

Hospitals To Use Surgical Safety Checklist

Patient Safety To Be Enhanced While C. Difficile Rates Decline.

NEWS

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Ontario is enhancing patient safety by requiring all hospitals to use a surgical safety checklist, beginning in January 2010.

The checklist will build on the government's patient safety indicator initiative that was launched in May 2008, and currently includes eight indicators. One of those indicators is C. difficile which hospitals began to report in September 2008. Since then, C. difficile rates have declined by 33 per cent.

The surgical safety checklist covers the most common tasks and items that operating room teams carry out, and has been shown to reduce rates of death and complications among patients. Hospitals will be required to report publicly on compliance with use of the checklist twice a year. The first public reporting will take place July 31, 2010 and will cover the period April 1, 2010 to June 30, 2010.

QUOTES

"Our government leads the country on the reporting patient safety indicators. Adding the surgical checklist to our list of public indicators will further improve patient safety in Ontario's hospitals."
– David Caplan, Minister of Health and Long-Term Care

"The addition of the surgical checklist is a logical next step for the patient safety program. Studies have shown that consistent use of a checklist reduces rates of death and complications associated with surgical care."
- Dr. Michael Baker, Executive Lead, Patient Safety Program

"Ontario's hospitals are working hard to make patient care even safer. Mandatory surgical safety checklists will help health professionals and hospitals better understand and further improve the care they provide."
Tom Closson, President and CEO of the Ontario Hospital Association.

QUICK FACTS

- Ontario currently reports on eight patient safety indicators: C. difficile; Methicillin Resistant Staphylococcus Aureus (MRSA); Vancomycin Resistant Enterococcus (VRE); Hospital Standardized Mortality Ratio (HSMR); Central-Line Primary Blood Stream Infection (CLI); Ventilator-Associated Pneumonia (VAP); Surgical Site Infection Prevention; and Hand Hygiene Compliance.
- In August 2009, Ontario hospitals reported a C. difficile rate of 0.26 per 1,000 patient days, a 33 per cent decline from the rate of 0.39 reported in August 2008.

LEARN MORE

Learn more about Ontario's [Patient Safety Initiative and hospital reporting.](#)

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