcare worker.

Explanations of the reasons(s) for not feeling able to remind their healthcare worker to sanitize their hands indicated a range of possible explanations.

Graph 2: If you would not feel able to remind your healthcare worker to wash/sanitize their hands if they had ASKED or invited you to do so, please indicate your reason(s) why.



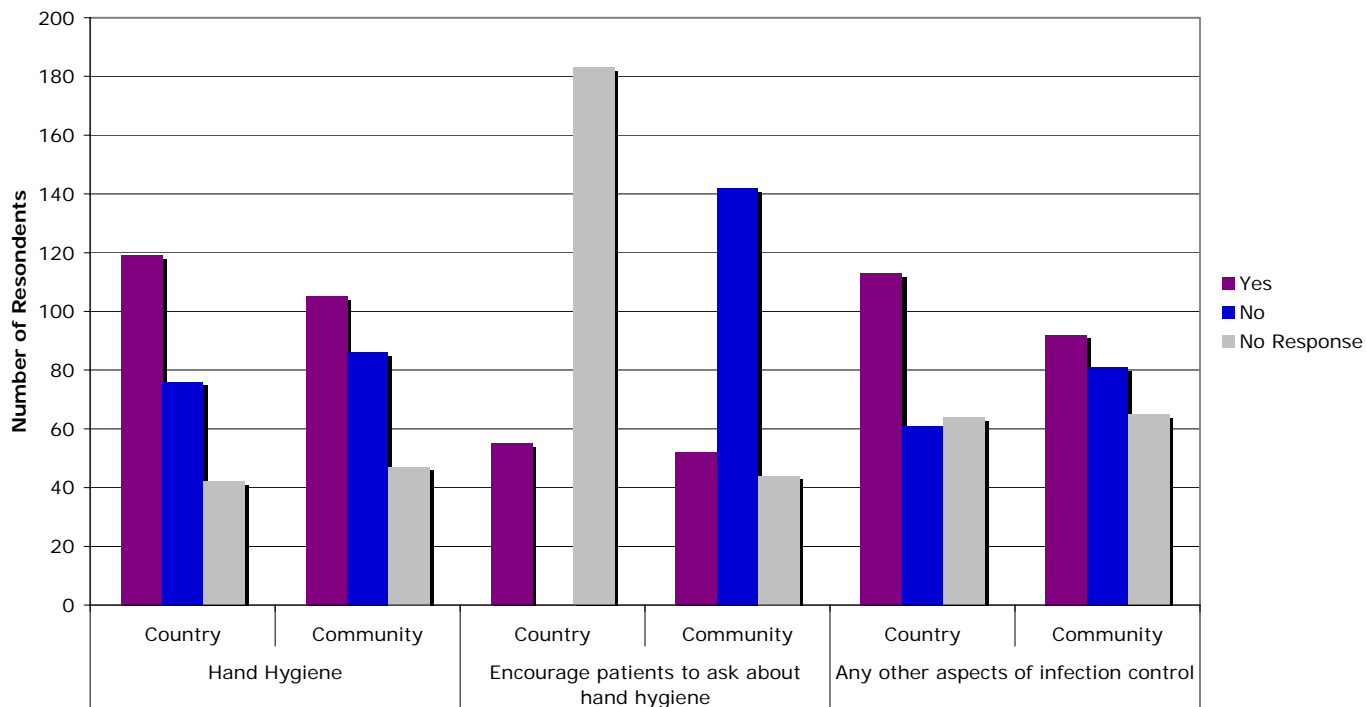
Graph 3: If you would not feel able to remind your healthcare worker to wash/sanitize their hands if they HAD NOT ASKED or invited you to do so, please indicate your reason(s) why.



Hand Hygiene Programmes

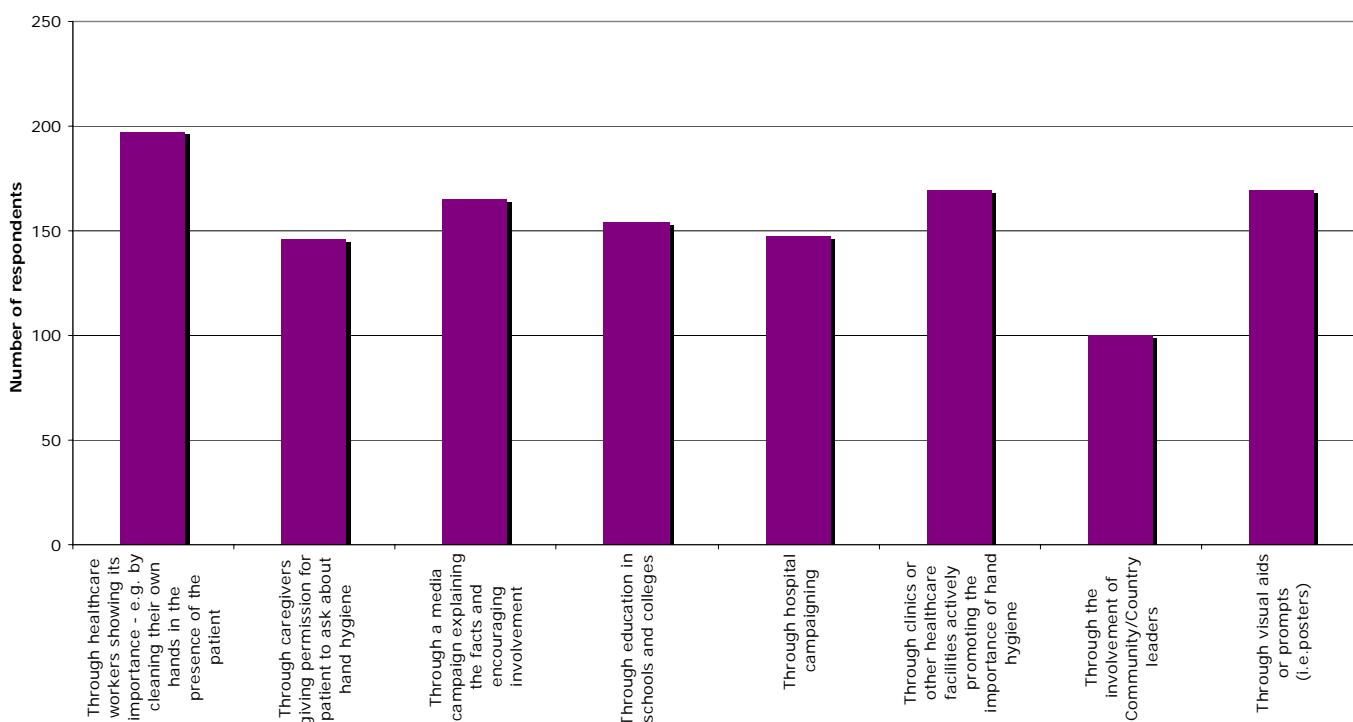
When asked whether there were Hand Hygiene programmes in their Country or Community respondents answered:

Graph 4: Are there programmes in your Country/Community that educate or communicate with patients on...



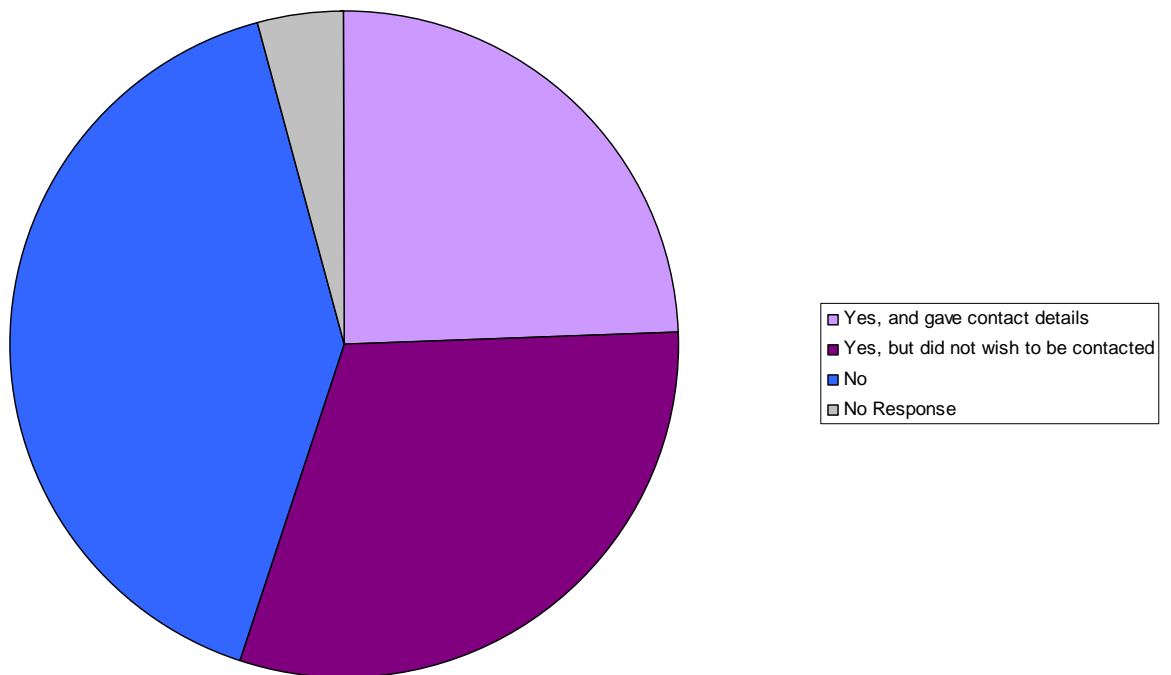
Respondents selected the following approaches as the best ways to educate people in their Country or Community on the importance of hand hygiene and infection control:

Graph 5: What would be the best way(s) to get messages across to educate people in your Country/Community about hand hygiene and how to prevent infection?

