Is Working in Healthcare Unhealthy?

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This project is testing for antibiotic-resistant strains of bacteria in health care workers. Healthcare workers inevitably have frequent contact with a variety of pathogens. this may make them more susceptible to illness, especially with antibiotic-resistant strains. This experiment is designed to test the hypothesis- If repeated exposure to health care settings causes an increase to antibiotic-resistant bacteria on a persons skin, then healthcare workers will have a bacteria present on their skin than the control group, consisting of the general population. The perception that hospitals are antibiotic-resistant bacteria hot spots is wide spread. In this test samples will be collected and put through two stages of testing in order to determine antibiotic-resistance. The first phase shows only a positive or negative results for bacteria in the Staphylococcus family. Then the second phase will test for the antibiotic-resistance of isolated strains of bacteria. Although the results of this test did not support the hypothesis it still gives valuable insight into the efficiency of the safety procedures used by healthcare professionals. Those procedures are in fact effective enough to lower the presence of bacteria on their hands. Some of the most important information gather from this experiment is the need for a larger awareness of the effectiveness of some simple precautions, such as hand washing.

Awards Won: