

To: Marc P. Volavka
Executive Director
Pennsylvania Health Care Cost Containment Council

From: Beth Kern
Interim Director of Quality Management
Quality Management Specialist

Date: October 27, 2006

Subject: Formal Comments for the Hospital-acquired Infection Report for 2005 Data

*Beth K. Kern
10-27-06*

Our formal comments are:

Pocono Medical Center has reviewed the data being presented in this report.

- Our overall hospital-acquired infection rates are significantly below statewide and peer group infections.
- Urinary tract, pneumonia, bloodstream, and multiple case infection rates are compatible to or lower than statewide and peer group rates.
- Mortality percentages for all categories of infections are higher than expected. Upon analysis of the data, we have found that our patients that expired were diagnosed with several co-morbidities and represented an older age group. The mean age of these patients was 75 years with 77% of the patients being greater than 75 years old. We also noted that these patients had a mean of 29.5 diagnosis codes, indicating they represented a population predisposed to higher mortality rates.
- Surgical site infections have a higher than expected rate reported. Upon review of our surgical site infections (SSI's), it was noted that two of our SSI's were coded using CDC criteria and did not meet PHC4 criteria for SSI classification. Moreover, another two SSI's that were coded by our former Infection Control practitioner did not meet either the CDC or PHC4 criteria for SSI. Hence, this thorough review establishes a total of 6 SSI's in comparison to the 10(ten) initially reported, giving us an SSI rate of 4.8 per 1000 cases. This updated rate is less than the comparative statewide and peer group summary SSI rates reported.
- We strive to provide quality patient care at Pocono Medical Center and continually work to improve the care that our patients receive. Please see below initiatives that have been developed and executed at PMC since 2005.

- “Partners in Your Care” – total hand hygiene enforcement program involving health care providers and patients alike
- Surgical Prophylaxis Antibiotic Guidelines: development and implementation with the goal to decrease surgical site infection by implementing the following measures
 - Choosing the appropriate antibiotic
 - Administration of antibiotic within one hour of incision time
 - Discontinuation of antibiotic 24 hours after surgical procedure, unless otherwise indicated
- Guidelines for Personal Protective Attire Delineated by Type of Procedure: development and implementation with the goal of maximizing sterile technique on indicated procedures
- MRSA Prevention and Detection:
 - Point Prevalence Study at PMC using a “new rapid PCR Assay” to determine inpatient colonization rate and risk factors associated
 - Line listing of all previously and currently MRSA colonized patients
 - MRSA Community Outreach Education Seminars to local nursing homes, home care agencies and schools
 - Developing initiatives for active MRSA surveillance in critical care areas and surgical patients
- Multidisciplinary quality teams in place, implementing recommended IHI bundles to prevent VAP (ventilator associated pneumonia), central line infections and surgical site infections.
- Additional Infection Control initiatives underway include: Influenza seasonal/pandemic/epidemic preparedness planning, disaster planning, silver impregnated foley catheter study, Antibiotic Stewardship for all practitioners at Pocono Medical Center

Thank-you for the opportunity to comment on the data reported.