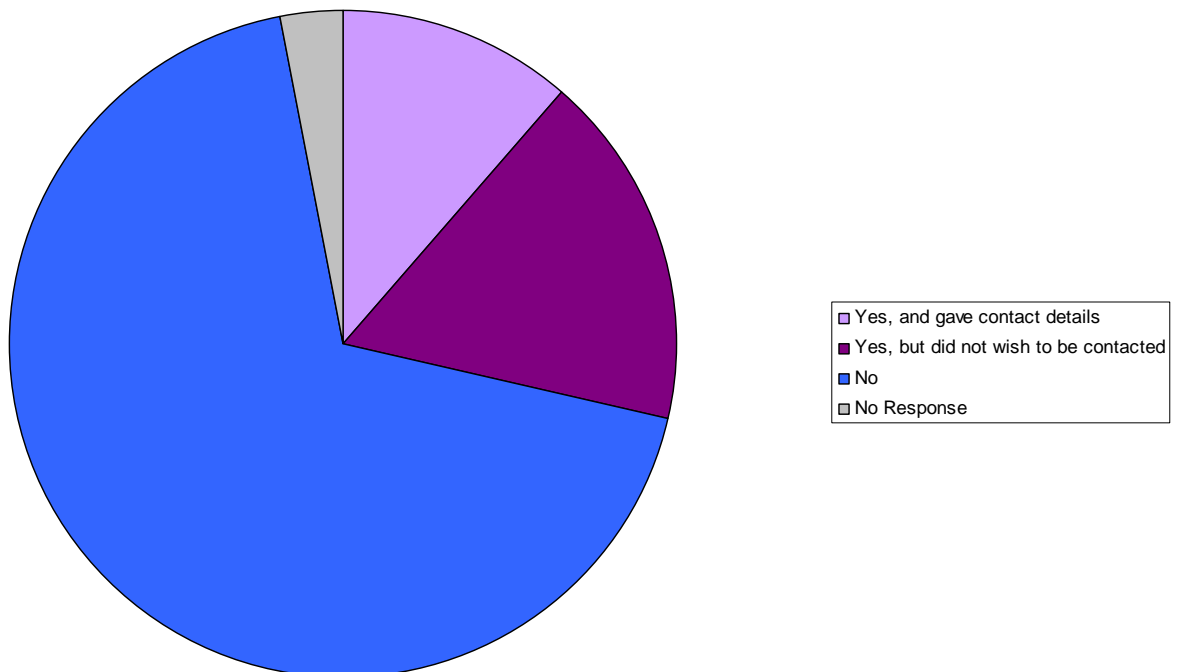


Personal experiences of health-care associated infections

Graph 6: Do you know of anyone who acquired/caught an infection when they were in hospital, after surgery or visiting a clinic/office or any other healthcare facility?



Graph 7: Do you know of anyone who acquired/caught an infection when they were in hospital, after surgery or visiting a clinic/office or any other healthcare facility, and which may have contributed to their death?



Of the respondents who answered 'Yes' to these questions, 58 gave their contact details, and will be contacted during Phase 2 of the research for follow-up interviews.

Regional Analysis

Respondents from 43 different countries completed the survey. For the purpose of regional analysis, the data will be divided into the World Health Organisation Regions:

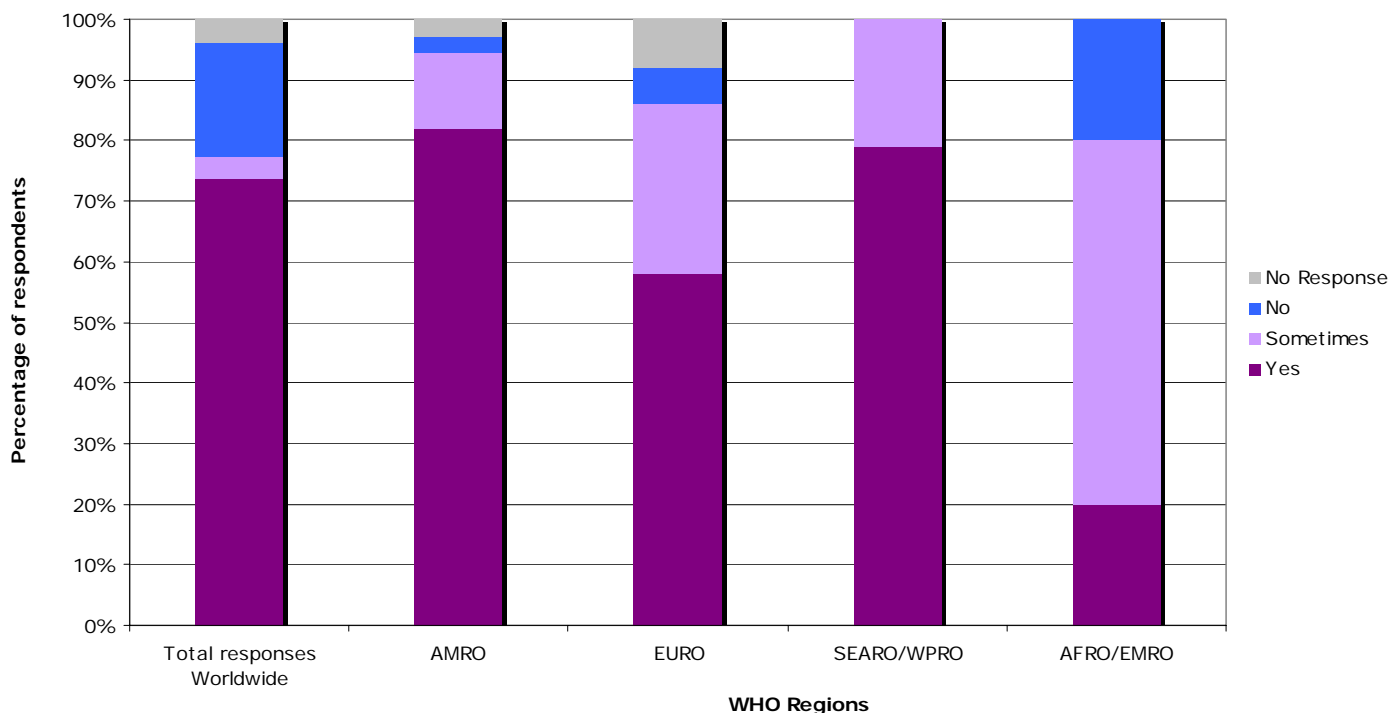
Region	Number of Respondents	Percentage
The Americas (AMRO/PAHO)	144	61%
Europe (EURO)	50	21%
South East Asia and Western Pacific (SEARO and WPRO)	33	14%
Africa and the Eastern Mediterranean (AFRO and EMRO)	10	4%

One person did not state their country. For details of the number of respondents from each country, see Annex 1.

The majority of the respondents were from the United States, Canada and the United Kingdom (92, 50, and 29 respectively). As there are only ten respondents at this stage from the AFRO and EMRO regions, this data can only serve as an initial indication, and for basic comparison between the regions. During Phase Two there will be an effort made to collect a greater proportion of responses from AFRO, EMRO, SEARO and WPRO.

Availability of Hand Hygiene Products:

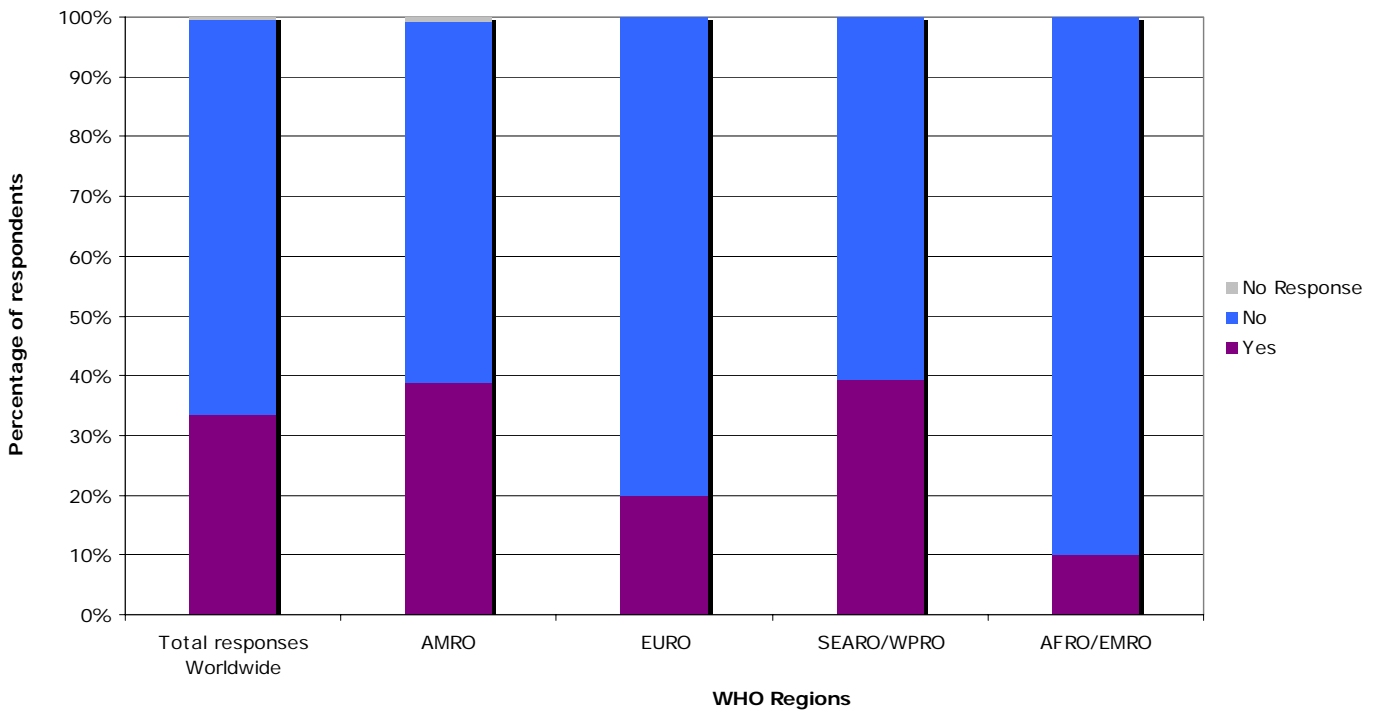
Graph 8: Are hand cleaning materials (e.g. soap, water or alcohol-based handrubs) readily available for staff, patients, and visitors to use in your hospitals and clinics?



Patient Empowerment

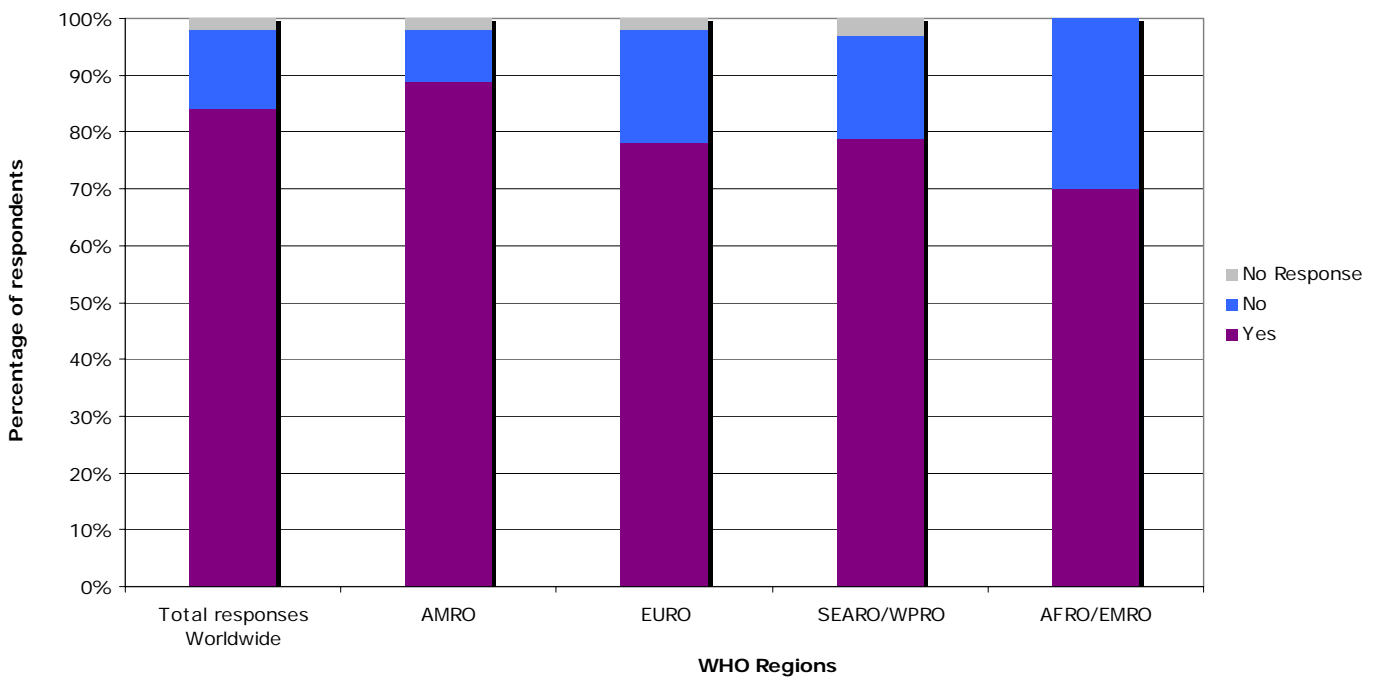
Patient Experiences:

Graph 9: Have you ever asked your healthcare worker to wash/sanitize their hands before they examined you?

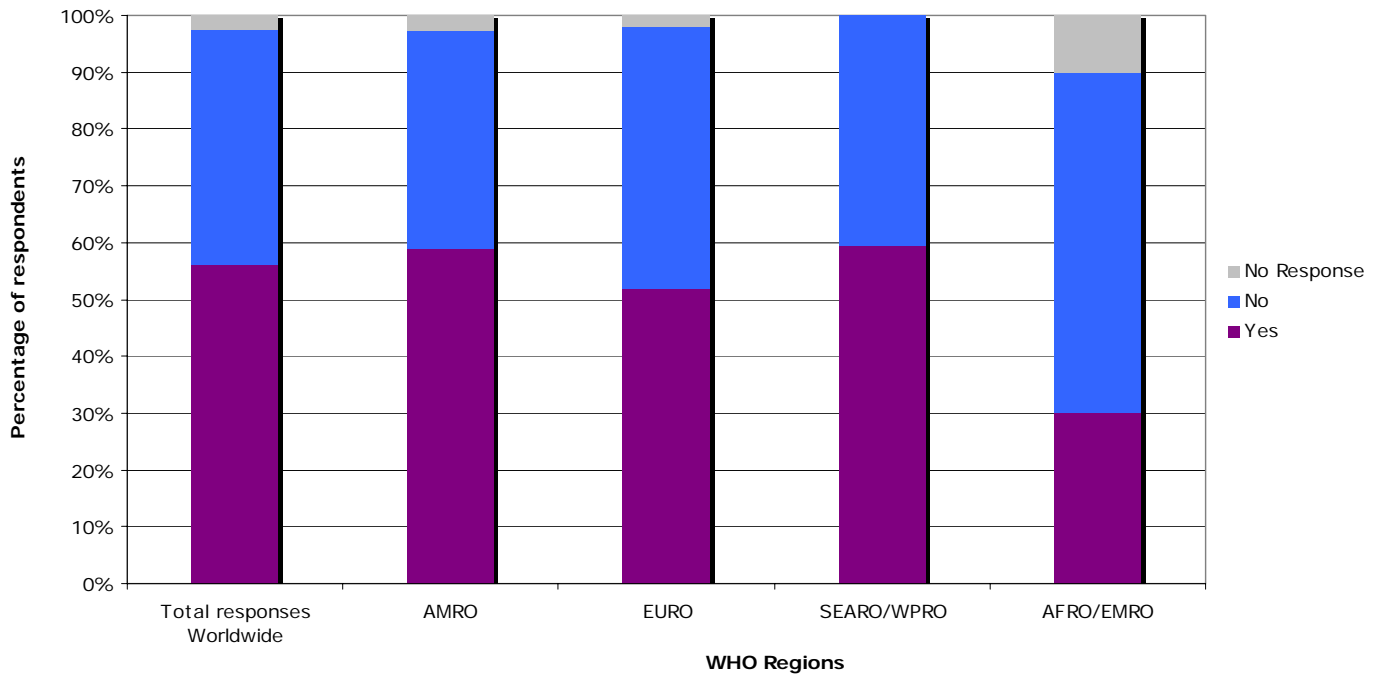


Patient expectations in hypothetical situations:

