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Richard Melchreit, MD
HAI Program Coordinator
Connecticut Department of Public Health

Dear Dr. Melchreit:

Hartford Hospital welcomes the State of Connecticut's initial public reporting of Central Line Associated Bloodstream Infections (CLABSIs) -- the first of the healthcare associated infections to be made available to the public. The posted data are from October 2009 to September 2010 from our Medical Critical Care Unit, B11I. During that time period, we had five CLABSIs, placing us "in the expected range" for a hospital in Connecticut with our mission, which means that we are not significantly different than the national average.

Hartford Hospital aspires to be a best performer and began a CLABSI quality improvement initiative in March 2010 under my leadership. As part of this ongoing initiative, we benchmark against top performers and emulate their improvement measures. Our standardized protocol for central line insertion has been refined and provider training has been updated. In addition, standardized line insertion kits have been developed.

Electronic documentation is now possible across our institution with online standardized pre-insertion checklist and insertion procedure notes, which reduces variability and eliminates opportunities for error. The care of central lines has been improved with a Scrub the Hub program (washing the ports with alcohol prior to accessing), standard dressing changes and a specialized antiseptic Biopatch dressing. We instituted daily CHG bathing in ICUs -- a measure that has been demonstrated to reduce CLABSIs.

To assure compliance with improvement measures, a layered approach to process monitoring has been established that utilizes daily rounding checklists, daily leadership rounds and BSI huddles if an infection occurs. The huddle results are reviewed by the BSI Steering Group to incorporate new opportunities for improvements as we strive to reach zero longitudinally. An electronic rounding tool is in the works.

This concerted team effort already has had a major impact on patient safety. For the last 202 days -- starting in July 2010 -- no CLABSIs have occurred in B11I. In fact, over this same time period **Hartford Hospital has sustained performance organization-wide at best-practice levels** (1.1 catheter associated bloodstream infections/1000 catheter days). We are committed to continued improvement in this regard as we strive to become a national leader in safety and quality.

Sincerely,

Rocco Orlando, MD
Senior Vice-President & Chief Medical Officer
Hartford Hospital & Hartford Healthcare