



NEWS RELEASE

Women & Children's Hospital of Buffalo Receives \$50,000 Award for Excellence in Medication-Use Safety from ASHP Foundation

Annual award, sponsored by Cardinal Health Foundation, encourages pharmacists to lead system-wide improvements in medication safety

Las Vegas (Dec. 7, 2009) — The American Society of Health-System Pharmacists (ASHP) Research and Education Foundation announced last night that the Women & Children's Hospital of Buffalo, a Kaleida Health facility in Buffalo, N.Y., is the recipient of the 2009 Award for Excellence in Medication-Use Safety. The award, sponsored by the Cardinal Health Foundation, is the only national honor that recognizes a pharmacist-led multidisciplinary team for implementing significant institution-wide improvements in medication safety.

At a ceremony held during the 2009 ASHP Midyear Clinical Meeting and Exhibition in Las Vegas, the Women & Children's Hospital of Buffalo received \$50,000 to further promote medication-use safety. Two award finalists, Henry Ford Hospital in Detroit, Mich., and Rex Healthcare in Raleigh, N.C., received awards of \$10,000 each.

"In administering this awards program, the ASHP Foundation seeks to share the success stories of the winner and finalists so practitioners across the country can benefit and learn from their experiences," said Stephen J. Allen, ASHP Foundation executive vice president. "The primary goal of this program is to provide opportunities for others to improve the quality and safety of medication management."

The Women & Children's Hospital of Buffalo, a Kaleida Health facility in Buffalo, N.Y., was named this year's award recipient in recognition of its development of a safe IV medication delivery system and intensive training program for both its pediatric and adult patients. The system incorporates an infusion pump with safety software; a customized drug library; a comprehensive drug list with descriptive naming; standardized dosing; and limited drug concentrations. The system also uses wireless technology to provide real-time updates and data for continuous quality improvement; and uses additional safeguards to protect against medication delivery problems that can go undetected by technology.

The comprehensive educational and training program, accompanying policies and procedures and the user-friendly design of the IV medication delivery system resulted in 99 percent compliance and use of the system. This represented a 60 percent increase compared to other facilities in the Kaleida health system. These enhancements also resulted in a sustainable 50 percent decrease in preventable IV medication errors, and the real-time data updates are used to provide insight on how medications are used and where errors can occur.

This initiative showcases the vital role that pharmacists, nurses and physicians play in ensuring that new technology is designed to optimize safe medication administration to protect children, one of our most vulnerable patient populations.

“Improving medication safety for our patients was the goal of this project from start to implementation,” said Kelly A. Michienzi, Pharm.D., clinical pharmacy coordinator and co-chair of the Pediatric Pharmacy & Therapeutics Sub-Committee at Women & Children’s Hospital of Buffalo. “The entire team continues to work to meet the high standards we set for ourselves. It is an honor to be recognized by experts in medication safety. We are grateful to the ASHP Foundation and the Cardinal Health Foundation for this award.”

One of this year’s two award finalists, **Henry Ford Hospital**, a part of the Henry Ford Health System in Detroit, Mich., was recognized for its implementation of a system-wide, pharmacist-directed anticoagulant service (PDAS) to improve patient safety.

Patients who participated in the hospital’s anticoagulation service were more likely to follow up with an anticoagulation clinic within 5 to 7 days of their discharge and required 80 percent fewer dose adjustments upon their first visit to an outpatient anticoagulation clinic. These patients also experienced a 26 percent reduction in anticoagulation-related readmissions within 30 days of discharge.

This year’s second finalist, **Rex Healthcare** in Raleigh, N.C., was recognized for its five-year initiative, “Stop the Traveling Clot,” which focused on preventing venous thromboembolism (VTE) among its patients. The initiative featured clinician education, the development of a unique VTE assessment tool and risk scoring system and clinician recommendations for preventing VTEs.

The “Stop the Traveling Clot” initiative changed the hospital’s standard practice to include routine VTE risk assessments for all inpatients at the point of admission and continuously throughout the hospital stay. In doing so, the initiative increased the use of mechanical and pharmacologic measures (by 53 percent and 43 percent, respectively) to prevent VTE and decreased the number of VTE readmissions within 30 days by 12.6 percent.

“Medication mistakes take a significant human and financial toll – injuring 1.5 million and costing \$3.5 billion annually,” said Dianne Radigan, director of community relations for Cardinal Health. “This year’s ASHP Foundation Award of Excellence honorees again prove that pharmacists can play a critical role in working with other health care providers to improve the overall quality and cost effectiveness of our nation’s health care system.”

The award recipient and finalists were chosen by an interdisciplinary panel of judges who evaluated all applicants. Finalists were chosen based on the initiative’s scope; planning and implementation; measurable outcomes and impact; innovation and applicability to other health care organizations. Judges visited each finalist’s site before selecting the award recipient. Selection panel members are:

Hedy Cohen, R.N., B.S.N., M.S.
Vice President
Institute for Safe Medication Practices
Huntingdon Valley, Penn.

Kathy Crea, Pharm.D., BCPS
Medication Safety Coordinator
OhioHealth, Clinical Resource Management
Columbus, Ohio

Sherry Danello, R.N., M.S.N., CNAA
Vice President, Patient Care Services/Chief Nursing Officer for System
St. Joseph’s/Candler Health System
Savannah, Ga.

Andrew S. Dunn, M.D., FACP
Director, Hospitalist Service
Mount Sinai Medical Center
New York, N.Y.

E. Robert Feroli, Jr., Pharm.D., FASHP
Medication Safety Officer
Johns Hopkins Hospital
Baltimore, Md.

Joanne Kowiatek, R.Ph., M.P.M.
Pharmacy Manager, Medication Patient Safety
University of Pittsburgh Medical Center Presbyterian
Pittsburgh, Penn.

-more-

Related Resources

The Award for Excellence in Medication-Use Safety was established in 2004 to recognize on a national level pharmacy professionals who have assumed a leadership role in promoting safety in the medication-use process. For more information regarding this award, please visit our Web site at www.ashpfoundation.org/medexcellence.

About the ASHP Research and Education Foundation

The ASHP Research and Education Foundation was established in 1968 by the American Society of Health-System Pharmacists as a nonprofit, tax-exempt organization. Our mission is to improve the health and well-being of patients in hospitals and health systems through appropriate, safe and effective medication use. We conduct leadership, education and research activities that foster the coordination of interdisciplinary medication management leading to optimal patient outcomes. Emphasis is given to programs that will have a major impact on advancing pharmacy practice in hospitals and health systems, thereby improving public health. To learn more about the ASHP Foundation, visit www.ashpfoundation.org.

About the Cardinal Health Foundation

With the support of Cardinal Health's (NYSE:CAH) 30,000 employees worldwide, the Cardinal Health Foundation supports local, national and international programs that improve health care quality and build healthy communities. The Cardinal Health Foundation also offers grants to encourage employee service to the community and works through international agencies to donate much-needed medical supplies and funding to those who need them in times of disaster. To learn more, visit CardinalHealth.com/community.

Contact Information

Cynthia L. LaCivita, Pharm.D.
Director of Education and Special Programs
ASHP Foundation
301-664-8609
clacivita@ashp.org

Bethany Coulter
Director of Communications
ASHP Foundation
301-664-8795
bcoulter@ashp.org

###