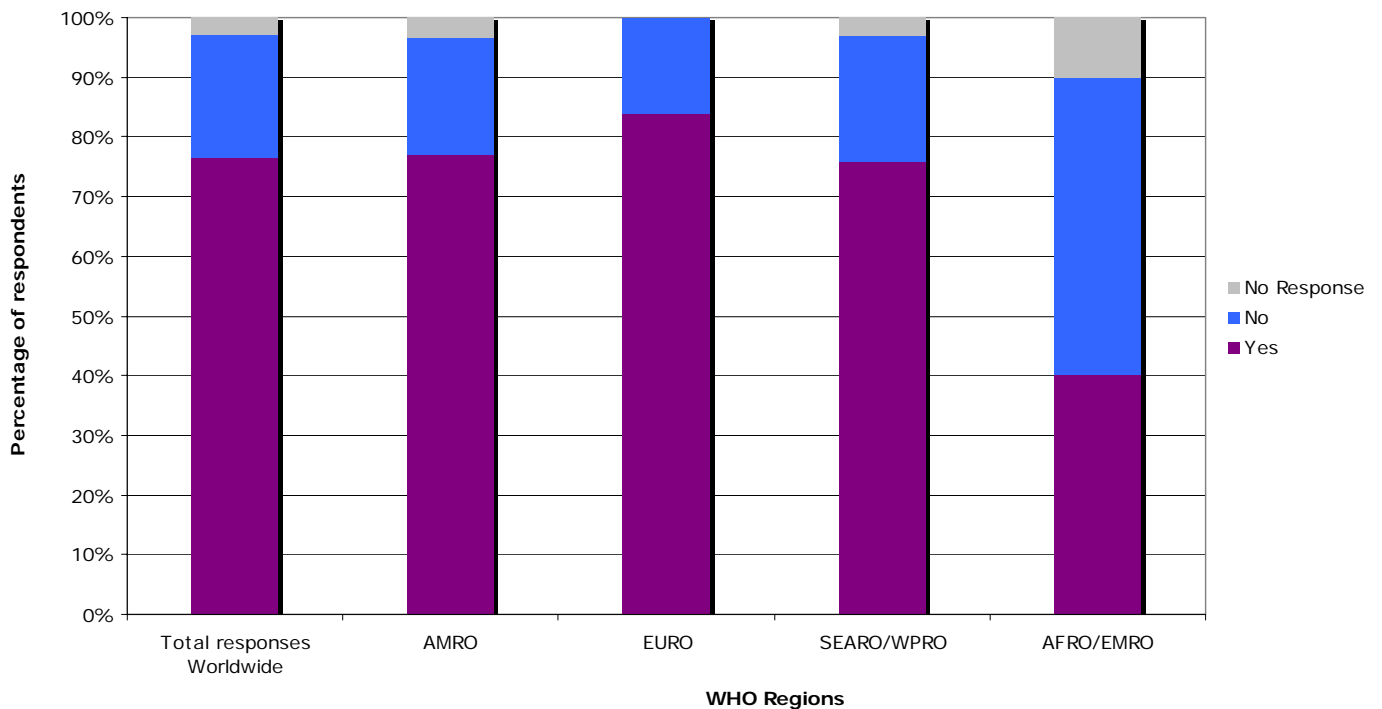
Graph 10: If your doctor, nurse or other person providing healthcare to you, ASKED or invited you to remind them to wash/sanitize their hands before examining you, would you feel able to do this?



Graph 11: If your doctor, nurse or other person providing healthcare to you, DID NOT ASK or invite you to remind them to wash/sanitize their hands before examining you, would you feel comfortable asking them to wash/sanitize their hands?

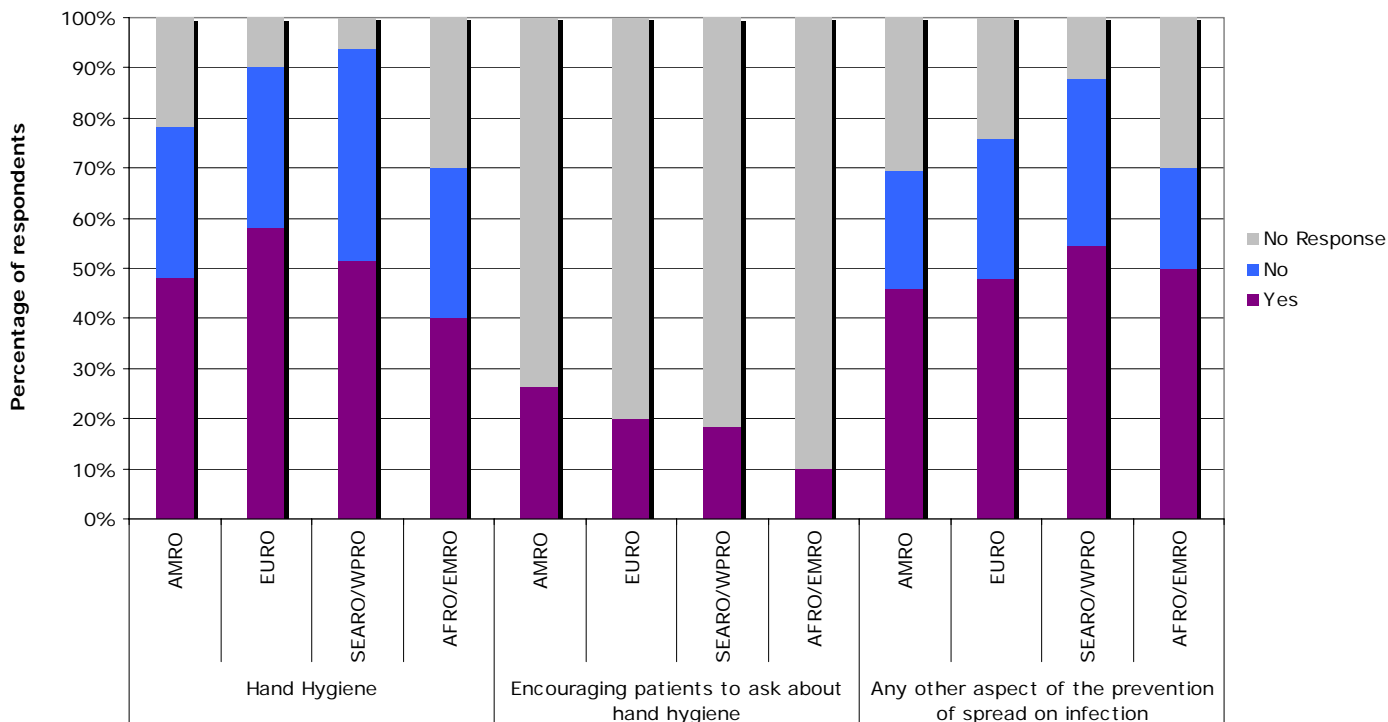


Graph 12: If you saw your doctor or nurse taking care of the patient next to you and then coming to you without washing or sanitizing their hands, would you ask them to do so?

