

## **Hospital-Acquired Infections: Quality Improvement**

Hazelyn Hunter

Lakeview College of Nursing

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Professor Travis Whisman

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Nursing is a profession of ever-changing standards and ways of doing things that impact how clients are cared for and outcomes are impacted. One such way that nursing impacts change and outcomes is through the use of quality improvement. The overall concept and intent of quality improvement is to enhance the processes that are beneficial for the client. This concept is used to ensure ongoing improvement by using research-based information and focuses on the overall quality. Research is conducted through quality-improvement studies that are frequently descriptive and measurable while being supported by existing data (Houser, 2023). The results of the research and quality improvement studies are deliberately calculated for the benefit of clinical groups (QSEN, 2020). Each research study conducted is peer-reviewed by external reviewers. Quality improvement (QI) and Quality and Safety Education for Nurses (QSEN) are related in a few ways. Both quality-improvement and QSEN strive for client care improvement and overall client outcomes (QSEN, 2020). The goal for QSEN is to improve client care by preparing nurses with accurate knowledge to better the overall safety and quality (QSEN, 2020). QSEN includes three different sections within each of the six categories. These sections are knowledge, skills and attitudes. Each of these sections provides methods to help enhance quality improvement. Some examples that relate to nursing from these three sections include describing approaches for changing care processes, using quality measures to understand performance, and valuing self and other contributions to outcomes of care in local settings (QSEN, 2020). A specific concern related to the nursing profession is hospital-acquired infections (HAIs). These infections may also be termed nosocomial infections which can affect many clients throughout the hospital setting. These infections result from hospitalized care which may lead to an extended care period or other extensive situations. HAIs can be prevented by using proper

techniques and hand hygiene for the safety of the clients. This topic is significant because these HAIs have the potential to be a life-or-death situation. There are many ways to monitor or improve HAIs, one of which is using research to gain perspective on current trends. One such article was done by McVey, et al. (2022) to study the impact of HAIs on patient care.

### **Article Summary**

This research discussed a process that was created during the COVID-19 surges. Research showed that during the COVID-19 pandemic 148 hospitals revealed a sudden increase in hospital-acquired infections which resulted from COVID-19 hospitalization (McVey, et al., 2022). This information led individuals to create the NSIQUI Toolkit which is made up of two documents. Zero Boards are used to track HAIs while being able to visualize data and trends. Report cards are also used to track information while also entering the data into the electronic health record. Specific staff members are chosen to audit the measures of each shift while also scoring them based on compliance. While enforcing the NSIQUI Toolkit, hospital-wide CLABSI rates were reduced by 19% and CAUTI rates reduced by 19.4% within a ten-month period hospitalization (McVey, et al., 2022). Research showed that healthcare workers reported more awareness and focus while working to prevent infection while using the NSIQUI Toolkit.

### **Introduction**

This research study was conducted to collect qualitative data to improve health care associated infections (HAIs) while in the hospital setting. The article expanded on methods to reduce HAIs specifically, central line-associated bloodstream infections (CLABSI), catheter-associated urinary tract infections (CAUTI), as well as hospital-acquired pressure injuries

(HAPIs) (McVey, et al., 2022). Examples of these methods to reduce HAIs included interactive whiteboards and audits each shift. The study is relevant to quality improvement because it addresses a major issue in the healthcare setting and conducted research while gathering data to implement a plan to reduce HAIs. This data that has been collected has been proven to decrease the number of HAIs while the NSIQI Toolkit is in place.

## **Overview**

This research article relates to quality improvement by providing information to healthcare individuals on how to reduce HAIs. The research shows that following the implementation process of National Database of the Nursing Quality Indicators (NDNQI) will reduce the quantity of HAIs (McVey, et al., 2022). If nurses and other health professionals take the time to use the whiteboards, complete audits and enter the correct information into the electronic health record the number of HAIs may decrease even more and increase overall quality improvement. This research used data to monitor outcomes of processes and the use of improvement to design and test changes that continuously improve quality and safety (QSEN, 2020).

## **Quality Improvement**

Based on this qualitative research article, this quality improvement information may be used in any healthcare setting such as hospitals, nursing homes, educational facilities and even home health. Most facilities have room for improvement while working to prevent infection. It is possible to make change as needed, while having the equal effect as well. For example, instead of acquiring an electronic whiteboard, a simple whiteboard will work or even a laminated piece of white paper (McVey, et al., 2022). Making shift audits to manage information is crucial

however, dedicating this task to a pair of individuals may help improve the job and data. Lastly, hand hygiene is always an important aspect of healthcare since it is the first step in prevention. Each of these changes made may improve quality HAIs. In addition, having a detailed communication plan including unit-based meetings, staff meetings, educational handouts, email communication and leader rounds will help enhance communication and quality improvement (McVey, et al., 2022). The preparation includes gaining supplies and assigning tasks. Managing and maintaining a system is the last way to improve care and is important to restore items that are needed to continue to enhance the overall quality improvement. This information does not need to have an impact on any institution if the funds are not available. Adjustments may be made that best suit the organization, and this should improve clients' perception of the organization while decreasing the risk of getting HAIs. Following protocol to reduce the risk of clients getting HAIs, essentially should leave the healthcare workers satisfied, since they have not caused harm to the client and essentially made the client feel good. This all increases the safety of the client while also increasing the nursing safety by protecting the client from HAIs and protecting the nursing staff both legally and from overall infection hazards.

## References

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McVey, et al. (2022). *Journal of Nursing Care Quality* 37(4):p 295-299. DOI: 10.1097/NCQ.0000000000000634.

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[https://qsen.org/competencies/pre-licensure-ksas/#quality\\_improvement](https://qsen.org/competencies/pre-licensure-ksas/#quality_improvement).