

Staff

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Timeline

10 AM - 11 AM EDT

Date

May 11, 2020

Evidence Matters Webinar | Increasing Handwashing Adherence: Lessons from Rigorous Evidence

As COVID-19 cases continue to grow rapidly across the globe and no cure is yet identified, prevention is essential to slow the spread. Frequent handwashing to interrupt transmission of the virus is one of the main recommendations from national health agencies, the World Health Organization, and other experts, but following handwashing guidance is not necessarily possible or easy for everyone, particularly in low-income countries.

Individuals living in areas with limited and unreliable access to piped water and lacking access to soap are not able to wash their hands regularly. As many as 40% of the global population lacks access to basic handwashing facilities. Others may not be aware of the correct handwashing steps to follow or they may not realize that handwashing can prevent the spread of infectious disease. These structural and knowledge barriers are compounded by a misunderstanding about susceptibility, communicability, and the potential severity of COVID-19.

What are the most effective ways to promote and increase handwashing in a low-income setting? What are the structural barriers these individuals face in doing so and what options are currently available to help them mitigate these barriers? Is information about handwashing and COVID-19 prevention trusted and being effectively communicated to vulnerable communities?

On May 11, 2020, Innovations for Poverty Action (IPA) held a webinar titled **“Increasing Handwashing Adherence: Lessons from Rigorous Evidence,”** which covered evidence from rigorous research on increasing uptake of handwashing and on addressing the structural barriers people face that prevent them from washing their hands. **Amy Pickering (Tufts University)** and **Robert Dreibelbis (London School of Hygiene and Tropical Medicine)** presented, and **Rachel Steinacher (IPA)** hosted and moderated. The presentations were followed by a Q&A session, where the presenters discussed how the evidence can inform policy, particularly in the face of the current COVID-19 pandemic.

Watch the webinar recording below:

Presenters

Amy Pickering, *Assistant Professor, Tufts University*

Robert Dreibelbis, *Associate Professor, London School of Hygiene and Tropical Medicine*

Rachel Steinacher, *Associate Director of Program and Business Development, IPA*

City

Webinar

Country

United States