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## Seven Strategies for Preventing MRSA

Several large infection control and healthcare organizations have joined to develop strategies hospitals can use to reduce the risk of spreading methicillin-resistant *Staphylococcus aureus* (MRSA). The [strategies](#) were published in the July issue of *Infection Control and Hospital Epidemiology*.

The strategies were developed by the Society for Healthcare Epidemiology of America, the Infectious Diseases Society of America, the American Hospital Association, the Association for Professionals in Infection Control and Epidemiology and The Joint Commission.

The strategies are:

- Conduct an MRSA risk assessment focusing on the opportunity for transmission and the ability of the facility to contain MRSA.
- Implement an MRSA monitoring program and track rates focusing on identifying patients with a history of MRSA and a way to track cases acquired in the hospital.
- Ensure compliance on hand-hygiene recommendations from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention or the World Health Organization.
- Ensure compliance with contact precautions for MRSA-colonized and infected patients.
- Ensure proper cleaning and disinfection of equipment and environment.
- Educate healthcare personnel, patients and families.
- Implement an alert system to notify patients with MRSA so measures can quickly begin to control the infection.

Reducing hospital-acquired infections, including MRSA, is a top priority for healthcare providers. A study published last year in *Infection Control and Hospital Epidemiology* found that using copper surfaces on bed rails, tables, IV poles and other objects could reduce infections by as much as 60 percent. Copper renders the electricity inside microbes inactive and reduces colonization of MRSA and other bacteria, the study noted.

Another study published in *Infection Control and Hospital Epidemiology* suggested new anti-bacterial dress code for doctors: avoiding long sleeves, watches, ties and jewelry; wearing sturdy, closed-toe shoes; and washing white coats at least once a week in hot water and bleach.

To learn more, here's the study [abstract](#).

## **QIOs Prevent Thousands of Hospitalizations and Readmissions**

Quality Improvement Organizations (QIOs), through their work with healthcare providers, and federal, state and private partners, prevented more than 95,000 hospitalizations and 27,000 readmissions among Medicare beneficiaries over a three-year period, [according to](#) the American Health Quality Association (AHQA).

Data from the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services indicates hospital readmissions among Medicare beneficiaries fell 13.22 percent in QIO communities between October 2010 and March 2013, compared to only 12.55 percent nationally. Hospital admissions also declined more in QIO communities (8.39 percent) than nationally (8.12 percent).

In addition to improvements at a hospital-wide level, QIOs also were associated with unit-wide improvements, including a 53 percent drop in central line-associated bloodstream infections between February 2011 and August 2013. Moreover, QIO-assisted hospitals took steps to reduce catheter-associated urinary tract infections by reducing the number of days Medicare patients used a catheter by more than 85,000 days nationwide.

Improved care transitions due to lower hospitalizations, including those in QIO communities, saved healthcare providers nearly \$1 billion, according to the AHQA.

In May, CMS announced it would restructure the QIO program to make it more efficient, bringing on two contractors to oversee quality improvement and prioritizing groups that work directly with providers toward patient care for contracts.

## **Save the Date**

Please note: While the information below is a list of planned programs for 2014, at this time not all programs can be accessed online for registration.

Sept. 18      Adverse Drug Events  
Sept. 29      Geriatric Emergency Department Guidelines

[Click here to register.](#)

### **Save the Date – Registration Coming Soon!**

*The NJHA Institute for Quality and Patient Safety*

## *12<sup>th</sup> Annual Leadership Summit*

Monday, September 22<sup>nd</sup>

The Conference & Event Center, New Jersey Hospital Association

The 12th Anniversary of the NJHA Institute for Quality and Patient Safety's *Annual Leadership Summit* is an opportunity to hear from the industry's most respected thought leaders. C-suite leaders, hospital trustees and patient safety professionals ... mark your calendars today for this informative event!