



CLEAN-UP: Tracey Brereton and David Scicluna from the Bendigo Health Care Group with the hand wash.

Group is hands above the rest

BENDIGO Health Care Group's nursing and clinical staff have been recognised as leading the way in hand hygiene practice.

The Bendigo Health Care Group is one of only two regional Victorian sites to pioneer new hand cleaning practices which are likely to be rolled out statewide.

Bendigo Health Care Group, Infection Control Manager, Jane Hellsten said the initiative dates back to 2002, when staff at the hospital began trialling a new alcohol-based rub, based on groundbreaking research from the University of Geneva Hospital in Switzerland.

Now, the hospital has been chosen by the Victorian Quality Council to pilot the use of the rub in place of traditional hand washing practices.

"Alcohol-based rubs have many benefits including reductions in the time required for hand washing," Ms Hellsten said.

"They are also less irritating to the skin and are more easily located at patient contact points throughout our services."

In addition to introducing the new alcohol-based rub, the task force also appointed hand hygiene champions, developed a comprehensive training and education campaign and placed "de-bug" at bedsides and other key locations throughout the group.