



NEWS

Mary Kay Grasmick, 608-274-1820 or 575-7516

WHA Joins National Patient Safety, Quality Improvement Initiative *Builds on Association's successful collaborations with member hospitals*

MADISON (December 20, 2011) ----- The Wisconsin Hospital Association will start work early next year on a national project aimed at preventing avoidable hospital-acquired conditions (HAC) and reducing unnecessary hospital readmissions.

"Partnership for Patients" is a national initiative supported by the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS). CMS awarded \$218 million to organizations that will develop a "hospital engagement network." The American Hospital Association, who has been designated as a CMS primary contractor, has sub-contracted the quality and safety improvement work in Wisconsin hospitals to WHA. It is a good fit for the Madison-based Association.

"WHA has been successful in fostering collaboration among our state's hospitals that has helped Wisconsin gain a national reputation for sharing practices that lead to safer, higher quality patient care," according to WHA President Steve Brenton. "Wisconsin's hospitals are known for providing care that is ranked as being among the best in the nation. This project will expand our improvement activities and lead to even higher performance and better care for patients in our communities."

The ambitious goals of the Partnership for Patients initiative are to reduce inpatient harm by 40 percent and readmissions by 20 percent over a three-year period on ten key areas for improvement:

- Adverse drug events ("ADEs")
- Catheter-associated urinary tract infections
- Central line-associated blood stream infections
- Injuries from falls and immobility
- Obstetrical adverse events
- Pressure ulcers
- Surgical site infections
- Venous thromboembolism (blood clots)
- Ventilator-associated pneumonia
- Preventable readmissions

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WHA will engage up to 80 hospitals. Through the new project, hospitals will have access to evidence-based practices, staff training and opportunities for sharing practices, as well as continued direct engagement with WHA staff.

“Our selection as a sub-contractor is largely based on the fact that WHA staff has been highly successful in working with our member hospitals to form quality collaboratives that have driven measurable results in the area of infection prevention,” according to Kelly Court, WHA chief quality officer. “The federal funding will enable us to expand our already proven results even further.”

Launched in April 2011, Partnership for Patients seeks to prevent 1.8 million injuries to patients in the hospital, saving more than 60,000 lives over three years. It also seeks to make care less costly. Funding is being channeled through the CMS Innovation Center, which was created by the Affordable Care Act.

"Partnership for Patients is helping the nation's finest health systems share their knowledge and resources to make sure every hospital knows how to provide all of its patients with the highest quality care," Health and Human Services Secretary Kathleen Sebelius said in an HHS news release.

For more information on the Wisconsin Hospital Association, visit: www.wha.org. For more information on the Partnership for Patients, visit www.healthcare.gov/partnershipforpatients.

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