



News Release

REF 2007-10

Contact: Cynthia L. LaCivita, ASHP Foundation
301-664-8609

Troy Kirkpatrick, Cardinal Health
614-757-6225

Barnes-Jewish Hospital Receives 2007 Award for Excellence in Medication-Use Safety

BETHESDA, Md. (Dec. 11, 2007) ? Barnes-Jewish Hospital has been named the recipient of the 2007 Award for Excellence in Medication-Use Safety. The award, which is sponsored by the Cardinal Health Foundation and administered by the American Society of Health-System Pharmacists (ASHP) Research and Education Foundation, nationally recognizes pharmacy professionals who have assumed a leadership role in promoting safety in the medication-use process. This is the only awards program to honor a pharmacist-led multidisciplinary team for its significant institution-wide system improvements relating to medication use. Two additional organizations, Community Health Network and Mercy Health Center, were honored as award finalists.

This year's recipient, Barnes-Jewish Hospital, located in St. Louis, treats approximately 1,200 patients per year with the diagnosis of severe sepsis, a condition where the body's over-response to an infection causes inflammation and blood clots that can ultimately lead to organ failure. Because early diagnosis and appropriate treatment can significantly improve survival rates, a multidisciplinary team at Barnes-Jewish Hospital believed that adopting and standardizing interventions related to the rapid diagnosis and treatment of severe sepsis would have a consistent positive impact on patient outcomes. Pharmacist, nurse and physician project champions collaborated to institute standardized care pathways supported by evidence-based treatment guidelines. Key components to the success of the initiative included development of a severe sepsis order set focusing on early restoration of proper blood flow and appropriate antimicrobial therapy, interdepartmental education of all patient care providers and adaptation of the order set into the emergency department's computerized prescriber order entry system. A comparison of pre- and post-implementation data demonstrated statistically significant reductions in 28-day mortality, hospital length of stay and hospital expenditures. Barnes-Jewish clearly demonstrated that standardizing sepsis care translated into significantly improved patient outcomes.

"We at Barnes-Jewish Hospital are honored to be recognized with this award for our efforts to improve the diagnosis and early treatment of severe sepsis and septic shock in patients presenting to the Emergency Department," says Scott Micek, Pharm.D., Clinical Pharmacist, Critical Care, and the pharmacist who led Barnes-Jewish Hospital's multidisciplinary team in its medication safety initiatives.

“This award demonstrates that research can be translated into clinical practice on a local level through teamwork, organization and standardization of care – all key components to improving quality of care, safety and patient outcomes.”

The first finalist, Community Health Network in Indianapolis, tackled the problem of incorrect or incomplete medication and admission histories in its health system. The organization used a systematic approach to develop and implement an action plan that would improve both their admission history and medication reconciliation processes. A multidisciplinary team instituted a successful Medication History and Reconciliation Program that led to decreasing unreconciled medications at Community Health Network by a remarkable 73 percent.

The second finalist, Mercy Health Center in Oklahoma City, addressed the issue of patient falls and injuries. When Mercy’s Falls and Restraints Committee began benchmarking the number of patient falls and related injuries in 2003, reporting them to the National Database of the Nursing Quality Indicators, its members became aware that Mercy’s fall rate exceeded the national average. In response, a pharmacist was added to the Falls and Restraints Committee and the pharmacy developed a Medication Fall Risk Score, which identifies medications as having a high, medium or low fall risk value. Since the implementation and use of the Pharmacy Fall Prevention Program, there has been a substantial decrease in the total number of falls. The results were impressive: A little more than one year after implementation, fall-related injuries decreased by 32 percent.

“The Cardinal Health Foundation focuses its efforts to support and promote patient safety initiatives across the country,” said Jim Mazzola, Vice President of Cardinal Health and the Cardinal Health Foundation. “The programs from Barnes-Jewish Hospital, Community Health Network and Mercy Health Center represent the type of innovative thinking in health care that should serve as an example for all hospitals.”

The recipient and finalists were formally recognized at a ceremony held during the 2007 ASHP Midyear Clinical Meeting in Las Vegas. Barnes-Jewish Hospital received a \$50,000 award to be used to further promote medication-use safety in its health system. The finalists received awards of \$10,000 each.

“In administering the awards program, the ASHP Foundation seeks to share the success stories of the winner and finalist organizations so practitioners across the country can benefit and learn from their experiences,” states Stephen J. Allen, Executive Vice President of the ASHP Foundation. “Providing opportunities for others to improve the quality and safety of patient medication management is the primary goal of this program.”

The three sites were chosen by an interdisciplinary panel of judges, who evaluated all applicants. Finalists were chosen based on criteria focusing on achievements in medication-use system initiative/scope, planning and implementation, measurable outcomes and impact, and innovation and applicability. Judges visited each finalist site before selecting a recipient. The selection panel members are:

Elizabeth Behrens, R.N., M.S.N.
Vice President, Quality and Performance Improvement
Evanston Northwestern Healthcare
Evanston, IL

Donald E. Casey Jr., M.D., M.P.H., M.B.A., FACP
Vice President of Quality and Chief Medical Officer
Atlantic Health System
Morristown, NJ

Hedy Cohen, R.N., B.S.N., M.S.
Vice President
Institute for Safe Medication Practices
Huntingdon Valley, PA

Kathy Crea, Pharm.D., BCPS
Medication Safety Coordinator
OhioHealth, Clinical Resource Management
Columbus, OH

Joanne Kowiatek, R.Ph., M.P.M.
Pharmacy Manager, Medication Patient Safety
University of Pittsburgh Medical Center Presbyterian
Pittsburgh, PA

Timothy S. Lesar, B.S., Pharm.D., FASHP
Director of Pharmacy
Albany Medical Center
Albany, NY

About the ASHP Foundation

The ASHP Research and Education Foundation (www.ashpfoundation.org) was established in 1968 by the American Society of Health-System Pharmacists as a nonprofit, tax-exempt organization. The mission of the Foundation is to improve the health and well-being of patients in hospitals and health systems through appropriate, safe and effective medication use. The Foundation provides leadership and conducts education and research activities that foster the coordination of interdisciplinary medication management leading to optimal patient outcomes. Emphasis is given to programs that will have a major impact on advancing pharmacy practice in hospitals and health systems, thereby improving public health.

About the Cardinal Health Foundation

Supported by the global resources of Cardinal Health (www.cardinalhealth.com), including more than 40,000 employees around the world, the Cardinal Health Foundation is the focal point of the company's community relations' efforts. The Foundation's mission is to advance and fund regional and national programs that improve access to and delivery of quality health care services. With annual revenues of \$87 billion and operations on five continents, Cardinal Health serves the health care industry with products and services that help hospitals, physician offices and pharmacies reduce costs, improve safety, productivity and profitability, and deliver better care to patients.

###