HHS Unveils New HAI Prevention Training Program

The U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) Office of the Assistant Secretary for Health has released *Partnering to Heal: Teaming Up Against Healthcare-Associated Infections*, an interactive computer-based video-simulation training program. This training program helps support the goals of the Partnership for Patients, a new public-private partnership that will help improve the quality, safety and affordability of health care for all Americans.

Healthcare-associated infections harm many patients, causing injury and raising costs. On average, 1 in 3 patients admitted to a hospital suffers a medical error or adverse event and at any given time about 1 in every 20 patients is affected by an infection related to hospital care. On average, 1 in 7 Medicare beneficiaries is harmed in the course of care, costing the government an estimated $4.4 billion every year.

To help address this public health challenge, the HHS Office of the Assistant Secretary for Health developed *Partnering to Heal*. This training program permits viewers to "become" one of five characters who can make decisions that impact health risks, and then view the results of those decisions and learn from the outcomes. It is designed to be used by students in the health professions, early-career clinicians, and other healthcare personnel, as well as patients and families to help prevent infections acquired in hospitals and other healthcare settings. Available online at no cost, *Partnering to Heal* [1] promotes a team-based approach to reducing preventable infections and deaths in the United States.

“The current data highlight the urgency to train providers in infection control practices,” said Howard K. Koh, MD, MPH, assistant secretary for health. “We’re hoping this video tool will help eliminate preventable infections.”

The video teaches viewers how to prevent the most prevalent hospital-acquired infections by sharing knowledge of universal and isolation precautions to take in healthcare settings. The training is designed to increase knowledge, alter attitudes, and shift the behaviors of clinicians and patients by focusing on principles of teamwork, communication, hand washing, flu vaccination, and the appropriate use of antibiotics and medical devices. *Partnering to Heal* is designed to be used as a facilitated training session or by individuals as a self-paced learning tool.

Partnering to Heal seeks safer and better care for all patients, which is consistent with the recently launched Partnership for Patients: Better Care, Lower Costs initiative. This new national public-private partnership with hospitals, medical groups, consumer groups and employers will help save lives by preventing millions of injuries and complications in patient care over the next three years. HHS has set

a goal of decreasing preventable hospital-acquired conditions by 40 percent (compared with 2010 rates) by the end of 2013. Achieving this goal should result in approximately 1.8 million fewer injuries and illnesses to patients, with more than 60,000 lives saved over the next three years. The Partnership for Patients has the potential to save up to $35 billion in healthcare costs.

To access the *Partnering to Heal* training video, see http://www.hhs.gov/partneringtoheal [1]. For more information about Partnership for Patients visit http://www.HealthCare.gov/center/programs/partnership [2].

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Links:
[1] http://www.hhs.gov/partneringtoheal
[2] http://www.HealthCare.gov/center/programs/partnership