



SIERRA.gov

Your resource for governmental issues

Volume 1 Issue 3



THE WASHINGTON BUZZ



S544

The Patient Safety and Quality Improvement Act of 2005

This bill would amend the Public Health Service Act to designate patient safety data as privileged and confidential. It would allow providers and patient safety organizations to disclose patient safety data. Also prohibits accrediting body from taking action against individuals or organizations for sharing this information. This legislation would also call for the maintenance of a patient safety network of databases that can accept, aggregate and analyze voluntarily reported patient safety data. This database would also provide a resource for providers and organizations. The need to adapt national standards to promote electronic exchange of health care information is also addressed.

This bill was introduced March 8, 2005 and referred to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor and Pensions.

S71

The Registered Nurse Safe Staffing Act of 2005

Requires that hospitals implement staffing systems that ensure appropriate staffing on each shift and unit. Also requires the public posting of staffing information of the number of licensed and unlicensed nursing staff on for each shift. Civil monetary penalties and whistle-blower protections are also included.

This bill was introduced January 1, 2005 and referred to the Committee on Finance.

HR1372

Quality Nursing Care Act of 2005

This bill also requires that hospitals implement staffing systems that ensure appropriate staffing on each shift and unit and provides whistle-blower protections.

This bill was introduced March 17, 2005 and referred to the House Energy and Commerce committee which referred it to the Subcommittee on Health. It was also referred to the House Ways and Means committee.

The Voice of Infection Prevention and Control

Yes, this wonderful resource is up and running! Check out all the information you can access with just a few clicks of the mouse:

- Search for elected officials: members of congress, governors, state legislators, local officials by zip code.
- Access current Action Alerts, key bills in Congress and key votes in Congress.
- Learn about Capital Hill Basics: e-mail, phoning and writing members of congress.
- Locate and contact national and local media.

You can easily keep current on all the governmental issues that affect our practice as infection control professionals. Make sure to read information on other bills on the APIC watch list that are not summarized in this issue.

You can access VIP online at:

<http://capwiz.com/apic/home/>

The Pennsylvania Experience & Findings

The Pennsylvania Health Care Cost Containment Council (PHC4) recently released the hospital acquired infection data collected from hospitals in 2004. A total of 11,668 infections were reported which was a rate of 7.5 hospital-acquired infections per 1,000 patients admitted to general acute care hospitals. Using 2003 cost statistics, they estimate that an additional \$2 billion dollars was spent on the hospital admissions for these patients. 1,793, or 15 percent, of these patients died. The mortality rate for patients without a hospital-acquired infection: 2.4%. PHC4 does acknowledge the data is incomplete as evidenced by the submission disparity among hospitals. During the fourth quarter for 2004, 17 percent of the hospitals submitted more than one-half of all the infections reported. Additionally, 16 hospitals reported no hospital-acquired infections occurred. Although mandatory reporting is in its infancy, this data demonstrates the importance of this controversial initiative that is spreading across the United States.

Thank you Harriet Carr for providing the full PHC4 report!



To research current and historical federal legislation, visit the following website.

<http://thomas.loc.gov/>



California Develops Healthier Bills

AB 1711

Introduced by Assembly member Strickland, this bill would authorize skilled nursing facilities (SNF) to establish a standing order for a Registered Nurse or Licensed Pharmacist to administer the influenza and/or pneumococcal immunizations to a patient. This legislation would negate the need to have patient specific orders related to these vaccines if the following criteria are met:

- Patient is age 50 or greater.
- The SNF medical director has authorized a standing order for the facility.
- All recommendations of the Advisory Committee on Immunization Practices (ACIP) of the federal Centers for Disease Control and Prevention are met.

This bill passed the Assembly and Senate and was submitted to the Governor's Office on July 6th, 2005.



To read complete California state bills, log on to this site and follow the directions in the "Bill Search" section on the right side of the webpage.
www.legislature.ca.gov

SB 739

Introduced by Senator Speier, this bill mandates the Office of Statewide Health Planning and Development (OSHPD) will have oversight of hospital reporting of infection data. On July 13th, SB 739 was amended by the Assembly Committee on Health and re-referred to the Assembly Appropriations Committee. Here are the important changes:

- All hospitals shall implement performance indicators or measures from the CDC and HICPAC guidelines no later than one year from publication.
- Maintain a record for inspection that documents process-improvement interventions. This record should also include an annual summary of the risk-stratified infection rates.
- Mandatory participation in the hospital-acquired infection reporting system of the National Healthcare Safety Network of the CDC.
- All hospitals shall be responsible for the collection and risk-stratification of data submitted.
- Required reporting every two quarters, comparing with previous six months. Must include information on benchmarking also.
- Infectious Disease physicians, hospital epidemiologists and integrated healthcare systems have been added to the list of members for the multidisciplinary advisory panel.

This bill has passed the Senate and has been re-referred to the Assembly Appropriations Committee.

Habit is habit and not to be flung out of the window by any man, but coaxed downstairs a step at a time.
-- Mark Twain

To provide suggestions for this newsletter or ask questions, please contact:

Rachel Green RN
APIC Sierra Chapter Legislative Representative
Rachel.M.Green@kp.org