



The following letter and attachment was sent to Chief Executive Officers of hospitals and health plans and Chief Medical Officers of health plans in Michigan on February 23, 2007

Dear Executive:

Subject: Changes to the 2007 MH&SC and Leapfrog Group Surveys

To better serve the Michigan health care community, the Michigan Health and Safety Coalition (MH&SC) is making significant changes to its annual survey of patient safety practices in hospitals. The MH&SC has conducted the Joint Hospital Survey in conjunction with The Leapfrog Group (Leapfrog) since 2003, using one data collection tool for both surveys. This year, the surveys will be conducted separately and each will contain important content changes. Leapfrog will launch its national survey in Michigan and across the country on March 5, 2007. We will share with you the content and timeline for the new MH&SC survey as it is finalized.

Why are we doing this? The MH&SC has worked to improve patient safety and the quality of care in Michigan's hospitals since its inception in 2000. Last year we completed our fifth and most successful survey with over 82% of Michigan's acute care hospitals participating in the MH&SC Joint Hospital Survey. Our results show significant progress in many areas of care, yet the need for improvement remains. MH&SC intends to devote time this year to evaluating the purpose and focus of its survey to ensure that it meets Michigan's hospitals' needs and to devote resources to forming statewide workgroups to address known gaps in performance based on prior years' data. This new direction is outlined in greater detail in the attachment.

What about The Leapfrog Group survey? The MH&SC continues to support national efforts such as Leapfrog's in the development and implementation of evidence- and consensus-based practices and measurement. The MH&SC will continue to promote hospital participation in Leapfrog's survey by sending communications about Leapfrog's survey to Michigan's hospitals. In return, MH&SC will obtain data from the Leapfrog survey (and other valid national data sources as they become available) to use in its new initiatives. More information about the Leapfrog survey will be coming to you next week.

This year presents new opportunities for improvement in patient safety while meeting measurement and reporting challenges. The MH&SC looks forward to working with your hospital and the entire Michigan community on these very important issues.

Thank you in advance for your continued participation in patient safety surveys.

Sincerely,

Thomas Simmer, MD
Chairperson-President and CEO
Michigan Health and Safety Coalition

Attachment

Blue Cross Blue Shield of Michigan

DaimlerChrysler Corporation

Ford Motor Company

General Motors Corporation

International Union, UAW

Michigan Association of Health Plans

Michigan Consumer Health Care Coalition

Michigan Department of Community Health

Michigan Education Special Services Association

Michigan Health & Hospital Association

Michigan Nurses Association

Michigan Osteopathic Association

Michigan Pharmacists Association

Michigan State Medical Society

MPRO, Michigan's Healthcare Quality Improvement Organization

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The Past and Future of the Michigan Health and Safety Coalition Hospital Survey

The Michigan Health and Safety Coalition (MH&SC) survey of hospital patient safety practices was one of the first of its kind in the country and began in 2001 - before any national consensus-based patient safety practices existed. To fill this void, MH&SC convened Michigan-based expert clinical panels to develop the MH&SC hospital guidelines. Creating and maintaining our own guidelines is resource-intensive but made sense when no other source of consensus-based patient safety practices was available. Six years later, there is a much different environment where several sources of national patient safety guidelines exist, including the Joint Commission on the Accreditation of Healthcare Organizations (JCAHO), the Agency for Healthcare Research and Quality (AHRQ), the National Quality Forum (NQF) and others.

To address the continuing need for patient safety improvements, and recognizing the current availability of patient safety practice guidelines, the MH&SC has set a new direction for its annual survey. First, the MH&SC will leave the guideline development business. Instead, the MH&SC will focus its survey on patient safety issues that are of special interest in Michigan and are NOT being addressed by national organizations. These may include building on areas that have internal enthusiasm and ownership, e.g., transfer issues to rural hospitals, ICU staffing, infection control in ICUs, and focusing on gaps in patient safety performance observed in our 2006 survey (e.g., esophagectomy) and national data sources.

Since 2003, the MH&SC has collaborated with The Leapfrog Group (Leapfrog) on the Joint Hospital Survey. Two separate surveys were combined into one data collection tool and administered at the same time. In 2007, however, the surveys will be administered separately. Leapfrog has moved its schedule to the period March 5 through May 31 and entails many changes in content. The MH&SC has chosen to focus its resources on its new direction rather than expending scarce resources on survey development, collection and coordination.

The MH&SC supports the efforts of Leapfrog and other national organizations in the development and implementation of evidence- and consensus-based practices and measurement. The MH&SC will continue to promote hospital participation in Leapfrog's survey, as it has since 2003, by sending communications about Leapfrog's survey to Michigan's hospitals. In return for its assistance, the MH&SC will obtain data from the Leapfrog survey (and other valid national data sources as they become available) for supplementation of its databases and initiatives. This will provide MH&SC with a broader picture of hospital performance and more opportunities to develop implementation projects that address observed gaps in performance.

The MH&SC new direction in 2007 will be an opportunity to continue Michigan's leadership in improving patient safety. Thank you in advance for your support.