1999 Ernest Amory Codman Award Recipient

Organization Award: Network

North Shore-Long Island Jewish Health System
Great Neck, New York

For Its Initiative: "Prevention, Prediction and Treatment of Pressure Injuries"

North Shore-Long Island Jewish Health System is comprised of 13 hospitals, two geriatric centers, a research center, home care, hospice, behavioral health programs and ambulatory care clinics. The Pressure Injury Initiative successfully demonstrates the utilization of performance improvement methodology to build a common clinical culture in a large integrated delivery system.

The senior organizational leaders including the board of trustees made the commitment to implement a quality management program based on uniform standards of care across the components of the system to establish internal benchmarking and improve the quality of life for the patient population. The approach is reinforced by Performance Improvement Coordinating Groups at each site with responsibility to medical boards for clinical decisions and approval of standards. Such an approach has enabled hundreds of employees to work together to coordinate the skin care program. This initiative employed the PDCA (Plan, Do, Check, Act) model that focused on sharing best practices, establishing an algorithm of care through the CareMap® methodology, creating databases, systemically measuring processes of care, and developing practice guidelines for patient assessment.

The initiative, which was started in 1996, utilized a methodology that consisted of prevalence studies, concurrent and retrospective chart reviews, and provided benchmarks for improvement in the prevention of pressure injuries. The initiative has increased knowledge of a common disease process and enhanced communication among caregivers. In addition, a framework has been established for analyzing resource consumption related to specialty beds, skin care products and medication. The end result was a reduction in skin care products from more than 100 to 24. Actual cost savings related to specialty beds was $141,794.

The initiative ultimately improved patient care, as evidenced by prevalence studies that were conducted in 1998 and 1999. The next step for this initiative includes the development of a research proposal focusing on the effect of targeted nutrition on wound healing. The following results were seen:

- There has been a reduction in the severity of pressure injuries, i.e., Stage III injuries decreased from 7 percent to 5 percent and Stage IV pressure injuries decreased from 5 percent to 1 percent.
- The median length of stay was reduced by a day.
- The nosocomial prevalence rate of 7.9 percent was significantly below the national benchmark of 10.3 percent.