



Intermountain Healthcare Honored by the CDC As a Model of How to Prevent Blood Clots in Hospitalized Patients

Eight health systems and hospitals honored nationally

SALT LAKE CITY, UTAH, USA, March 30, 2016 /EINPresswire.com/ -- [Intermountain Healthcare](#) is one of eight health systems and hospitals nationwide that were recognized this week by the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention for implementing protocols that have helped to reduce the rate of venous thromboembolism (VTE), or blood clots, among hospital patients.

Intermountain was awarded the CDC's HA-VTE Prevention Champion award, which honors the ongoing research and best-practice protocols within Intermountain to prevent hospitalized patients from developing blood clots.

Besides Intermountain, other national VTE champions include: Mayo Clinic, Northwestern Memorial Hospital in Chicago, and Johns Hopkins Hospital in Baltimore.

The purpose of the CDC's recognition program is to encourage other hospitals and health systems to adopt best practices created by the eight VTE champions. The CDC estimates that up to 900,000 venous thromboembolism events occur in the U.S. each year, resulting in as many as 100,000 premature deaths.

VTE-associated healthcare costs may also be as high as \$10 billion a year. Without appropriate prevention, it's estimated that as many as 15 percent of hospitalized medical patients will develop hospital-acquired blood clots.

National guidelines recommend VTE-risk assessment protocols for hospitalized medical patients, but they aren't uniformly followed across the nation. Therefore, the CDC began the Healthcare-Associated Venous Thromboembolism Prevention Champion program to recognize health care systems and hospitals that are working to reduce VTE rates and encourage other hospitals to adopt their protocols and best practices.

"Healthcare-associated VTE is a serious and growing public health problem," says Thomas Frieden, MD, MPH, director of the CDC. "These challenge winners saved lives by implementing innovative VTE prevention strategies in their institutions. We can all learn from their ideas and work together to protect patients from developing deadly blood clots."

As part of the protocol, Intermountain Healthcare hospitals utilize an electronic tool that resides in the electronic patient record, which scans the medical record of hospitalized patients daily.

"If a patient is found to be at risk for blood clots, and is not receiving an appropriate medicine to prevent clots, the hospitalist caring for the patient is sent a secure text message alerting them to assure best care is being given," said Scott Woller, MD, co-director of Intermountain Medical Center's Thrombosis Clinic, and principle investigator of the project.

The protocol was launched at Intermountain Medical Center and LDS Hospital, and then implemented at Intermountain's Park City Medical Center, Utah Valley, McKay-Dee, and Riverton hospitals. The initiative is expected to expand across the entire 22-hospital Intermountain Healthcare system.

As part of the initiative, Intermountain hospitalist physicians receive a monthly report on their response to the alerts, their performance, and patient outcomes. Intermountain partnered with Twine Clinical Consulting, LLC, and Medical Impact Ventures, LLC, to create the proprietary audit-and-assessment tools used in the initiative.

"The expertise of Twine Clinical was invaluable in generating the monthly feedback to the individual physicians in an easy-to-use dashboard format that gives them real-time data regarding their personal performance and the resolution of blood clots among patients under their care," Dr. Woller said.

"This groundbreaking work by Dr. Woller and his colleagues shows why Intermountain Healthcare is so effective in improving care and reducing costs," said Mark Ott, MD, chief medical director of Intermountain's Salt Lake Valley hospitals. "By using data to track the care we provide and increase our adherence to proven care processes our patients get better outcomes and avoid the complications that threaten their safety and increase their costs."

The CDC HA-VTE Champions' work will be posted on the CDC's website, shared by the U.S. Agency for Healthcare Research and Quality, and displayed at the 2016 Thrombosis and Hemostasis Summit of North America in April in Chicago.

The Champions range from a small community hospital to some of the country's largest health systems, and they represent both rural and urban areas. Together they cared for more than 450,000 patients admitted to hospitals across the United States in 2014.

They were able to improve VTE prevention within their institutions and organizations by implementing innovative, effective and sustainable VTE prevention strategies, including:

- Engaging teams of different healthcare experts to support and promote prevention activities.
- Informing patients and providers about the need for and benefits of VTE prevention.
- Using technology (such as electronic risk assessment and clinical decision support tools and alerts) to ensure that all patients are assessed for their risk for VTE and bleeding.
- Providing real-time feedback, scorecards and dashboards for providers and organizations to monitor performance and identify areas for improvement.

For more information and to see profiles of the winners and their initiatives, please visit <http://www.cdc.gov/ncbddd/dvt/ha-vte-challenge.html>.

Intermountain Healthcare is a not-for-profit health system based in Salt Lake City. Transforming healthcare through high quality and sustainable costs, Intermountain strives to help people live the healthiest lives possible. For more information, visit www.intermountainhealthcare.org.

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