

Introduction

Welcome to the premier issue of IPRO's *Hospital Patient Safety News*. This quarterly newsletter provides health care professionals at hospitals participating in IPRO's Medicare quality improvement projects with project updates, resources and reminders. If you have colleagues that you believe should be receiving this newsletter, they can request their own subscription by sending an e-mail to Eloise Tate at etate@nyqio.sdps.org.

In our first issue we are presenting an overview of the four projects that comprise the IPRO Patient Safety Initiative under the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid (CMS) 9th Scope of Work. They are:

- **MRSA Project:** Reducing rates of health care-associated Methicillin-resistant *Staphylococcus aureus* (MRSA) infections;
- **Surgical Care Improvement/Heart Failure (HF) Project (SCIP):** Improving inpatient surgical safety and heart failure treatment;
- **Pressure Ulcer Project:** Working collaboratively with local nursing homes to reduce the incidence of pressure ulcers in high-risk patients; and
- **Medication Safety:** Reducing the prevalence of prescribing potentially inappropriate drugs with anticholinergic properties to seniors and improving the quality of warfarin management.

MRSA Project

Methicillin-resistant *Staphylococcus aureus* is a type of bacteria that is resistant to certain antibiotics. These antibiotics include methicillin and other more common antibiotics such as oxacillin, penicillin and amoxicillin. Staph infections, including MRSA, occur most frequently among persons in hospitals and health care facilities who have weakened immune systems.

The goal of the MRSA Project is to reduce transmission and infection rates by promoting proven strategies that include:

- Hand washing;
- Surface and skin decontamination, (e.g., sterile technique);
- Antibiotic stewardship (an activity that includes appropriate selection, dosing, route and duration of antimicrobial therapy); and
- Epidemiologic approaches, such as isolation, and typing and tracking of organisms within and between hospital units.

Since February 1, 2009, data have been collected monthly from the hospitals participating in the MRSA Project, and entered into the Multidrug-Resistant Organism (MDRO) Module.

For more information, please visit www.ipro.org/mrsa.

Pressure Ulcer Project

IPRO is supporting more than 70 New York State hospitals as they work collaboratively with local nursing homes to reduce the incidence of pressure ulcers in all patients across the continuum of care.

Since December 2008, we have held 12 collaborative meetings in partnership with hospitals and nursing homes across New York State. Feedback collected at the meetings reveals the need for:

- A common transfer form/transfer checklist (including the final skin assessment prior to discharge);
- A list of contacts at each facility;
- Physician education on skin assessments and present-on-admission coding;
- Improved communication among facilities (including face-to-face meetings); and
- Mutual understanding of nursing home and hospital regulations/requirements.

As we continue to meet with facilities across the state, IPRO will assist in the development of tools to enhance processes and leverage small, localized improvements. Our goal is to enhance the work at the local level and to facilitate improvements, as needed.

For more information, please visit www.ipro.org/pressureulcers.

SCIP Project

IPRO is working with hospital staff to help maximize resources and assist in implementing a combination of interventions across departments to address the three areas where the incidence and cost of surgically related complications are high: surgical site infections (SSIs), venous thromboembolism (VTE) and adverse cardiac events.

Surgical Site Infections

An estimated 40-60% of SSIs are preventable with appropriate use of prophylactic antibiotics. Overuse, underuse, improper timing, and misuse of antibiotics occurs in 25-50% of operations. Preventive measures provide opportunities for improvement in most hospitals, yet reports have shown that despite education, hospital compliance with these measures varies from 16 -81%. IPRO is working with participating hospitals to assess and develop opportunities to improve processes that will reduce the incidence of post-operative wound infection.

For more information, please visit www.ipro.org/scip.

Venous Thromboembolism Prophylaxis

In conjunction with the SCIP Project, IPRO is working with participating hospitals to assess and develop opportunities to improve processes that will reduce the incidence of post-operative VTE. As part of a special study, IPRO is also working with the Agency for Healthcare Research and Quality (AHRQ) to help New York State hospitals implement the "Preventing Hospital-Acquired Venous Thromboembolism: A Guide for Effective Quality Improvement" toolkit. Funded by AHRQ, this toolkit is based on quality improvement initiatives undertaken at the University of California, San Diego Medical Center and Emory University Hospitals. The goal for this study is for hospitals to implement a universal VTE prophylaxis protocol within their facility. IPRO and AHRQ are providing technical assistance to support implementation of the toolkit through a series of web-based and telephonic conferences with Dr. Gregory Maynard from the University of California, San Diego Medical Center, who developed the toolkit. Visit jeny.ipro.org for more information on these conferences.

For more information, please visit www.ipro.org/scip.

HF/Adverse Cardiac Events

IPRO is working with participating hospitals to assess and develop opportunities to improve processes that will reduce the incidence of post-operative cardiac events.

Hospitals participating in the SCIP Project are focusing on the HF-3 indicator-heart failure patients with left ventricular systolic dysfunction (LVSD) who are prescribed an ACEI or ARB at hospital discharge.

For more information, please visit www.ipro.org/scip.

Medication Safety

The Safe Warfarin-Antibiotic Testing (SWAT) Project

The SWAT Project is a statewide initiative that seeks to improve the quality of warfarin management through the promotion of proactive monitoring and improved follow up, particularly when patients are prescribed antibiotics known or suspected to interact with warfarin. The SWAT Project also seeks to raise public awareness regarding the hazards of sub-optimal warfarin management practices and promote the widespread adoption of high-quality warfarin management systems.

To improve the quality of warfarin management across New York State, IPRO has developed a variety of complimentary educational resources and clinical tools for providers and Medicare beneficiaries, which are updated regularly and are available at www.ipro.org/swat.

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