



HEALTH RESEARCH &  
EDUCATIONAL TRUST  
In Partnership with AHA

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## ***NEWS RELEASE***

### **AHRQ Awards Contract to HRET for National Expansion of Project to Reduce Catheter-Associated Urinary Tract Infections**

CHICAGO – November 2, 2011 – The Health Research & Educational Trust (HRET), an affiliate of the American Hospital Association, has been awarded a one-year, \$4 million contract by the Agency for Healthcare Research and Quality (AHRQ) to support a nationwide initiative to reduce catheter-associated urinary tract infections (CAUTI) in hospitals.

Currently, twelve states are participating in an AHRQ-funded program to implement infection reduction protocols and a comprehensive unit-based safety program designed to decrease CAUTI rates by at least 25 percent. The new AHRQ funding will help HRET extend this initiative nationally to help hospitals throughout the United States reduce unnecessary catheter usage and improve catheter maintenance—the two keys to reducing CAUTI rates.

Recent studies have found that about one-fourth of all hospitalized patients have a urinary catheter placed during their hospital stay. Infections that can result from urinary catheters are the most common type of hospital-acquired infection in U.S. hospitals.

For the national expansion, state hospital associations and other state-level patient safety leaders will engage participating hospitals seeking to implement the protocols to reduce or even eliminate CAUTIs. The hospitals will receive advice on effective prevention strategies from three organizations that have successfully reduced CAUTIs in hospitals in Michigan: the Michigan Health & Hospital Association Keystone Center for Patient Safety & Quality (MHA Keystone Center), the University of Michigan and St. John Hospital in Detroit. Additionally, expertise in implementing unit based safety programs will be provided by the Johns Hopkins University Quality and Safety Research Group, which performed seminal work in this area.

Drs. Sanjay Saint, from the University of Michigan, and Mohamad Fakih, from St John Hospital, will provide the project's clinical leadership and work closely with key professional groups such as the Society of Hospital Medicine (SHM), the Society for Healthcare Epidemiology of America (SHEA) and the Association for Professionals in Infection Control and Epidemiology (APIC) to build support for the project among key stakeholders.

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“HRET is honored and pleased that AHRQ has awarded this important project to us and our partners,” said Maulik S. Joshi, DrPH, president of HRET. “We believe that working with state hospital associations, clinical experts such as Doctors Saint and Fakih and professional groups such as SHM, SHEA and APIC will allow us to reduce CAUTI rates and improve the quality and efficiency of hospital care across the U.S.”

The AHRQ contract provides project support through August 14, 2012, with an option to extend the project through August 2015.

For more information on the project, visit <http://www.onthecuspstophai.org/>, AHRQ’s website: <http://www.ahrq.gov/qual/cusp.htm> or [www.hret.org](http://www.hret.org). For more information on AHRQ’s recent awards aimed at the fight against healthcare-associated infections, go to <http://www.ahrq.gov/news/press/pr2011/haify11pr.htm>.

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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](http://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.