Update: Infection Reporting Change for Critical Access Hospitals

A change has been made in the plan for Minnesota infection reporting for CAHs. We are now asking that CAHs report their hospital-wide Catheter Associated Urinary Tract Infection (CAUTI) rates to the National Healthcare Safety Network (NHSN), beginning with service dates of Jan. 1, 2014. In addition, the measure for employee influenza vaccination rate will no longer be required at this time.

Last fall, a decision was made to align Minnesota infection reporting with the federal requirements. Critical Access Hospitals were asked to begin reporting the employee influenza vaccination rate, given that A) CAHs are not required to report federally, B) this measure is rural-relevant, C) this will be a future required measure for PPS hospitals, and D) many CAHs were reporting a similar measure rate through the state’s FluSafe campaign, and it was thought the transition to reporting to NHSN would not be problematic.

Since that time, we have learned

1) That the FluSafe program is taking steps to align its measure with the NHSN definitions. However, this will not be completed for several months.
2) That the CAUTI rate in Minnesota appears to be higher than other parts of the country. Given that measurement leads to improvement, and that CMS plans to expand its current NHSN-reported CAUTI measure hospital-wide, the CAUTI measure is a prime candidate to add to the slate of required submissions for CAHs.

The request to make this change was brought to us by the community of infection prevention professionals and discussed with CAH representatives before being approved. When FluSafe and NHSN become aligned, the employee influenza vaccination measure may also be added to the slate.

CAHs should begin planning to become certified NHSN users. Staff at Stratis Health and MHA are working to identify resources to help hospitals through this process. Our understanding of NHSN deadlines would be that first quarter 2014 data would be due in August of 2014. This gives CAHs roughly 13 months to comply with this change.

August 2013