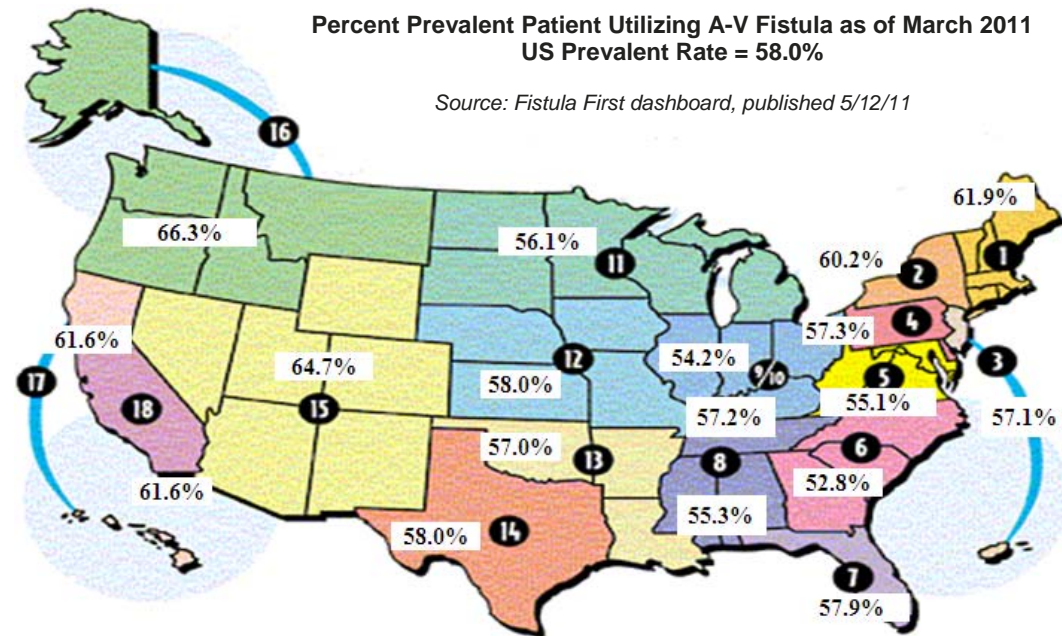


Fistula First Update

First the good news; As of March 2011 New England dialysis providers reached a prevalent AV fistula rate of 61.9%, which surpasses the goal of 60.2% set by CMS for this Network. The bad news is that there are too many catheters in use!

The 90 day catheter rate is a problem that needs to decrease as catheters have the greatest impact on patient's morbidity and mortality. Infections are the second leading cause of death in dialysis patients and the catheter is the vascular access with the highest rate of infection. A recent survey of New England dialysis clinics by this Network indicated that 16% of Hemodialysis patients have a catheter in use for >90 days. The KDOQI guidelines suggest that only 10% of patients should have a catheter in use for >90 days. All dialysis clinics should consider making catheter reduction one of their major goals this year.



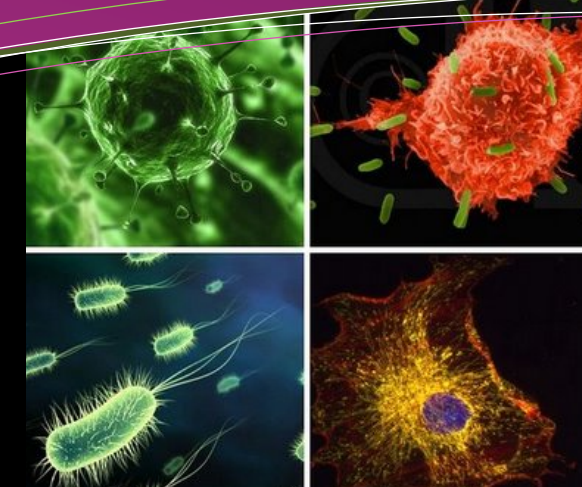
HEALTH ASSOCIATED INFECTIONS

The Network of New England is involved in two Healthcare Associated Infections (HAI) projects using the CDC's National Healthcare Safety Network (NHSN) tracking tool.

