

January 11, 2002

Dear Hospital CEO:

The Michigan Health and Safety Coalition recently released the Hospital Referral Guidelines. On December 21, the guidelines, along with a brief announcement, were sent to your organization from the Michigan Health & Hospital Association, a member of the Coalition. The guidelines can also be found on the Coalition's Web site at www.mihealthandsafety.org.

The next phase of hospital involvement with the guidelines officially begins in February, when each hospital will be asked to participate in a web-based survey based on the guidelines.

One of the key benefits of this survey for hospitals is the consolidation of multiple efforts. The results of this survey will be used by the Leapfrog Group and Michigan health plans, which had planned to conduct their own separate surveys. Hospitals that participate in the survey will also receive blinded, aggregate information on how they compare to other similar Michigan hospitals and the state as a whole. It will also set the stage for ongoing hospital participation in implementation workgroups.

Several levels of reporting will be generated by results from this first survey and confidential raw data will be available to research staff supporting the Coalition. These results will help the Coalition identify issues that need to be addressed before moving forward with implementing the guidelines, such as funding and access to care in different geographic areas.

Health plans will have access to data for their HMO network (contracted) hospitals, eliminating the need for hospitals to separately collect and submit the required information. In addition, high-level hospital specific summary data will be made available for public use (e.g., consumers, Coalition, Leapfrog Group) later this year. Hospitals will have the opportunity to review and provide comment on their individual report prior to public release.

We are encouraging use of the guidelines, which are intended to support continuous improvement in the safety and quality of health care in Michigan. The guidelines include recommendations for staffing, patient volume, data collection and continuous improvement initiatives.

Because the guidelines are new and the survey is complex, we are planning three half-day educational seminars to help you gain a clear understanding of the guidelines, their purpose, how the data will be used, how to complete the online survey, and to answer any questions you may have. Leadership from the Coalition, from the MHA and from the Leapfrog Group will present information, answer questions and gather feedback at each session.

Two important pieces of information are required in response to this letter.

First, please complete and return the attached seminar registration form. Include the name, title, telephone number and e-mail address of each person who will attend one of the seminars and identify which seminar they will attend.

Second, identify the contact person at your organization who should receive future survey materials. Survey information as well as a link to the survey and a unique institutional password will be sent via e-mail to the designated individual.

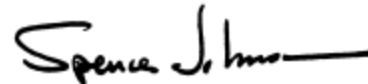
By January 25, 2002 FAX survey respondent forms to Chris Goeschel at the MHA. Fax Number: 517-323-0946.

To ensure broad representation, this letter has been sent to chief executive officers, chief medical officers, and quality management directors. If you have questions regarding the survey or seminars, please contact Chris Goeschel at (517) 886-8384 or cgoeschel@lans.mha.org.

Sincerely,



Marianne Udow
Sr. Vice President
Blue Cross Blue Shield of Michigan
Chair, Michigan Health & Safety Coalition



Spencer Johnson
President
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Attachments (2)