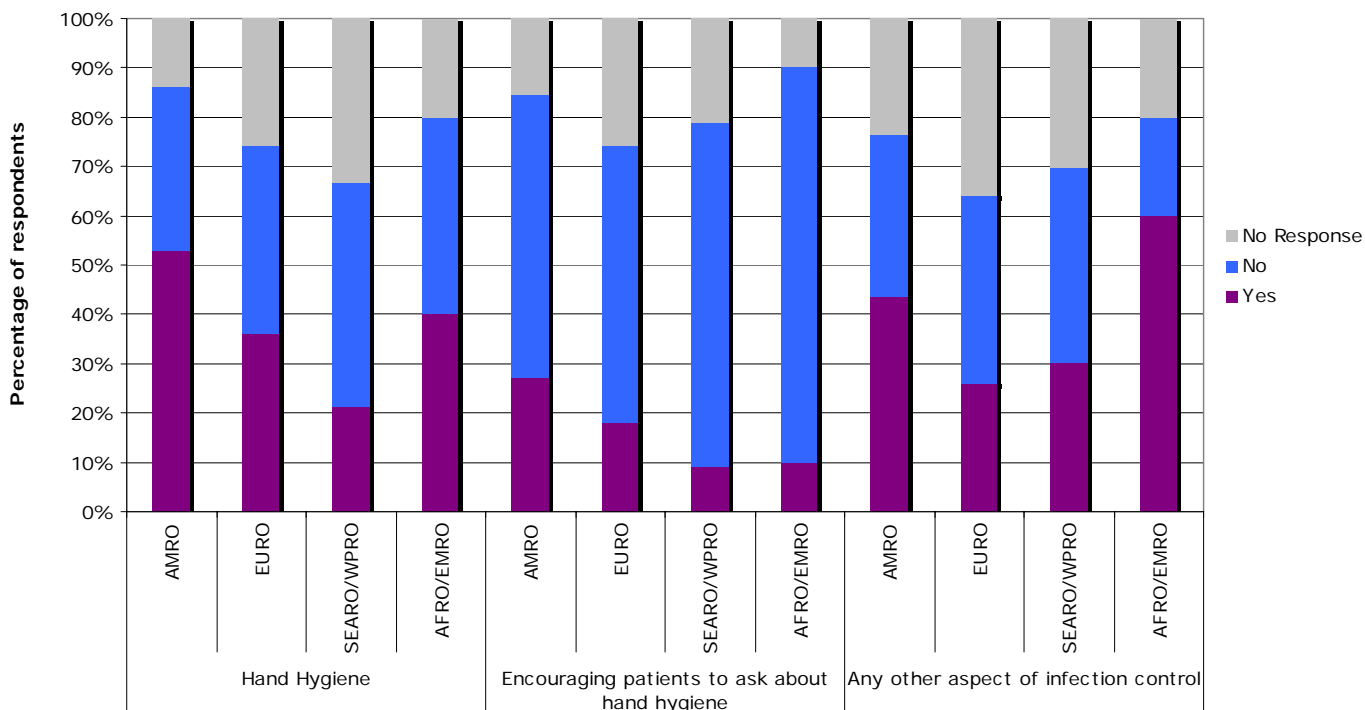


Hand Hygiene Programmes

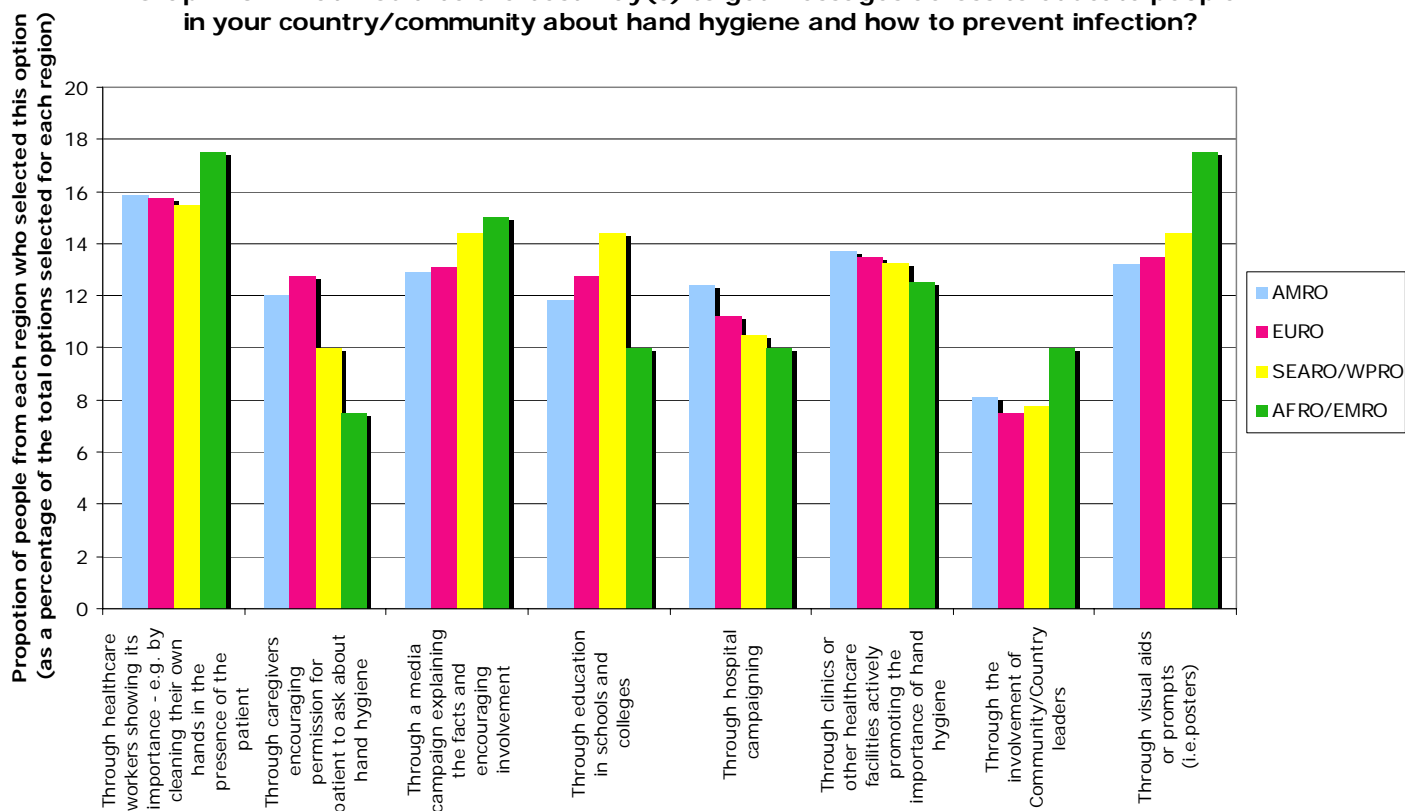
Graph 13: Does your COUNTRY have a programme that educates/communicates with patients about the importance of:



Graph 14: Does your COMMUNITY have a programme that educates/communicates with patients about the importance of:



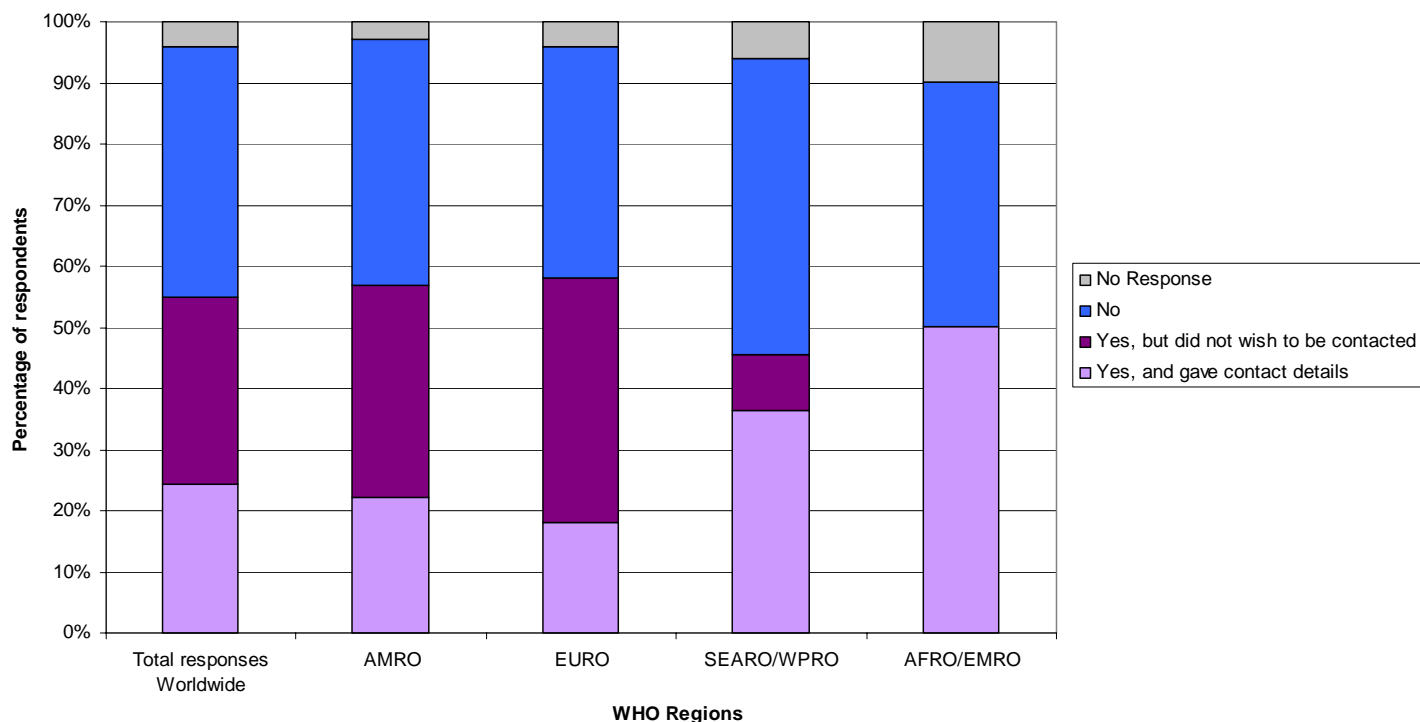
Graph 15: What would be the best way(s) to get messages across to educate people in your country/community about hand hygiene and how to prevent infection?



