Ready, Set, Go: Know Your Risks
Leadership Tool for a Learning Organization

Infection Prevention and Control in Hospitals

WHY IS INFECTION PREVENTION AND CONTROL IMPORTANT?

• About 1 in 25 hospital patients has at least one healthcare-associated infection (HAI) on any given day. Roughly 12% of patients with HAIs die during their hospitalization.¹

• HAIs are associated with significant morbidity in and of themselves, and they may complicate care of the patient’s other conditions. They increase morbidity, costs, and length of stay even after underlying illness is adjusted for.²

• Estimates of the direct medical costs of HAIs to U.S. hospitals range from $28 billion to $45 billion annually.³

• The cost of treating HAIs is not offset largely by reimbursement. HAIs do not garner higher diagnosis-related group reimbursement, they divert resources, and they may affect payment under federal programs to reduce healthcare-associated conditions and readmissions. Patients may sue, and regulatory noncompliance could lead to monetary penalties.⁴

DID YOU ASK?

• Are our infection preventionists allotted enough work time to perform their infection prevention and control duties and perform rounds? Do they have no or few other competing priorities?

• Do we pay for our infection preventionists’ membership in a professional society for infection prevention and control, as well as allot time for them to attend society meetings and events and pursue further education and certification in infection control?

• How do we perform surveillance for infectious diseases and evaluate the effectiveness of our infection prevention and control program?

• How do we promote the appropriate use of antimicrobials?


Need More Information?

As a member of ECRI Institute’s risk and patient safety program, you and your staff can access guidance outlining strategies for an effective infection prevention and control program:

➤ Guidance: Overview of Infection Prevention and Control

➤ Guidance: High-Profile Healthcare-Associated Infections

ECRI Institute can help you with all of your patient safety, quality, and risk management projects. E-mail us at hrc@ecri.org.