HHS' Role in Reducing Rates of Healthcare-Associated Infections

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GAO Report: *Healthcare Associated Infections in Hospitals* (March 2008)

Focused on:

- CDC preventive guidelines and HHS-supported activities to promote implementation
- Accreditation efforts to reduce HAIs
- Identification and Integration of HHS data collection

GAO Report: Recommendations

1. Identify priorities among CDC's recommended practices to:
   - Promote implementation of high priority practices
   - Consider inclusion into CMS's *Conditions for Participation*
2. Establish greater consistency and compatibility of data collected across HHS to:
   - Increase reliable national estimates

Testimony to the House Oversight and Reform Committee (4/16/2008)

Remarks focused on:

1. HHS Efforts related to prevention of HAIs
2. Surveillance and Monitoring of HAIs
3. Value-based Purchasing to create incentives
4. Regulatory approaches to facilitate quality improvement research

#1 HHS Steering Committee on HAI Reduction

- Establish national goals for reducing HAIs; e.g *Lower HAIS by 60% in 5 yrs*
- Identify and track benchmarks:
  - short term (1-2 yr)
  - mid-term (3-5 yr)
  - long term (5-10 yr)
- Coordinate and Leverage HHS resources to accelerate and maximize impact

#2 Prioritization of Recommended Clinical Practices

In Partnership with the HICPAC:

- Prioritize existing 1200 recommended practices
- Establish a “Top 10” list

Benefits of Prioritization:

- Serve as a platform for National Prevention Campaign
- Help guide CMS Hospital Surveys
- Help CDC/AHRQ focus translation into practice programs

#3 Hospitals: Regulatory Oversight and Compliance

- HHS partner with accreditation org's and CMS to survey for infection control practices (e.g JCAHO/AOA/CMS)
- CMS to explore including recommended practices in their *Conditions for Participation*
- CDC Division of Healthcare Quality Promotion with partners to provide TA to hospitals with "deficient" infection control programs

#4 Improve and Expand HAI Surveillance

- Ensure definitional alignment of HHS data systems
- Standardize measures to enhance compatibility
- Encourage reporting through CDC's National Healthcare Safety Network (currently 25% U.S. hospital participate)

#5 Value Driven Healthcare: An Important Link

- Public reporting of HAIs empowers consumers to make informed choices
- Provider feedback has demonstrated effectiveness on lowering HAIs
- CDC's National NHSN helps hospitals establish baselines and track trends
- Incentives for prevention may increase prevention efforts

Charge to HICPAC

1. Prioritize list of recommended clinical practices and develop a “top ten” list to help focus rapid implementation efforts
2. Develop with input from liaisons from CMS and AHRQ, the criteria (e.g., population affected, magnitude of problem, strength of evidence, economic impact, feasibility) by which HICPAC recommendations can be considered for inclusion as Medicare Conditions of Participation as High Priority Prevention Interventions and High Priority hospital acquired infections