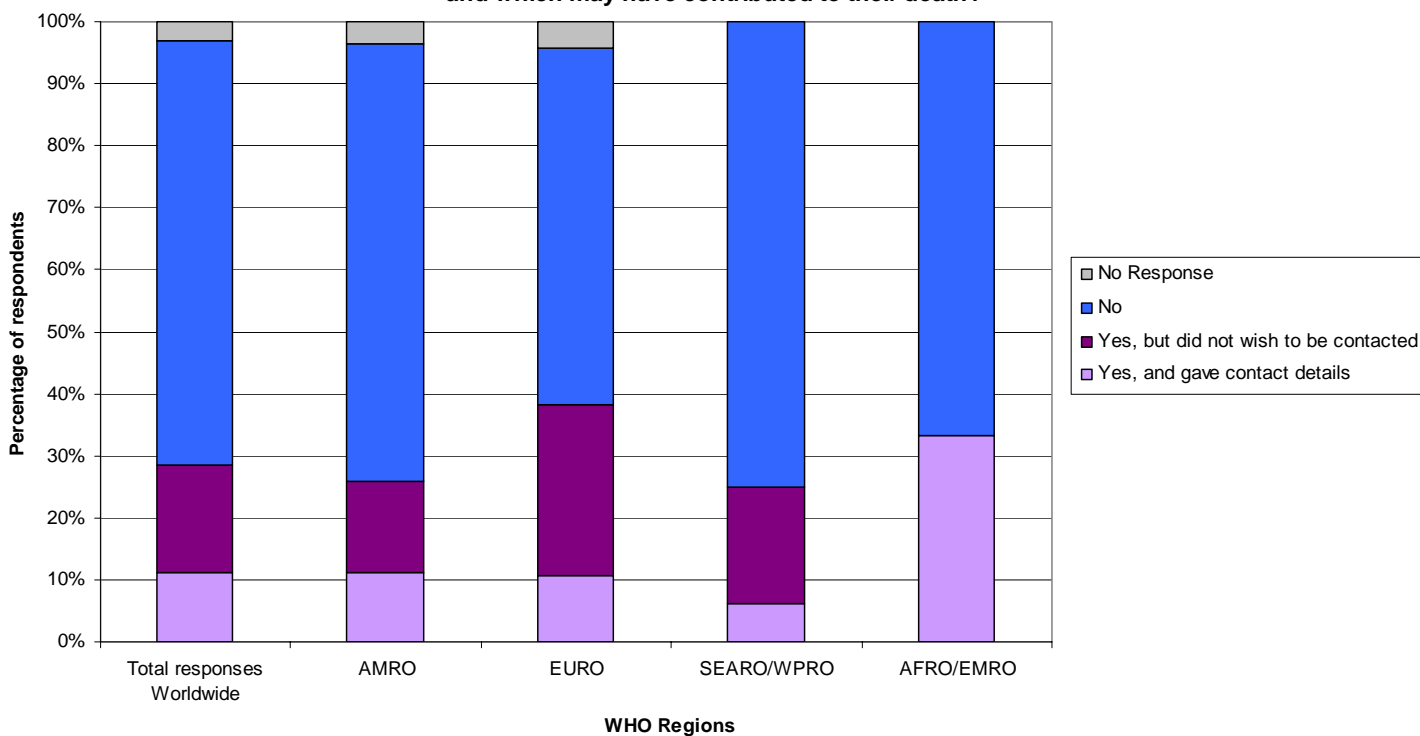
The data is presented as a percentage of the total number of options marked as important in each region. The graph therefore indicates which approaches are considered most useful in each region, showing some differences between regions. This provides potentially useful data to inform future programmes in each region.

Personal experiences of health-care associated infections

Graph 16: Do you know of anyone who acquired/caught an infection when they were in hospital, after surgery or visiting a clinic/office or any other healthcare facility?



Graph 17: Do you know of anyone who acquired/caught an infection when they were in hospital, after surgery or visiting a clinic/office or any other healthcare facility, and which may have contributed to their death?



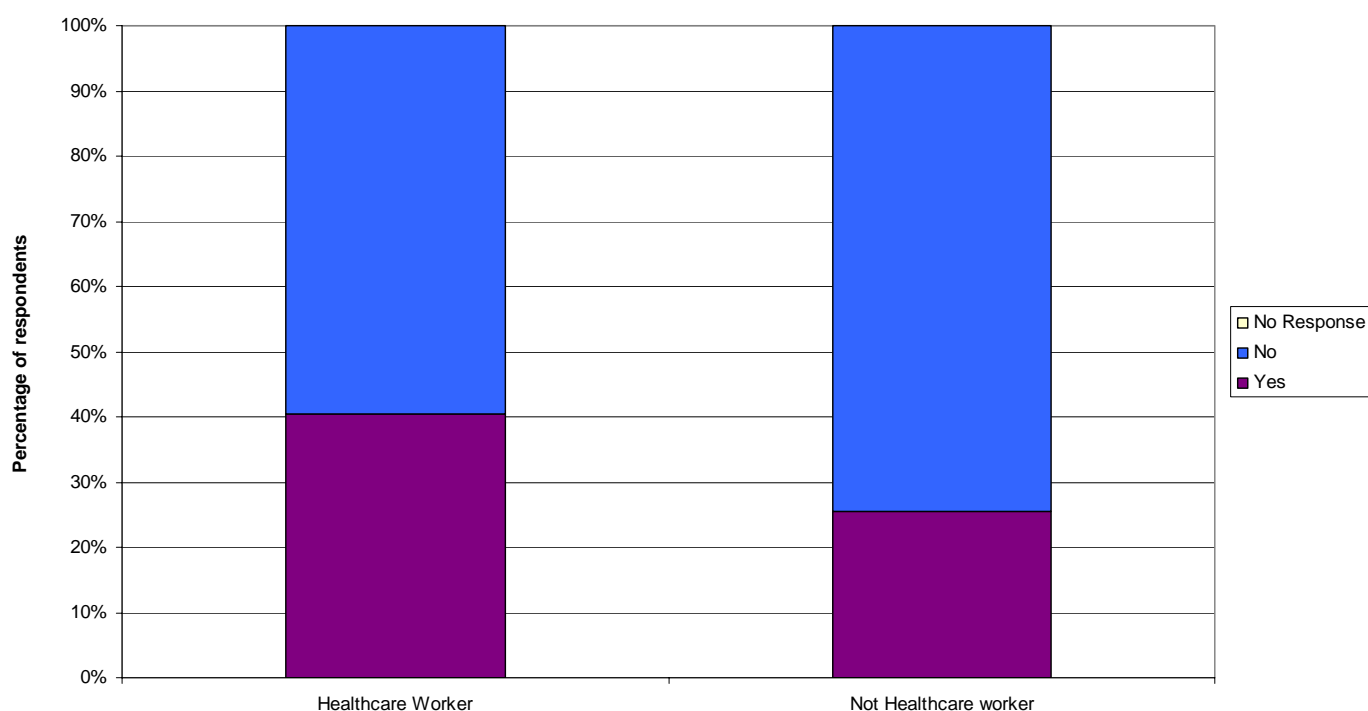
Analysis by Sector

Although a concerted effort was made to target “patients” a large percentage of respondents stated that they were healthcare workers.

Table 4: Are you a Healthcare Worker?		Number of respondents	Percentage
Yes		131	55%
No		106	45%

It could be assumed that respondents who identified themselves as healthcare workers may have a different experience of the healthcare sector, greater knowledge of what programmes were in place and greater willingness to discuss hand hygiene issues with healthcare workers.

Graph 18: Have you ever asked your healthcare worker to wash/sanitize their hands before they examined you?

