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Joint Commission Announces New 2012 National Patient Safety Goal for CAUTI

The Joint Commission has approved one new National Patient Safety Goal for 2012 that focuses on catheter-associated urinary tract infection (CAUTI) for the hospital and critical access hospital accreditation programs. There are no new NPSGs for the other accreditation programs.

CAUTI is the most frequent type of healthcare-acquired infection (HAI), and represents as much as 80 percent of HAIs in hospitals. The new goal, NPSG.07.06.01, states: Implement evidence-based practices to prevent indwelling catheter-associated urinary tract infections (CAUTI). (This goal is not applicable to pediatric populations).

The goal was one of two HAI-related goals recommended to The Joint Commission in July 2010 by the Patient Safety Advisory Group. The first potential goal focused on ventilator associated pneumonia (VAP), but input from the field review and from The Joint Commission's Hospital and Long Term Care Professional and Technical Advisory Committees (PTACs) indicated that the lack of a nationally agreed-upon definition made it difficult to consistently identify and measure VAP.

In addition, the potential CAUTI goal was originally proposed to be applicable to the long-term care program, but input from the field review suggested that the EPs in the proposed NPSG were based on research in hospitals, and that other requirements may be more appropriate for long-term care settings. The field review of the potential NPSGs was conducted in December 2010 through January 2011.