



Talking Points

Hospital Acquired Infections

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Issue

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) will release the National and State Hospital Acquired Infection (HAI) Progress Report, 2014 on Thursday, March 3. The report looks at six measures: central line-associated bloodstream infections (CLABSI), catheter-associated urinary tract infections (CAUTI), methicillin-resistant *Staphylococcus aureus* (MRSA), *C. difficile* (*C. diff*), and surgical site infections in abdominal hysterectomy and colon surgery. The Maryland-specific portion of the report contains some unfavorable data about the state's progress in reducing HAIs; below are some relevant points to bring into the discussion.

Talking points

- Maryland's hospitals are surprised by some of the results. Under Maryland's new all-payer waiver agreement with the federal government, hospitals are required to reduce 65 infections and other hospital-acquired conditions by 30 percent – a far more aggressive target tackling a much more comprehensive list of complications than hospitals nationally. Collectively, hospitals have reduced those preventable complications by more than 30 percent since 2014.
- The CDC data reflect 2014 performance; preliminary data for 2015 indicate that Maryland's hospitals improved on CAUTI and *C. diff* measures. Still, the CDC's report as it pertains to those two measures plus hysterectomy and MRSA is cause for concern.
- Previous statewide collaboratives to improve infection rates were very successful; one reason Maryland's CLABSI rate is reported as 47 percent lower than the national baseline is that one of those collaboratives specifically addressed CLABSI improvement.
- Maryland's hospitals continue to double down on efforts to understand performance, prioritize areas needing improvement, and engage in various infection improvement efforts. Such efforts include a statewide program to monitor and report hand hygiene compliance that has steadily achieved compliance rates of more than 90 percent, and partnering with VHQC, the state's quality improvement organization, in collaboratives to reduce complications such as CAUTI and CLABSI. Hospitals also will soon be participating in a new effort organized by the Department of Health & Mental Hygiene to address proper stewardship of antibiotics.
- The Maryland Patient Safety Center has developed the Clean Collaborative to help hospitals and others identify best practices for cleaning and disinfecting surface areas as a means of reducing infections. Among the conditions that collaborative will target are *C. diff* and MRSA.
- The CDC report depicts statewide performance only, and cannot be used to make assumptions about any specific hospital's performance.