

# Infection Prevention & Control

## Week

### Rings and Nails

## Did You Know?

**There is clinical evidence that wearing hand and wrist jewelry and finger nail polish or artificial nail extensions contributes to healthcare associated infections.**

### WHY?

#### **It prevents effective hand hygiene.**

- It has been found that skin under rings is more heavily colonized with microorganisms than the rest of the hand, and that rings increase the risk of glove tears. A plain band is allowed.
- Wrist jewelry may prevent proper washing of the skin, and skin may not be dried properly following handwashing if wrist jewelry is present.
- Chipped nail polish or nail polish has been shown to foster the presence of microorganisms which resist removal by handwashing even with surgical scrubs.
- Long nails are difficult to clean, can pierce gloves and harbor more microorganisms than short nails. Keep natural nails clean and short, the nail should not show past the end of the finger.
- Artificial nails and nail enhancements have been implicated in the transfer of microorganisms such as *Pseudomonas species*, *Klebsiella pneumoniae* and yeast that resulted in outbreaks.

**For more information or to provide feedback on this document contact  
Infection Prevention & Control at 766-3428**