

Massachusetts Coalition
for the
Prevention of Medical Errors



Highlights of the Coalition's Activities and Accomplishments

Advising Policy Makers in Promoting Patient Safety

- * The Coalition is often called on to serve on state sponsored expert panels and to serve in an advisory role on the development of state initiatives.
- * The Coalition participated actively in the Patient Safety Committee of the Massachusetts Health Care Quality and Cost Council in its initiative to bring Patient Safety Programs to all settings of health care, and has continued to work on this initiative with the Massachusetts Secretary of Health and Human Services and the Commissioner of the state's new Center for Health Information and Analysis (CHIA).
- * The Coalition serves as the statutory advisory committee to the Betsy Lehman Center of Patient Safety and Medical Error Reduction

"I view the Coalition as one of the true pioneers in promoting patient safety! The Coalition has helped guide public policy toward improving patient safety, and played a key role in drafting legislation that created the Betsy Lehman Center for Patient Safety. In addition, the Coalition has been a terrific resource to the Center in addressing complex issues and guiding its research agenda. The work of the Coalition has put Massachusetts health care in the forefront of the patient safety initiatives."

- Senator Richard T. Moore, Senate President, Pro Tempore

Leading Statewide Initiatives and Partnering for Transformation

Improvement Collaboratives

- * 100% of acute care hospitals, and many non-acute hospitals, participated in the Coalition's Infection Prevention Collaboratives, addressing many categories and frequent and harmful infections, including an initiative in which 27 hospitals reduced the rate of *C. difficile* infections by 25%.
- * Infection prevention collaboratives in recent years have included more than 70 long-term care facilities, partnering with 18 hospitals in their communities.
- * 90% of the state's acute care hospitals participated in Coalition-led improvement collaboratives for reconciling medications and timely and reliable communication of critical test results, aims which later became Joint Commission National Patient Safety Goals for all hospitals nationally. The Coalition, with the participating hospital teams, developed best practices and toolkits for implementation made available at no cost on the Coalition's website.
- * Collaboratives include learning sessions for front-line multi-disciplinary staff, audio conferences, and listserves, to provide opportunities to learn from faculty and colleagues.

Co-Chair of the Massachusetts Care Transitions Forum and Care Transitions Steering Committee

- * In partnership with many organizations in the state, the Coalition has worked to improve care coordination across transitions of care, reducing avoidable readmissions and improving the patient's and family's experience after a hospital discharge.
- * The partners offer learning sessions, audio conferences, and other opportunities to motivate support, measure, and coordinate improvement activities. More than 50 cross-continuum teams are now involved in this work, first organized as STAAR (STate Action on Avoidable Re-hospitalizations). Teams include hospitals, long-term care facilities, home health agencies, physician office practices, elder service agencies and others.

Patient Safety and Malpractice Reform

**** Proactive Reduction in Outpatient Malpractice: Improving Safety, Efficiency, Satisfaction - PROMISES***

In partnership with several member organizations, the Coalition is working to develop, pilot, and disseminate a patient safety program for primary care practices. This initiative to reduce malpractice risk in primary care practices is supported by a grant from AHRQ.

**** Massachusetts Alliance for Communication and Resolution following Medical Injury***

The Coalition is on the leadership team of this alliance of patient advocacy groups, teaching hospitals and their insurers, and statewide provider organizations working toward transparent communication, sincere apologies and fair compensation in cases of avoidable medical harm.

Engaging Consumers

In 2008 a new Massachusetts state law required that Patient and Family Advisory Councils (PFAC) be established at all acute, chronic and long-term care hospitals to serve as the “patient voice” in hospital organization decision-making. The Coalition supported the formation of these councils by:

- * participating in the state’s public hearing process to advocate for a pace of implementation to support effective councils
- * creating an audio-conference series, with a multi-stakeholder program committee including consumer advocates and hospitals, to support the successful implementation of PFACs statewide

Sharing Patient Safety Knowledge and Best Practices

Educational forums have been an integral component of Coalition activities since its inception. During the past 15 years, nearly 10,000 member and non-member health care practitioners, hospital leaders, advocates and consumers have attended 65 learning sessions and leadership workshops, or participated in one of about 60 audio conferences or coaching calls. In addition to the collaboratives already listed, these cover a wide range of topics, including leadership for patient safety, accountability, medication safety in ambulatory settings and in long-term care, communication strategies, anticoagulation management, and other topics.

“The focus on education and support of front line providers in the practice of small tests of change across the continuum of care has launched improvement initiatives that have advanced safety for patients across Massachusetts.”

- Jane Franke, BCBSMA.

Monthly membership meetings

The Coalition’s monthly meetings provide an opportunity for members to hear presentations about effective patient safety innovations and strategies from patient safety leaders, updates on state and federal legislative and regulatory issues and actions, reports on ongoing and proposed collaborations, and upcoming federal and state funding opportunities. Meetings also provide the opportunity to improve planning and programs by communication among the stakeholders, with providers, regulatory agencies, payers, and consumers participating directly in these discussions.

“The Coalition is doing great work. I have told our senior leader that probably nowhere in the country is there a regular gathering of quality and safety minds that equals your Coalition meetings. Good for Massachusetts.”

- Dr. Jim Butterick, former CMO, Cape Cod Health System

Monthly newsletter

The Coalition’s monthly report provides a comprehensive compilation of patient safety and medical error updates, studies and resources for improving safety, including a detailed summary of prior meeting presentations and discussions.

“Foremost is my sense that the Coalition has kept the flame of safety burning, which is no easy task in these days of 15 minutes of fame, followed by the shifting of attention to the newest medical news or initiative or organizational endeavor.

The gathering together of representatives of hospitals, physicians, health plans, nurses, pharmacists, purchasers, and patient advocates, to discuss, in a non-confrontational environment, focusing on specific measure that can be taken to improve patient safety and avoid errs, has been enormously helpful. I congratulate the coalition, and you, for keeping it going for 15 years.”

- Dolores Mitchell, Executive Director, Massachusetts Group Insurance Commission