



NEWS RELEASE

from Halton Healthcare Services

Immediate Release

July 30, 2010

Halton Healthcare Services posts Patient Safety Data and introduces new Surgical Safety Checklist Compliance Rates

The Ministry of Health and Long-Term Care has released the most recent rates for seven hospital patient safety indicators today. These indicators include the monthly rates for *C.difficile* and the quarterly rates for Central Line Infection Associated Bloodstream Infections, Ventilator-Associated Pneumonia, Surgical Site Infections, along with bloodstream infection rates for Methicillin-resistant *Staphylococcus aureus* (MRSA) and Vancomycin Resistant Enterococcus (VRE). HHS also posted the compliance rates for the newest patient safety indicator to be publicly reported – the Surgical Safety Checklist (SSCL).

“The new surgical safety checklist indicator provides us with valuable insights which will help us enhance and focus our patient safety initiatives in our Operating Rooms,” notes Mr. John Oliver, HHS President and CEO. “We are supportive of both transparency and accountability within the healthcare system because we believe it will inspire improved performance, enhance patient safety, and strengthen the public’s confidence in Ontario’s hospitals”

As posted today on the HHS website, HHS observed decreased rates of *C.difficile* infections in June 2010, compared to previous monthly rates and no cases of hospital acquired VRE, Hospital Acquired MRSA Bloodstream Infections, Ventilator Associated Pneumonia and Central line infections from April – June 2010.

“In general, we continue to achieve positive results in the infection indicators, which attests to our commitment to infection prevention and control at HHS,” notes Dr. Rau. “However, we continue to closely monitor the fluctuating incidence of *C.difficile* infections. We have an established antibiotic stewardship program, we strongly advocate for improved hand hygiene, and we continue rigorous environmental cleaning of our healthcare environment.”

Beginning July 30, 2010 all Ontario hospitals with operating rooms are now required to publicly report the quarterly surgical safety checklist compliance rates at the HHS hospitals. First quarter compliance rates are 91.7 per cent for HHS, 94.5 per cent for Georgetown Hospital, 88.9 per cent for Milton District Hospital and 92 per cent for Oakville-Trafalgar Memorial Hospital.

“The Surgical Safety Checklist rates are very encouraging and demonstrate our commitment to this vital new patient safety initiative. They will provide a baseline for our hospitals to track improvements over time,” notes John Oliver, HHS President and CEO. “

A surgical safety checklist is a patient safety communication tool that is used by teams of operating room professionals (nurses, surgeons, anesthesiologists, and others) to discuss important details about each surgical case.

The Surgical Safety Checklist was launched and implemented across Halton Healthcare Services' three hospitals in July of 2009. This new safety process was initially introduced by the World Health Organization (WHO) in 2008 as part of its "Safe Surgery Saves Lives" campaign after the WHO's global research study conclusively revealed that the Checklist reduced both surgical complications and deaths. A Canadian version of this process has since been developed in conjunction with the Canadian Patient Safety Institute and endorsed by a number of Canadian healthcare organizations including the Canadian Anaesthesiologists Society, the Canadian Nurses Association and the Royal College of Physicians and Surgeons.

Cindy MacFarlane, Patient Care Manager, Operating Room, OTMH explains that the idea for the Surgical Safety Checklist was actually adopted from the aviation industry.

"Just like a pilot checks his aircraft before take-off, the surgical team methodically check-off a list of items that have been categorized into three timeframes – an 'initial briefing', a 'time-out' before the incision and an 'after the operation' debriefing," explains Mrs. MacFarlane "Poor communication has been cited as the root cause of mistakes and adverse events. This safety initiative inspires communication and teamwork."

"The checklist prompts dialogue between the team members and the patient prior to any surgical intervention. It effectively de-emphasizes hierarchy amongst the team members by focusing us all on the task at hand and getting us to discuss critical information," notes Dr. John Iskander, General Surgeon at Georgetown Hospital. "This simple checklist has an incredible potential to save lives and prevent complications."

"While time-outs before making an incision have been a well established practice at all three of our HHS community hospitals since 2007, the WHO recommendation of adding a briefing session before the operation and a debriefing session before the patient leaves the operating room serves to further streamline the entire process," notes Mrs. McFarlane.

"It only takes a few extra minutes to ask a handful of simple but important questions to confirm key information – while the patient is still awake. Although everything on the checklist is a well-known standard of care, this valuable tool helps eliminate errors and ensures the best possible patient outcomes by making us all more vigilant," adds Dr. Hossam Makar, General Surgeon at Milton District Hospital. "It also builds on best practice by allowing us to reflect on what and how we could have been done better - during our debriefing sessions."

Patients having surgery at one of the HHS hospitals can expect to have the checklist performed during their procedure.

The patient safety indicator data is available on Halton Healthcare Services' website and on the Ministry of Health and Long-Term Care's website at www.haltonhealthcare.on.ca or www.ontario.ca/patientsafety.

For more information contact
Zita Taksas Raponi
Public Relations
905-845-2571, ext. 6774

Patient Safety Indicators

Rates of Ventilator Associated Pneumonia: April – June 2010

Georgetown Hospital Cases: 0 Milton Hospital Cases: 0 Oakville Hospital Cases: 0

Rates of Central-Line Infections: April – June 2010

Georgetown Hospital Cases: 0 Milton Hospital Cases: 0 Oakville Hospital Cases: 0

Rates of New Hospital Acquired VRE Infections: April – June 2010

Georgetown Hospital Cases: 0 Milton Hospital Cases: 0 Oakville Hospital Cases: 0

Rates of New Hospital Acquired MRSA Bloodstream Infections: April – June 2010

Georgetown Hospital Cases: 0 Milton Hospital Cases: 0 Oakville Hospital Cases: 0

SSI Prevention Indicator (Antibiotic Timing) Rates : April – June 2010

The percentage of time our health care team at HHS gave patients the antibiotics within the appropriate time period before hip or knee joint replacement surgery. Only patients, 18 years or older, who are about to undergo primary hip or knee joint replacement surgery are included. At HHS, hip and knee total joint replacement surgeries are only performed at the Oakville Hospital.

Oakville Hospital: 100%

Surgical Safety Checklist Compliance Rates : April – June 2010

The Surgical Safety Checklist (SSCL) compliance indicator measures **the degree to which all three phases - briefing, time out and debriefing** - of the checklist were performed correctly and appropriately for each surgical patient. All three steps must be fully completed during all surgeries to achieve a rating of 100%.

Georgetown Hospital 94.5% Milton Hospital 88.9% Oakville Hospital 92.0%

Rates of Hospital Acquired *C. difficile* Infections at HHS for June 2010

Georgetown Hospital Cases: 0

Milton Hospital Cases: 0

Oakville Hospital Cases: 3 Rate: .33