HEALTHCARE SYSTEM SEPSIS PERFORMANCE IMPROVEMENT: Dignity Health

Highlights:

1,476 LIVES SAVED

$69M IN COST SAVINGS

3-DAY ALOS DECREASED

Results

The first clinical impact as a result of Dignity Health’s Sepsis Performance Initiative was an increase in rapid response call volume. This indicated a heightened awareness among the staff of and early identification of sepsis, leading to saved lives.

The Dignity Health sepsis initiative resulted in a striking impact on patient outcomes, exceeding the initial goals. Across the Dignity System, 1,476 lives have been saved, representing a decrease in mortality of 72.8% (2007 - April 2013). The System has also realized $69.1 million in healthcare expense savings and a decreased average length of stay (LOS) for sepsis patients of 2.96 days.

Background

Sepsis has gained wide recognition as one of the leading causes of death within hospitals. Every year, severe sepsis strikes an estimated 1 million Americans¹ and between 28 to 50 percent of those affected die.² Treatment for sepsis often involves a prolonged stay in the intensive care unit and complex therapies, both of which are quite costly.

It has been estimated that $20.3 billion is spent annually in the United States to treat sepsis.¹ The average cost per septic patient is $18,600, almost double the average cost per hospital stay across all other conditions.³ Identification of sepsis is a significant challenge, but early diagnosis and treatment can have a profound effect on survival rates.

In healthcare institutions, nurses are the front-line managers of septic patients. Preparing nursing staff to better assess, monitor, and recognize potential symptoms of sepsis significantly improves patient safety and outcomes as well as prevents costly critical care unit admissions, expensive medical interventions, and longer hospital stays.

MSC’s Simulation Solutions have earned the exclusive endorsement of the American Hospital Association.
Dignity Health Case Study continued...

The Challenge

Dignity Health (fka Catholic Healthcare West) commenced a Sepsis Performance Improvement Initiative to increase adoption of the Surviving Sepsis Campaign (SSC) Guidelines across the system. When consistently implemented in clinical practice, the evidence-based SSC guidelines are validated to reduce patient mortality and healthcare expense associated with sepsis.1

The initiative was launched with three goals:

1. Reduce hospital-wide severe sepsis mortality rate by at least 20%.
2. Achieve a 10% reduction in direct variable cost per sepsis case.

The initiative engaged the front-line nursing staff for implementation of best practices in identifying and treating sepsis and ensuring compliance with early treatment bundles. A combination of online, in-person, and high-fidelity simulation education was provided to the staff, with the aim of educating 100% of medical/surgical and ED nurses on the identification and treatment of severe sepsis.

The Solution: MSC's Sepsis Quality Solution

MSC's Sepsis Quality Solution was a cornerstone of Dignity Health’s system-wide sepsis initiative. Eight Dignity hospital facilities participated in MSC’s Solution, touching over 700 medical/surgical and ED nurses.

Participant Assessment

- 97% of participants agreed that MSC’s Sepsis Quality Solution increased their knowledge of sepsis.
- 96% of participants agreed that MSC’s Sepsis Quality Solution increased their confidence in treating sepsis.
- Participants had an increase in knowledge of the SSC guidelines. The mean pre-initiative knowledge level was 72% vs. 96% post-initiative.

Comments offered by participants regarding how MSC’s solution affected their practice include:

- “Simulation training was very helpful. I feel I will retain this info better due to the hands on practice.”
- “Very informative, simulations were very helpful to solidify information.”
- “Greatly improved my knowledge, I feel more confident in dealing with patients.”

Conclusion

Sepsis is a growing problem among healthcare institutions today. Many organizations are now taking proactive steps toward reducing mortality associated with sepsis. MSC’s Sepsis Quality Solution identifies gaps in your sepsis treatment processes, addresses your unique needs via tailored delivery, and continuously measures and analyzes your performance to deliver a strong return on your investment.

Through diligence and a focused effort supported by MSC’s Sepsis Quality Solution, Dignity Health experienced a significant decrease in mortality, length of stay, and $69 million in cost savings related to sepsis.


For more information on MSC’s partnership with Dignity Health, please contact your Sales Executive or call us at 888.889.5882.