Currently, 20 providers, in this Network, 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 the Network if you are interested in being part of the Network of New England's HAI projects.

NETWORK NOTES is written, designed and distributed by the Network of New England. This newsletter is published while under contract with Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services, Baltimore, Maryland. Contract # HHSM-500-2010-NW001C.

Amber Borges.....Editor
Danielle Daley.....Designer
Jaya Bhargava.....Contributor
Peggy Lynch.....Contributor



This Issue

- Bloodstream Infections in Hemodialysis Patients with Central Lines **P.1**
- The Patient Experience **P.2**
- Vocational Rehabilitation **P.2**
- Bed Bugs **P.3**
- Congratulations 5-Diamond Facilities! **P.3**
- Fistula First Update **P.4**

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

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) released a report in March 2011, stating that approximately 37,000 bloodstream infections happen each year to dialysis patients with central lines (otherwise known as a central venous catheter). This report, which can be accessed at <http://www.cdc.gov/vitalsigns>, focused national attention on infections in dialysis facilities. The main messages from the report are:

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

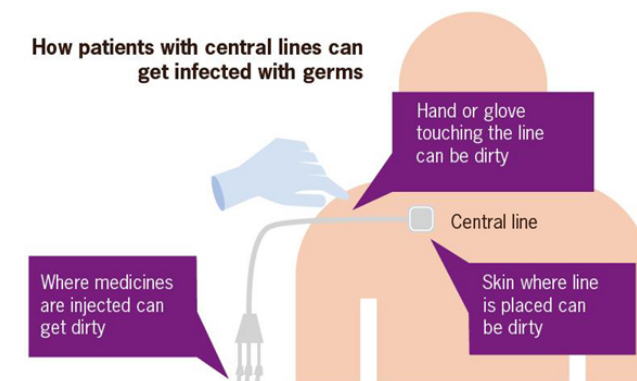
- About 350,000 people receive life-saving hemodialysis treatment at any given time. Many use central lines when first starting treatment. Infections are one of the leading causes of hospitalization and death for hemodialysis patients.

Improve adherence to infection prevention practices in hemodialysis care

- Decrease the use of central lines for hemodialysis
- Ensure that mandatory central lines are cared for using best practices

- Track infections as an important part of prevention; CDC's National Healthcare Safety Network (NHSN) provides a system for tracking infections in hemodialysis settings. This tool 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).

How patients with central lines can get infected with germs



The Patient Experience

Great Grandmother and 2nd Oldest PD Patient in New England Enjoys Fulfilling Life

As told to Amber Borges, MSW:

Helen Conklin has been on dialysis for a little over 3 years. Helen began in-center hemodialysis (HD) in 2008 at Fresenius Medical Care of Warwick, which has the "most wonderful staff". On hemodialysis, Helen had high blood pressure which was distressing to her. On a television in her dialysis clinic Helen saw a demonstration of peritoneal dialysis (PD). Although she was apprehensive at first, she advocated for herself by approaching her nephrologist about PD. She has been self-administering her PD at home ever since.

Helen uses a cyclor and administers her PD at night, where she has about 4 exchanges. PD is "no problem at all".

Helen is the 2nd oldest PD patient in New England (she's 5 days shy of the oldest). On PD Helen has more energy during the day. Although she doesn't go out as much as she used to, she is able to enjoy more time at her senior club, with her cat, baking and most importantly her family. Helen has lived with various loving family members, in over 20 states, since her mother died when she was 3. She has worked hard all of her life,



Helen Conklin, 95
Warwick, Rhode Island

sometimes having more than one job at a time. Helen, who is widowed, now enjoys the company of her 3 children, 5 grandchildren, and 4 great grandchildren who offer their help to her whenever she needs it. She says that her life "has been quite a ride" and all those that have had the pleasure of knowing her agree!

Bed Bugs

A survey of pest managers by the University Of Sydney Department Of Medical Entomology shows that bed bug infestations have increased 5,000 percent since 2000! Hospitals, businesses, dialysis centers, homes, buses, apartments and hotels are just a few places where bed bugs are being reported. In a recent Canadian study, it has been found that bed bugs carry two types of drug-resistant bacteria; Staphylococcus Aureus (MRSA) and Vancomycin-Resistant Enterococci (VRE), according to the Center for Disease Control Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) and Emerging Infectious Diseases Journal.

