

Bloodstream Infections in Hemodialysis Patients with Central Lines A Preventable and Costly Threat to Patient Safety

Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) released a report in March, 2011 stating about 37,000 bloodstream infections happen each year to kidney dialysis patients with central lines.

<http://www.cdc.gov/vitalsigns/> (Select hyperlink to open, or copy and paste the link in web browser).

This report focused national attention on infections in dialysis facilities.

The main messages from the report are:

Apply prevention model to outpatient hemodialysis centers that use central lines for treatment.

- About 350,000 people receive life-saving hemodialysis treatment at any given time. Many use central lines when first starting treatment. Infections are one of the leading causes of hospitalization and death for hemodialysis patients.

Must improve adherence to infection prevention practices in hemodialysis care.

- Decrease the use of central lines for hemodialysis
- Ensure that central lines that must be used are cared for using best practices
- Tracking infections is an important part of prevention; CDC's National Healthcare Safety Network (NHSN) provides a system for tracking infections in hemodialysis settings. This also helps in efforts to devise targeted infection prevention strategies and measuring local and national progress toward prevention.
- Educate staff and patients about proper central line use and maintenance practices, as well as risks associated with central lines.
- Look for opportunities to collaborate with various groups to reduce bloodstream infections in hemodialysis patients (e.g., regional collaborative with ESRD Networks, state health departments and CDC).

The Network of New England is involved in two Healthcare Associated Infections (HAI) projects using CDC's NHSN tracking tool. Currently, 20 providers are enrolled in NHSN. The Network is assisting providers to enroll in NHSN and track their infections in comparison to CDC's national average. The Network also is providing a beneficial collaborative experience to facilities involved. Please call Network if you are interested in being part of Network of New England HAI projects.