

For Immediate Release

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ICU COLLABORATIVE IMPROVES PATIENT OUTCOMES

Providence, R.I. – November 24, 2009 – Hospitals in Rhode Island are safer today after a year-long effort aimed at improving the care of patients diagnosed with sepsis. The Surviving Sepsis Campaign was added to the efforts of the Rhode Island ICU (intensive care unit) Collaborative last March. During that time, there has been a 14.3 percent drop in overall sepsis mortality, making the survival rate from sepsis in Rhode Island significantly better than the national average.

Sepsis can be defined as the body's response to an infection. An infection is caused by microorganisms or "germs" invading the body and can be limited to a particular body region. Recognizing an opportunity to improve patient care in Rhode Island, the Rhode Island ICU Collaborative joined the Surviving Sepsis Campaign (SSC), an international initiative of the European Society of Intensive Care Medicine, the International Sepsis Forum, and the Society of Critical Care Medicine, in 2008. The SSC is aimed at improving the diagnosis, survival, and management of patients with sepsis by addressing the challenges associated with it. Since the launch, emergency department and intensive care unit staff have implemented "bundles" of evidence-based practices. A "bundle" is a group of therapies for a given disease that, when implemented together, may result in better outcomes than if implemented individually. Partnered with education, collaboration and empowerment, health care professionals have significantly improved the care of sepsis patients in Rhode Island including:

- A 16.5 percent decrease in severe sepsis mortality
- A 12.7 percent decrease in septic shock mortality
- Achieving a statewide mortality rate that is 20.8 percent better than the national average

"Rhode Island has achieved double-digit improvement in eight of the ten SSC measures," said Mitchell Levy, MD, academic advisor, SSC international leader and president of the Society of Critical Care Medicine. "Our state is now a national leader in the care of sepsis patients and receiving recognition from colleagues around the world."

Health care professionals from across the state recently gathered to review the results of the campaign, share best practices and develop next steps. Representatives from Rhode Island will present the state's results during the Society of Critical Care Medicine's national convention in January.

"The Rhode Island ICU Collaborative expanded its scope requesting additional resources and commitment from hospitals to participate in the Surviving Sepsis Campaign," said Laura Adams, president and CEO of the Rhode Island Quality Institute. "They answered that call with overwhelming determination and their results have been more than impressive."

“Rhode Island’s dedication to quality improvement is unsurpassed,” said H. John Keimig, president and CEO of Quality Partners of Rhode Island. “The results of our work with the Surviving Sepsis Campaign demonstrate the health care community’s remarkable dedication to collaboration aimed at improving patient care.”

“Once again, our hospitals have taken quality improvement and patient care to the next level,” said Edward Quinlan, president of the Hospital Association of Rhode Island. “These results would not be possible without a professional, dedicated workforce with a tireless dedication to patient care. Their commitment and results should be celebrated.”

The Rhode Island ICU Collaborative was formed in 2005 by the Rhode Island Quality Institute, Quality Partners of Rhode Island and the Hospital Association of Rhode Island to improve care for adult intensive care unit patients. The Collaborative aims to improve the culture of safety and prevent infections, complications and associated costs. Participating teams implement and evaluate proven strategies that address these issues. Rhode Island is the first state in the nation to achieve and maintain 100 percent hospital and adult intensive care unit participation in such a project. Work with the Collaborative positively impacts the care provided to patients in all 263 ICU beds across the state. Hospitals in Rhode Island care for more than 16,000 patients each year in the ICU setting.

Blue Cross & Blue Shield of Rhode Island and UnitedHealthcare of New England have funded the project's management costs and hospitals support the internal costs of the program. Neighborhood Health Plan of Rhode Island also provides financial support.

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