Bedbugs are reddish brown, oval and flat, about the size of an apple seed. During the day, they hide in the cracks and crevices of beds, box springs, headboards and bed frames. It can be difficult to distinguish bedbug bites from other insect bites. In general, the sites of bedbug bites usually are:

- Red, often with a darker red spot in the middle
- Itchy
- Arranged in a rough line or in a cluster
- Located on the face, neck, arms and hands

Some people have no reaction at all to bedbug bites, while others experience an allergic reaction that can include severe itching, blisters or hives. Bedbugs don't care if their environment is clean or dirty. All they need is a warm host and plenty of hiding places.

There are several ways to get rid of bed bugs. A doctor may prescribe a skin



cream containing hydrocortisone, or an oral antihistamine, such as diphenhydramine (Benadryl).

Treating a home may be more difficult because bedbugs hide so well and can live for months without eating. Hiring a professional exterminator, who may use a combination of pesticides and nonchemical treatments, is the best option.

However, because exterminators are so expensive (prices can exceed \$5,000!) some people may not be able to afford them. Next steps could include contacting Adult Protection Services to assist with the infestation and also help people relocate to a cleaner environment. Dialysis facilities may utilize their "isolation" room for dialysis until the problem is resolved. Reaching out to the city health department, the state Department of Public Health or the Chief Epidemiologist at the CDC can also be helpful.

Sources:
<http://www.badbedbugs.com/>

<http://www.mayoclinic.com/health/bedbugs/DS00663>

Congratulations 5-Diamond Facilities!

The following Network of New England dialysis facilities that have either recently achieved or continue to maintain 5-Diamond Patient Safety status in 2011.

Thank you for participating in this program, and for your team's dedication to promoting a culture of patient safety to improve patient safety awareness for End-Stage Renal Disease beneficiaries.

- Berkshire Medical Center
- FAHC - Barre Satellite
- FAHC - Chittenden County Dialysis
- FAHC - North Country Dialysis
- FAHC - Rutland Dialysis
- FAHC - St. Albans Satellite
- Fresenius Medical Care of Methuen
- Kennebec Kidney Center
- Lewiston-Auburn Kidney Center
- New Britain General Hospital
- New Hampshire Kidney Center
- New Haven Dialysis
- New Haven Home Dialysis
- Physicians Dialysis Inc. Worcester
- Saints Medical Center Dialysis
- Saints Memorial Med Ctr / Merrimack Valley Dialysis – Methuen
- Southwestern Vermont Renal Center
- Umbagog Kidney Center
- VA Medical Center – Providence
- VA Medical Center – Togus



Sturbridge Host Hotel, Sturbridge, MA

Save the Date

October 13, 2011

23rd Annual Network of New England
Educational Meeting

The 2011 meeting will be held at the Sturbridge Host Hotel and Conference Center located on picturesque Cedar Lake in Sturbridge, MA.

Registration brochures will be mailed in August, so please plan your time and register early to attend.

Vocational Rehabilitation

End Stage Renal Disease presents many challenges for the hundreds of thousands of individuals who face dialysis each year in the United States. For many, the desire to remain active and feel connected to others is significant. Pursuit of personal rehabilitation goals can enhance a person's quality of life, sense of purpose, self identity, competence, independence, general health and energy.

While employment is not possible for all dialysis patients, it is a practical goal for many patients and should be encouraged. Visit the Vocational Rehabilitation section of the Network website for helpful resources and updated state agency contacts.

Please contact the Network if you have questions or comments on how the Network can offer additional support to help improve vocational rehabilitation among renal patients.



Water Treatment Safety Alert

The Network was notified by several state surveyors that dialysis providers have been cited for not taking the extra safety step of verifying dialysis machine conductivity & pH by a separate meter prior to onset of treatment. For more information about water treatment safety, visit the quality section of the Network of New England website at <http://www.networkofnewengland.org/quality.htm>