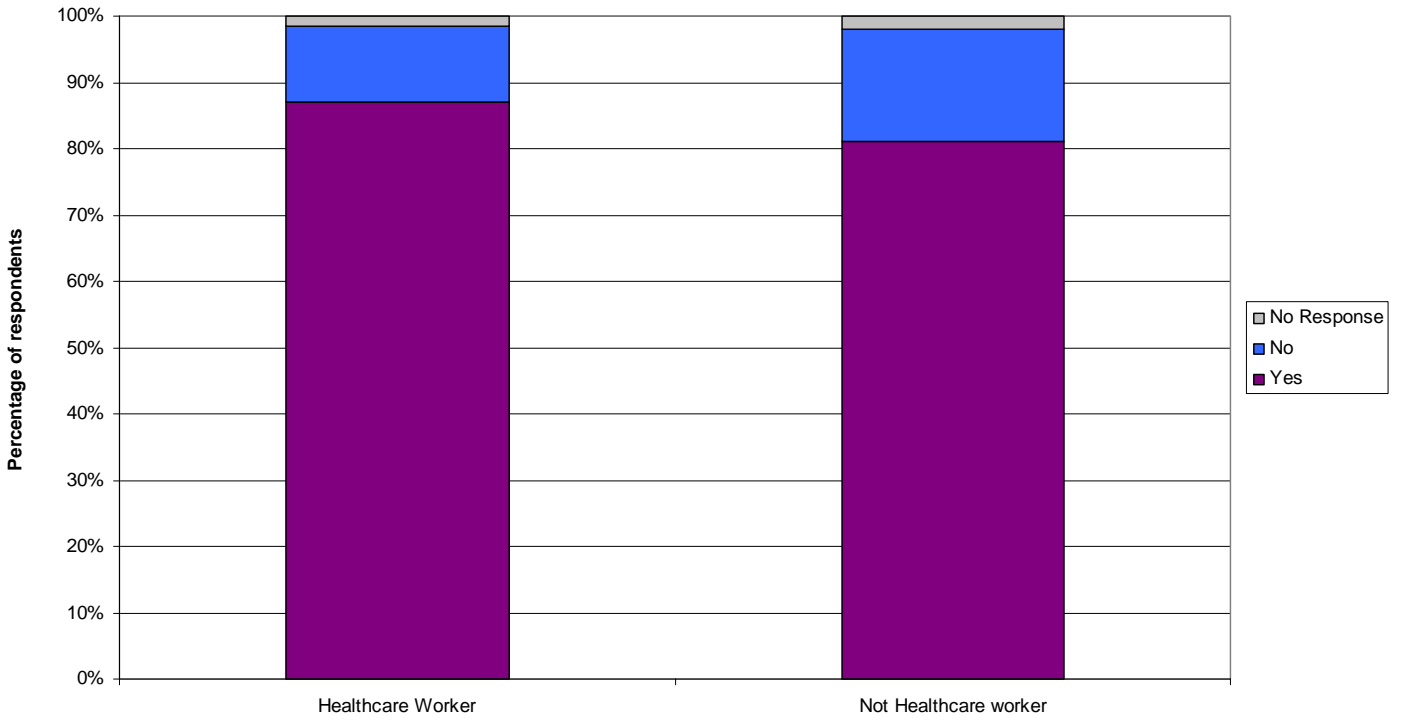


This appears to be supported by the results which show that 40% of “healthcare worker” respondents had in the past asked their healthcare worker to wash/sanitize their hands, compared with only 25% of non-healthcare workers who had done so.

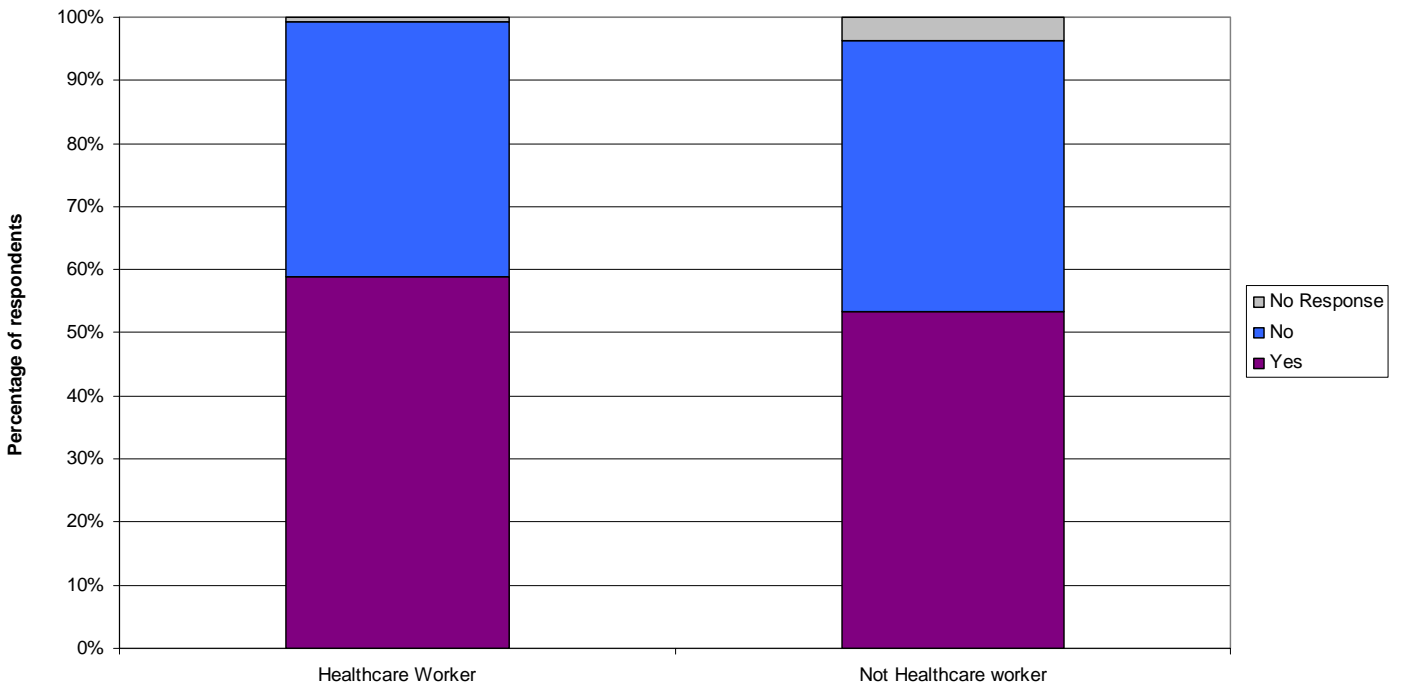
It should also be borne in mind that many of those who completed the surveys were connected in some way with patient safety, as policy makers, patient advocates, or patients who are interested in the subject of patient safety, and had in some instances personal experience of hand hygiene improvement. It is likely that they are more informed about the dangers of low compliance with hand hygiene.

Patient expectations in hypothetical situations:

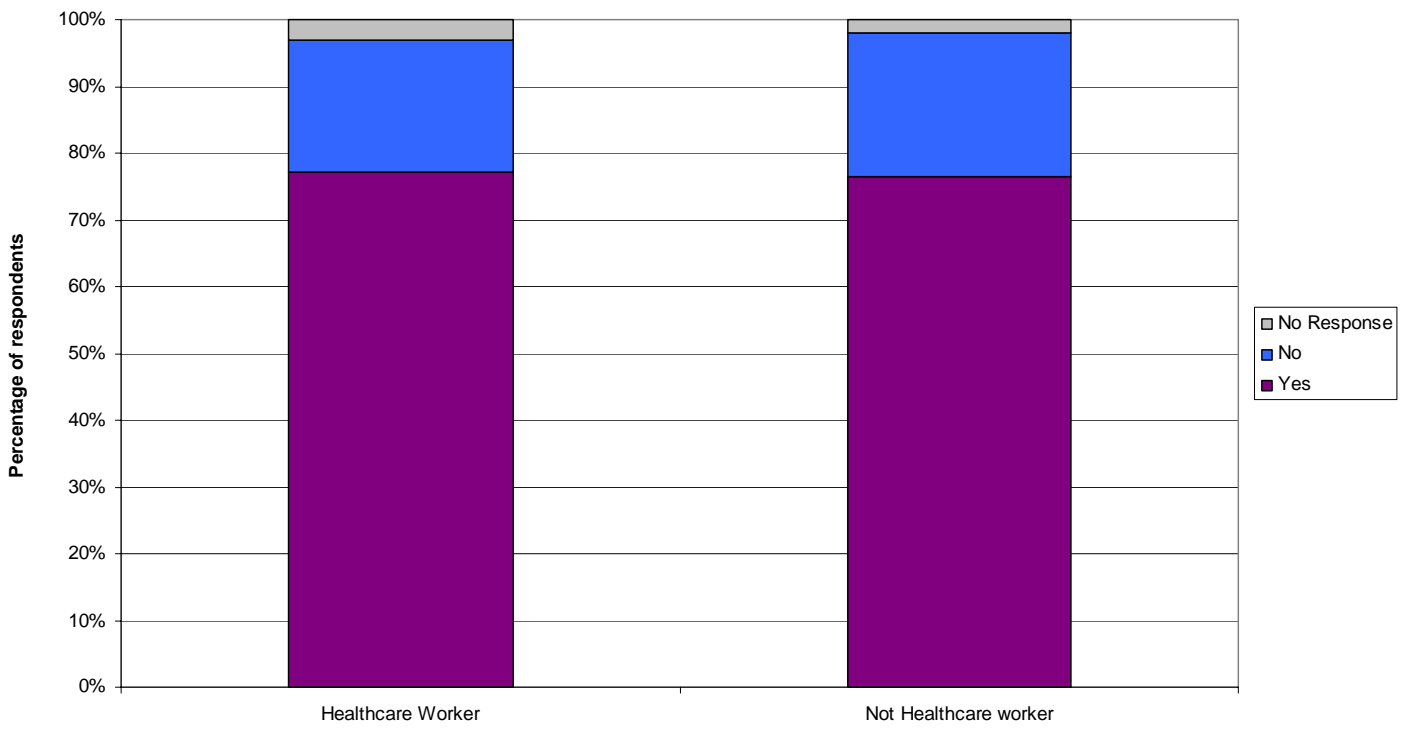
Graph 19: If your doctor, nurse or other person providing healthcare to you, ASKED or invited you to remind them to wash/sanitize their hands before examining you, would you feel able to do this?



