



New Antibiotic Stewardship Program Reduces Unnecessary Antibiotic Use and Costs at Saint Anthony Hospital

State Hospital Association Awards Organization for Innovative Best Practice

CHICAGO, March 5, 2019 – In its ongoing effort to maintain the highest quality health care standards, Saint Anthony Hospital implemented a comprehensive Antimicrobial Stewardship Program. This program won the Illinois Health and Hospital Association (IHA) Innovation: Partners in Progress Award for the second consecutive year. This year, Saint Anthony is being recognized for reducing the unnecessary use of antibiotics and is one of only two award recipients.

“Overuse of antibiotics is a nationwide problem. It can lead to antibiotic resistance and is considered a public health priority. The CDC enumerated seven core elements for antibiotic stewardship programs, but these can be difficult to implement – much more so in a community hospital setting like Saint Anthony,” said Alfredo Mena Lora, MD, Medical Director of Infection Control at Saint Anthony Hospital. “Our Infection Control Department teamed up with our Pharmacy Department to develop comprehensive evidence-based guidelines for antibiotic use reflective of our local drug susceptibility patterns. Pharmacists review all antibiotic prescriptions, check our treatment guidelines, consult with an infectious disease expert and discuss with the ordering physician when necessary. We studied the effects of this program and found that it led to better, more judicious use of antibiotics.”

Nationally regulatory agencies, including the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, and The Joint Commission have made reduction of antimicrobial use a top priority when surveying health care institutions across the country. Prior to starting the training program, only one in four pharmacists felt comfortable with antibiotics and infectious syndromes. However, after just three months, all pharmacists felt comfortable working with evidence-based guidelines for infectious syndromes. Stewardship recommendations were given in over 53 percent of all antibiotics consumed. Ultimately, this led to a total decrease in antibiotic use, increase use of oral alternatives, and reduction in unnecessary costs.

“IHA and its more than 200 hospitals and nearly 50 health system members are dedicated to advancing person-centered health care through evidence-based quality and safety initiatives and innovative programs that can measurably strengthen health and health care for all Illinoisans,” said A.J. Wilhelmi, IHA President and CEO. “We are inspired by the achievements of this year’s award recipients, and through our innovation challenge, we continue to work to enhance the spread of best practices across the state.”

A panel of judges consisting of statewide and nationally recognized health care quality experts evaluated submissions from hospitals and health systems from across the state based on their improvement impact and the applicant’s willingness to help bring innovations that can lead to better outcomes both locally and statewide.

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