Results: The development of this spreadsheet has provided the information available on the patient in an organized, useful format. The ability to sort by multiple variables provides identification of incomplete information as well as potential trends.

Lessons Learned: A well designed spreadsheet is a useful tool for surveillance line listings that require a high degree of flexibility and rapid analysis.

Publication Number 16-153

**Different Techniques Help To Increase Influenza Immunization**

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ISSUE: Transmission of Influenza from staff to patients and co-workers can create serious population health care problems. Vaccination is an important method of preventing influenza and its severe complications. Per CDC fewer than 40% of health care workers are immunized each year.

PROJECT: Since 2002 our hospital rate of staff being immunized has been above the national average. Our Infection Control Committee chose to have 90% of staff immunized for 2005. Previous years education was the main resource to encourage staff to be immunized. Our group developed techniques to involve all departments to encourage each other to take the flu vaccine. The Infection Control Committee became the F.B.I (Flu Bug Immunized) team. We were also part of the S.W.A.T. (Shriners Wellness Awareness Taskforce) team. In October we dressed in our props for Halloween (props were black t-shirts with FBI on the front and SWAT on the back). We also gave each department the name of their organism and they were to design what it appeared like on a 5 × 7 card. We then placed the cards on our “FBI Most Wanted” bulletin board. When each staff member in their department had been given the flu vaccine; their organism was captured. With the delay of obtaining the vaccines our program was placed on hold. In late November we did receive our vaccines and continued with the program. Co-workers were encouraging each other to take the vaccine so they could be “captured.” Departments were in competition with each other to be “captured” first.

RESULTS: We did reach our 90% goal. This included full time and per diem staff.

LESSONS LEARNED: Education is very important but peer pressure by co-workers is an added benefit. Also we have decided to order our vaccine from different supplier in order to start our vaccines in October as planned.

**Research**

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**Bacterial Contamination of Stethoscopes with Antimicrobial Diaphragm Covers**

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ISSUE: Stethoscopes in the hands of most health care disciplines can harbor harmful microorganisms. A relatively new product has come into use in the hospital setting in the effort to combat organisms that cause infections. Saint Alphonsus (SARMC) wanted to find out if this product would help decrease nosocomial infections.
PROJECT: Antimicrobial diaphragm covers (>2 per individual) with the manufacturers’ recommendations about cleaning and routine changing of covers were distributed to a mixed group of clinicians working in a large medical/surgical/trauma intensive care unit (ICU). All clinicians were instructed that they may be randomly selected to participate in a study. The study included culturing the healthcare workers stethoscope and a short survey regarding the workers practice of routine cleaning and changing of their stethoscope cover (if given the antimicrobial stethoscope cover).

During the study period clinicians were randomly selected from the ICU staff (MD’s RN’s, RT’s, or Other) for culture of stethoscope diaphragms (with and without diaphragm covers). Cultures were obtained by pressing the diaphragm surface for five seconds on mannitol agar plate and incubating the plate aerobically for forty-eight hours.

At the time of culture, each clinician was asked to complete a short written survey. Each clinician indicated the duration of use of their antimicrobial cover (if applicable), how often they cleaned their stethoscope, and what agent they used for cleaning the stethoscope.

RESULTS: 74 stethoscopes were cultured (37 with covers, 37 without covers). One hundred percent of the stethoscopes cultured were contaminated. Colony counts were significantly lower for uncovered stethoscope diaphragms averaging 71.4 colony counts compared to 246.5 colonies on covered stethoscopes.

LESSONS LEARNED: In summary, the antimicrobial diaphragm covers appeared to offer no advantage.

Staff Attitudes toward CDC’s Hand Hygiene Guideline

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ISSUE: Although it has been four years since the publication of the new CDC Hand Hygiene Guideline for Healthcare Settings, to date no study has assessed the attitudes of staff toward recommendations in the new Guideline.

PROJECT: “Attitudes Regarding Practice Guidelines” questionnaire was administered to a sample of ICU staff members in 38 U.S. hospitals. The tool has a 6-point Likert scale and two sections: Section 1 includes attitudinal statements about practice guideline in general (18 statements) and Section 2 includes 18 parallel statements specifically regarding the Hand Hygiene Guideline. Possible scores range from 0-180, with higher scores indicating more positive attitudes. Additionally, the instrument asks the respondent to name the most important factors that would either facilitate or prevent the use of the Guideline, and asks them to self-report the proportion of time when they use an alcohol hand degermer.

RESULTS: 1,974 surveys were distributed, 1,346 were returned (68.2%). The respondents included of 996 nurses (74%), 222 physicians (16%), and 128 others (10%). 80% of the respondents agreed there was sufficient administrative support and resources in their setting to allow the implementation of the Guideline. 861/ 1282 (67%) reported using alcohol “almost always” in their practice. Those with higher scores on the survey reported using alcohol hand hygiene significantly more frequently than those with lower scores (ANOVA, p < 0.001). 63% reported that following the Guideline would increase their risk of skin damage; they also reported frequent use of alcohol significantly less often than those who did not report that use of the Guideline would increase skin damage (65.3% and 73.0% respectively, p < 0.001). Staff named six barriers to hand hygiene, with the most frequent (92.9%) being lack of time or equipment and negative effects on skin.

LESSONS LEARNED: Recommendations in the Guideline seem to be widely implemented, and a more positive attitude toward practice guidelines was associated with increased use of alcohol hand hygiene products. Nevertheless, reported barriers to hand hygiene do not seem to have changed since publication of the Guideline.