Graph 20: If your doctor, nurse or other person providing healthcare to you, DID NOT ASK or invite you to remind them to wash/sanitize their hands before examining you, would you feel comfortable asking them to do so?

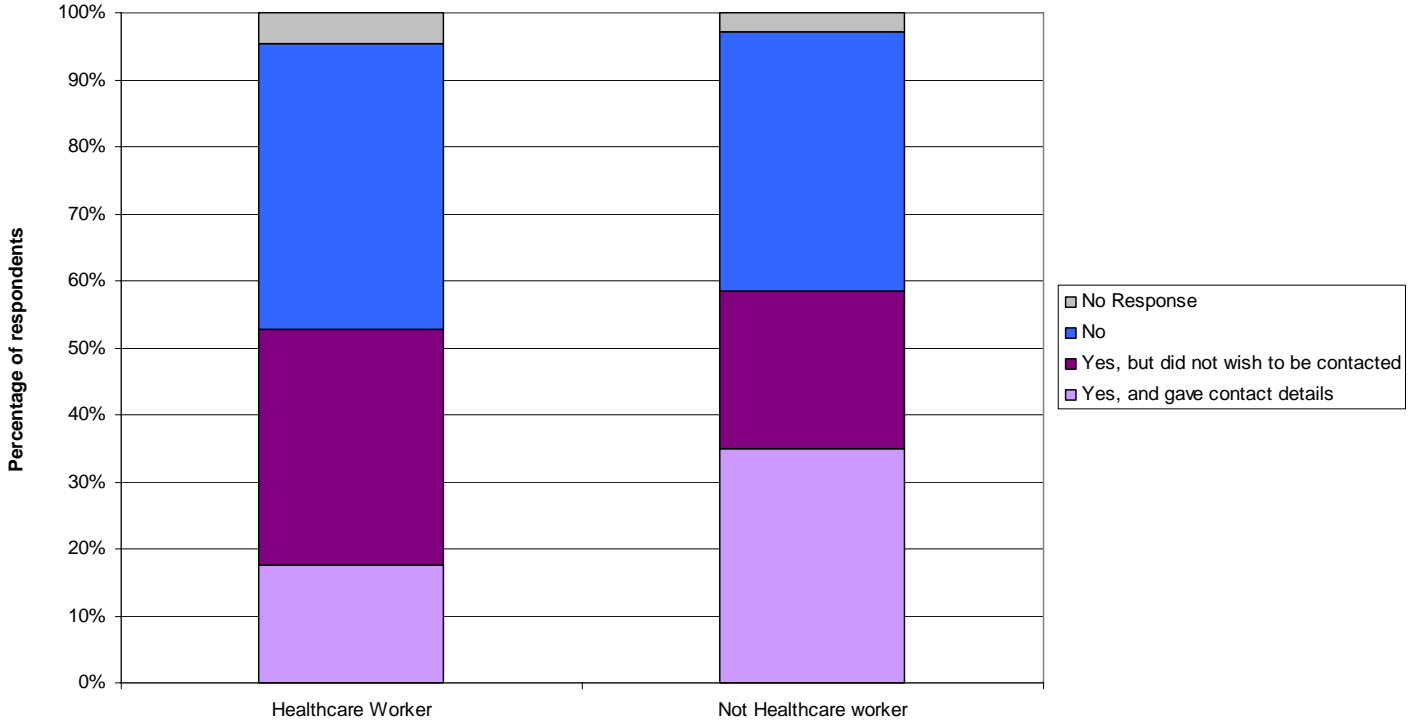


Graph 21: If you saw your doctor or nurse taking care of the patient next to you and then coming to you without washing or sanitizing their hands, would you ask them to do so?

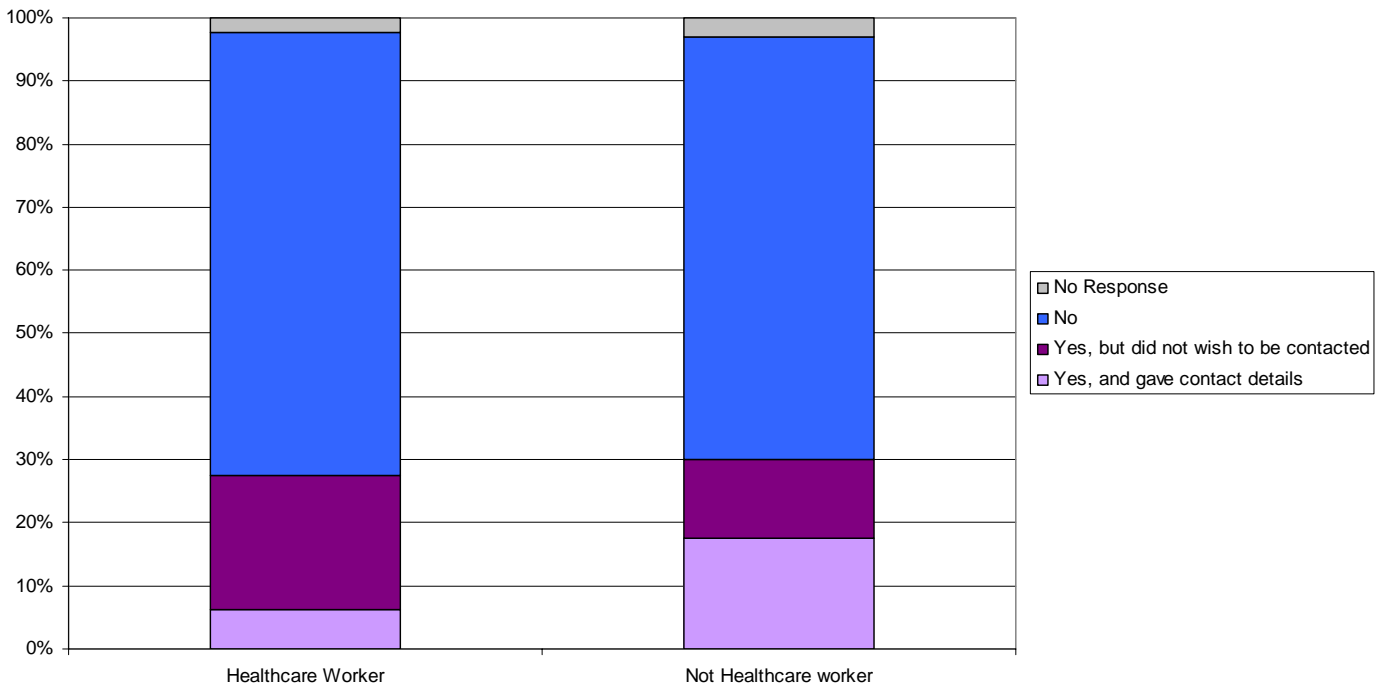


Personal experiences of health-care associated infections

Graph 22: Do you know of anyone who acquired/caught an infection when they were in hospital, after surgery or visiting a clinic/office or any other healthcare facility?



Graph 23: Do you know of anyone who acquired/caught an infection when they were in hospital, after surgery or visiting a clinic/office or any other healthcare facility, and which may have contributed to their death?



Conclusion

It is clear that a wealth of valuable information has been obtained from Phase 1 of the work, and the WHO World Alliance for Patient Safety are indebted to the respondents who took the time to complete the survey and provide contact details.

In an attempt to expand the pool of information on this subject which in itself requires further research, the WHO World Alliance for Patient Safety will commence Phase 2 in November 2007, with results anticipated by early 2008.

Phase 2 will be publicised more widely in a bid to increase responses from people from the AFRO, EMRO, SEARO and WPRO regions, and from non-health care workers.

Annex 1

**The Number of Respondents from Each Country
Divided by Regional Category**

Region	Country	Number of Respondents
The Americas (AMRO)	Argentina	1
	Canada	50
	Colombia	1
	USA	92
	TOTAL	144
Europe (EURO)	Austria	1
	Belgium	1
	Croatia	1
	Cyprus	1
	Finland	1
	Germany	2
	Greece	1
	Ireland	1
	Italy	1
	Moldova	1
	Portugal	1
	Slovenia	1
	Sweden	3
	Switzerland	4
	Turkey	1
	UK	29
TOTAL	50	
South East Asia and Western Pacific (SEARO and WPRO)	Bangladesh	2
	Bhutan	2
	India	4
	Indonesia	2
	Maldives	3
	Myanmar	2
	Thailand	1
	Timor-L'Este	2
	Australia	8
	Brunei Darussalam	1
	Cambodia	1
	China	3
	Malaysia	1
	Singapore	1
	TOTAL	33
Africa and the Eastern Mediterranean (AFRO and EMRO)	Liberia	1
	Nigeria	1
	Uganda	1
	Zambia	1
	Iran	1
	Jordan	1
	Pakistan	2
	Saudi Arabia	1
	Tunisia	1
TOTAL	10	