**Solution:** Local Nursing Homes Assist in Improving Vaccination Rates

**Organization:** Washington County Hospital

**Type:** Acute Care

**Primary Contact:** Kathy Morrisey RN, MA, CIC, Director, Infection Control

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**IDENTIFICATION:**

Obtaining an accurate vaccination history on admission to the hospital can be a challenge, especially in the elderly patient population. This information is important in ensuring that eligible patients receive influenza and pneumococcal vaccinations as part of their treatment plan during hospitalizations.

As the only acute care facility in Washington County and ten local private long term care facilities in the area, Washington County Hospital provides acute care to a large number of long term care residents. Maintenance of accurate vaccination records and routine regular vaccination of residents is required in long term care. During the admission assessment of long term care residents, nursing staff frequently resort to contacting the nursing home to verify the vaccination status because many residents are uncertain of their status or can not respond appropriately due to their clinical condition.

**PROCESS:**

Washington County Hospital initiated several new processes to improve vaccination compliance in February 2008. These included:

- Moving administration of vaccines to the beginning of the hospitalization, instead of the day of discharge
- Initiating a hospital approved vaccination protocol followed by nursing staff
- Requesting nursing homes to send the vaccination record to the hospital along with the resident

**SOLUTION:**

As a result of the request for documentation of the nursing home resident’s vaccination history, an Infection Control Coordinator at one of the nursing homes decided to include this information on all of the residents’ armbands. This creative solution eliminated the nursing home staff from having to locate and include additional documentation in the transfer packet and provided the hospital staff with accurate vaccination information that is critical to developing the plan of care for the resident.

Since this was one process initiated along with other changes to improve our compliance rate, it is difficult to measure its effect. However, it certainly is a simple and creative way to solve the problem of obtaining an accurate vaccination history.

This innovative idea was shared with the other nursing homes in the area and recommended for implementation. One additional facility implemented this recommendation as a patient safety and quality initiative.