Organization Award: Disease-Specific Care

Swedish Medical Center
Seattle, Washington

For its initiative:
“Comprehensive Stroke Program: A Metrically-Driven Program to Continually Assess, Improve and Demonstrate Sustainable Quality”

In 2000, an analysis of stroke care at Swedish Medical Center indicated significant gaps in care and the inconsistent application of evidence-based stroke care practices. Stroke care at most American hospitals is deficient in part because of the complexity of care and high implementation costs. The goal of Swedish Medical Center's initiative was to create an inpatient stroke program with a sustainable, comprehensive set of interrelated quality and administrative outcomes through the use of trained and organized care providers.

This initiative was strongly supported by leadership and sustained by stroke unit champions. Data from this initiative drove change, including the formation of a brain-attack response team to respond to inpatient strokes; the development of community education on stroke; and the implementation of stroke scale certification for nurses and doctors to advocate for a common, metrically oriented language for assessing stroke patients. In addition, it spurred significant culture changes within the medical staff, including better receptivity to standardization of care. During 2002-2004, the initiative achieved the following:

Achievements

- 57 percent increased compliance in standardized care processes.
- 17 percent decrease in mortality.
- 14 percent improvement in length of stay.
- 83 percent compliance for new nursing swallow screen (an evaluation for dysphagia, a swallowing disorder that can occur from stroke).