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NEWS RELEASE

ICUs from 350 Hospitals Reduce Central Line Bloodstream Infections by 35 Percent

CHICAGO – April 5, 2011 – An interim report released today by the Agency for Healthcare Research and Quality (AHRQ) shows a 35 percent reduction in central line-associated bloodstream infections (CLABSI) among adult intensive care units from over 350 hospitals that are participating in the national *On the CUSP: Stop BSI* project. CLABSI rates dropped from an average of 1.8 infections per 1,000 central line days to an average of 1.17 infections per 1,000 central line days in units that participated in the project.

The findings from this report show the initial results from hospitals within the first 22 states that have participated in the project. The project is led by the Health Research & Educational Trust (HRET), an affiliate of the American Hospital Association (AHA).

These results demonstrate the commitment of America’s hospitals to providing safer care for their patients,” said Rich Umbdenstock, AHA president and CEO.

At present, approximately 1,100 hospitals from 45 states, the District of Columbia, and Puerto Rico have enrolled in the national effort. Building on the success of an earlier Michigan Health & Hospital Association (MHA) Keystone Center project in dramatically reducing CLABSI rates in Michigan hospitals, AHRQ funded this national effort to accomplish the same goal.

“AHRQ’s vision of spreading a proven method of reducing these infections to all states has demonstrated its innovative leadership in patient safety, and HRET is proud to be part of this groundbreaking work along with Johns Hopkins and the MHA Keystone Center,” said John R. Combes, MD, AHA senior vice-president and senior fellow at HRET.

The *On the CUSP: Stop BSI* initiative, scheduled to continue through 2012, is already showing promising results. The AHA and state hospital associations across the country are actively promoting the project. Participating hospitals are exposed to a training model initially developed by Peter Pronovost, MD, PhD and others at the Johns Hopkins University Quality and Safety Research Group. Participating hospitals also receive data reports and implementation guidance from the MHA Keystone Center and collaborate with other participating hospitals in their state under the guidance of their state hospital association’s project lead.

“The encouraging results so far demonstrate the value of well-coordinated and evidence-based national improvement efforts,” said Maulik Joshi, DrPH, president of HRET.

This interim report is a result of AHRQ's efforts to support projects aimed at preventing healthcare-associated infections (HAIs), such as CLABSI, catheter-associated urinary tract infections, surgical site infections, ventilator-associated pneumonia, methicillin-resistant *Staphylococcus aureus*, and *Clostridium difficile*. The Department of Health and Human Services' *Action Plan to Prevent Healthcare-Associated Infections* is focusing attention on the need to dramatically reduce these infections. For additional information on the *Action Plan*, go to <http://www.hhs.gov/ash/initiatives/hai/actionplan/index.html>.

The report is available at: <http://www.ahrq.gov/qual/onthecusprpt/>

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Health Research & Educational Trust (HRET)

Founded in 1944, the Health Research & Educational Trust (HRET) is the not-for-profit research and education affiliate of the American Hospital Association (AHA). HRET's mission is to transform health care through research and education. HRET's applied research seeks to create new knowledge, tools, and assistance in improving the delivery of health care by providers in the communities they serve. For more information about HRET, visit www.hret.org.

Agency for Healthcare Research and Quality (AHRQ)

AHRQ's mission is to improve the quality, safety, efficiency, and effectiveness of health care for all Americans. The research sponsored, conducted, and disseminated by AHRQ provides information that helps people make better decisions about health care.