



LA County Department of Public Health Issues Health Alert Leading up to Tenth Anniversary of 9/11

The Los Angeles County Department of Public Health (LACDPH) has issued a health alert to area hospitals. In an effort to detect potential acts of terrorism in the period leading up to and following the tenth anniversary of 9/11, the LACDPH is reminding emergency rooms and hospital health care providers to remain vigilant for potential cases of bioterrorism, chemical terrorism and nuclear/radiological terrorism. Health care providers are also reminded to report any suspected cases immediately to Public Health, as concerns regarding infection control, management of those exposed, diagnostic testing and specimen collection need to be

addressed.

Clues to potential terrorist incidents include:

- A single case of disease caused by uncommon agent (e.g. anthrax, smallpox)
- An unusual clinical presentation of a single patient (e.g. severe gastrointestinal or respiratory syndrome with rapid progression of illness without an explained cause should heighten suspicion)
- A higher morbidity and mortality with a common disease or syndrome (e.g. gastrointestinal or respiratory) or failure of such patient to respond to usual therapy
- Ill persons who seek treatment at the same time (point source)
- Simultaneous cluster of similar

illnesses

In the event of a suspected terrorism incident or suspected case, hospitals are urged to call LACDPH immediately and ask to speak with the Public Health Physician on Call. During business hours, call (213) 240-7941 and after hours please call (213) 974-1234. The full health alert message is available at <http://www.publichealth.lacounty.gov/acd/docs/HANsept11aniv.pdf>. For more information regarding terrorism agent and treatment guidelines, please visit <http://www.publichealth.lacounty.gov/acd/Bioterrorism/Terrorismagentinformation.pdf>.

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Next PDS University Session on Contract Performance is Aug. 30

PDS University presents *Is the Shift in Your Patient Mix Hurting or Helping Your Contract Performance?* This 20-minute interactive webinar will focus on

how you can use PDS data to prepare for the current shifts in treatment settings in the market.

This online session is set for Tuesday, Aug. 30, at 10:00 a.m.

(<https://www2.gotomeeting.com/register/202941242>).

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Patient Safety First Releases First-Year Results

In its first year, *Patient Safety First...a California Partnership for Health* reports that it has helped save 800 lives by working to prevent sepsis-related deaths. Launched in 2010, *Patient Safety First* is a groundbreaking three-year, \$6-million collaboration between the National Health Foundation, California's Regional Hospital Associations and Anthem Blue Cross to improve the consistency and quality of health care for Californians.

"*Patient Safety First* is one of the most challenging and potentially rewarding endeavors ever undertaken in the health care system," said Dr. Eugene Grigsby, president of the National Health Foundation, which verified the initial outcomes of the initiative. "It strives to engage California hospitals in learning collaborations with the

specific goal of improving patient safety and cost savings for those needing hospitalization."

The initiative, which brings together more than 160 participating hospitals from across the state, has led to:

- A 41 percent reduction in ventilator-associated pneumonia (VAP);
- A 25 percent reduction in central line blood stream infections (CLBSI);
- A 24 percent reduction in catheter-associated urinary tract infections (CAUTI); and
- A reduction in birth traumas and elective deliveries prior to 39 weeks gestation.

Early data suggest the *Patient Safety First* initiative in California has already resulted in a cost-avoidance of more than \$11 million. This is money that would have been used to care for patients

who would have developed sepsis and other hospital-acquired infections if they had not been able to avoid illness as a result of the shared learning made possible by the collaboration.

More than 1,600 participating clinicians and health care industry professionals have shared best practices that lead to safety and quality improvements through *Patient Safety First*.

Partners for *Patient Safety First...a California Partnership for Health* include:

- The National Health Foundation
- Anthem Blue Cross
- The three regional hospital associations of California: Southern California, San Diego & Imperial Counties, and Northern & Central California

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Course on Leadership Skills for Nurses Was a Sold-Out Success

HASC and Flex Ed's *Leadership Skills for the Registered Nurse* full-day educational program on Tuesday, Aug. 16 at the California Endowment in Los Angeles sold out. A total of 62 participants reviewed the key concepts of emotional intelligence, as well as how

to apply this trait to key nursing leadership skills.

The course was taught by Christine Horton, RN, who has been the chief clinical officer for Flex Ed for the last four years, and has more than 15 years of teaching experience as well as management

background as a perinatal director.

Attendees learned about emotional intelligence and the impact of emotions when making decisions as well as relating personal practice to the organization's nursing vision.

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Registration Open for Oct. 18 Seminar on Role of the Charge Nurse

Role of the Charge Nurse, scheduled for Oct. 18 at Verdugo Hills Hospital, will focus on advanced leadership strategies, communication techniques, priority setting and conflict management for the registered nurse who participates or plans to participate in the charge nurse role.

At the end of this course, which is presented by HASC and Flex

Ed, participants will be able to:

- Identify three key managerial functions of the charge nurse
- Describe how to assess patient care needs and match them with staff competence and ability
- Discuss how to manage conflict
- Explain the importance of relationship management skills in interdepartmental communication

The session will be led by Mark

Kaliher, RN, who has been teaching with Flex Ed for more than three years. Kaliher is formally trained in ER nursing, and has worked as a staff nurse and relief charge nurse.

Program cost is \$95 for HASC member hospitals. Online registration for the course is available at <http://www.cvent.com/d/ncqn3k>.

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