

THE VALUE OF COLLABORATION AGAINST HAIs

Michigan health system demonstrates that partnership between infection prevention and environmental services improves efficiency of system-wide cleaning and disinfection

Beaumont Health is a large, multi-hospital healthcare system in Dearborn, Mich., which began preparing for a system-wide infection prevention (IP) and environmental services regulatory survey in 2012. Initial audits revealed several challenges across the continuum of care, including damage to wood tone laminates from overuse of bleach products, staff compliance with disinfection protocols and widespread deficiencies in understanding appropriate use of several disinfectants.

According to the CDC, about 1 in 25 hospital patients acquire a healthcare-associated infection (HAI) each day.¹ However, collaboration between IP and environmental services professionals can reduce rates of infection transmission, as well as improve facility outcomes, reduce process redundancies, improve patient or resident satisfaction and reduce costs.² Still, many facilities fail to collaborate effectively.

At Beaumont, collaboration between IP and environmental services was a means to establish practice guidelines and product standardization for improving system-wide environmental cleaning and disinfection.

Compliance and Education

Beaumont's infection preventionist, Priscila Bercea, collaborated with environmental services resident regional manager, Alissa Bachnak, along with the larger IP teams to establish a structured approach that improved environmental hygiene and networking across the entire healthcare system.

To improve compliance, Beaumont standardized IP and environmental services sup-

plies by selecting a recognizable and easy-to-use product line. The team partnered with PDI to identify improvement needs and implement Super Sani-Cloth wipes for "just in time" surface and equipment disinfection. Sani-Cloth Bleach wipes were placed in rooms with suspected or confirmed *C. difficile*.

Additionally, staff needed better product utilization and compatibility education. To start, the team strategically posted educational posters and attached brackets to all mobile computers and multi-patient use equipment. Furthermore, brackets were mounted in every patient room to provide easy access for patient bedside cleaning and disinfection, and tools were clearly marked with large contact time stickers.

Fostering Interdepartmental Communication

IP and environmental services also established a monthly Infection Control Liaison Program to communicate directly with frontline staff about HAI prevention. This meeting includes the hospital infection preventionist, clinical staff members and environmental services liaisons from every unit in the facility. Information sharing at these meetings has been critically important for continued improvements.

The infection preventionist shares articles and statistics on infection rates, hand hygiene data and clinical alerts. Frontline staff members, called "IC Liaisons," are responsible for sharing material with their departments. Monthly attendance and completion of assignments is noted and communicated to nursing leadership to ensure participation. An open question-and-answer session allows

concerns to be shared, and encourages dialogue around improving overall patient care.

Additionally, the environmental services management director attends monthly Corporate Infection Prevention and Control Committee meetings, where IP shares hospital-specific compliance rates. Correspondingly, an infection preventionist attends monthly Corporate Environmental Services Managers meetings.

Finally, the team never stops exploring new avenues for collaboration. Currently, they are evaluating adenosine triphosphate monitoring technology, which measures the remaining organic matter after cleaning a surface, medical device or surgical instrument.

Outstanding, Sustainable, Transferable Results

As a result of strong collaboration, the team celebrated a successful regulatory survey, and continues to utilize educational tools and practice guidelines to support best practices.

"By sharing concerns and working together to provide additional support and education to employees throughout the entire institution, each department has a better understanding of individual needs," said Bercea. "Our journey has increased our mutual passion toward positive patient outcomes and family experiences."

Infection prevention and environmental services now work together with nursing personnel and administrators to establish efficient and effective methods for providing the right products and education, which ultimately supports Beaumont's mission to provide excellence in care to the individuals and communities it serves.

1. HAI Prevalence Survey, electronically accessed from www.cdc.gov/HAI/surveillance/index.html, July 7, 2015, Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.

2. Adams, Audrey B.; Armellino, Donna M.; Calfee, David; Jalon, Hillary; Smith, Barbara A. (2009). The Role of Environmental Services in a Collaborative Infection Prevention Model to Reduce *Clostridium difficile* in the Greater New York Region. *American Journal of Infection Control* Volume 37, Issue 5, Pages E189-E190, June 2009.

Sani-Cloth® is a trademark of PDI, registered in the US Patent and Trademark Office.