

safer healthcare *now!*

May, 2005

In response to growing concerns among healthcare workers and the public over patient safety, a National Steering Committee was established and the *Safer Healthcare Now!* campaign was developed. Phil Hassen, CEO, Canadian Patient Safety Institute, is Chair of the committee. A full list of Steering Committee members is available at www.saferhealthcarenow.ca or www.soinsplussecuritairesmaintenant.ca. A national information call on April 12, 2005 introduced the campaign to healthcare workers, administrators and other interested parties. The campaign builds on other patient safety work occurring in hospitals across Canada, and the recognition that there is room for improvement.

Each of the six interventions (or strategies) promoted through *Safer Healthcare Now!* has an evidence base indicating that appropriate implementation and practice can lead to reduced mortality and adverse events. However, evidence also clearly indicates there is significant opportunity for improvement in the consistent implementation of these strategies. For example, a review of post-Acute Myocardial Infarction care in four Canadian provinces revealed that “although utilization rates for beta-blockers, ACE inhibitors and statins increased over the study period, the rates were still far below optimal levels” (Pilotte, Beck et al., 2004). Similar results have been found in Saskatchewan (Chan, Brossart et al., 2004).

The six strategies are:

1. **At the first sign of patient decline outside the intensive care unit:** Deploy Rapid Response Teams.
2. **To prevent avoidable deaths from heart attack:** Consistently Deliver Reliable, Evidence-Based Care for Acute Myocardial Infarction.
3. Prevent Adverse Drug Events (ADEs): **Implement medication reconciliation.**
4. Prevent Central Line Infections: **Implement a series of interdependent, scientifically grounded steps called the “Central Line Bundle.”**
5. Prevent Surgical Site Infections: **Reliably deliver the correct perioperative antibiotics at the proper time.**
6. Prevent Ventilator-Associated Pneumonia: **Implement a series of interdependent, scientifically grounded steps called the “Ventilator Bundle.”**

Teams of healthcare professionals will work together within organizations to implement the campaign strategies. All participating organizations have committed to implementing one or more of the strategies. The organizations enrolled represent more than 200 teams. Teams will be directly supported through geographic “nodes”. There are currently three established: Western Canada, Ontario, and Atlantic Canada. In addition, three national working groups have been established to advise and facilitate the campaign in the areas of communications, measurement and education/resources. The Canadian Patient Safety Institute provides financial and secretariat support to the NSC and to the campaign across Canada.

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The *Safer Healthcare Now!* campaign was modeled after the *100,000 Lives* initiative of the U.S. Institute for Healthcare Improvement (IHI), and adapted from a Canadian perspective to better align with our healthcare system and existing data collection processes. IHI's CEO Don Berwick and his staff have provided invaluable advice to the SHN national steering committee. For more information on IHI and its campaign, visit www.ihl.org.

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