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Robert A. Malson
President

January 9, 2009

Pierre Vigilance, MD, MPH
Director
District of Columbia Department of Health
825 North Capitol Street, NE, 4th Floor
Washington, DC 20002

Dear Dr. Vigilance:

Thank you for giving the District of Columbia Hospital Association (DCHA) the opportunity to provide a second round of comments on the proposed reporting requirements and procedures for minimizing patient infection by methicillin-resistant *Staphylococcus aureus* (MRSA). Our hospitals appreciate your inclusion of so many of our requests submitted during the initial proposed rulemaking process and believe that the revised rule will provide additional guidance to providers as they work to ensure the best possible care.

After a comprehensive review of the revised regulations, our hospitals believe that there remains only one unresolved issue with the rule as written. As stated in our original request, we urge you to reconsider the language of the following section of the proposed rule:

Section 2038.99

All long-term care facilities in the District are not hospital-based. The definition of long-term care facility in the proposed language does not acknowledge this fact, thereby leaving many facilities whose patients would benefit from these regulations unaffected. For these reasons, we recommend the definition of long-term care facility in the proposed language be changed to the following: “a *facility* intended for the treatment of patients who require extended stays to complete their treatment.”

DCHA strongly believes that the proposed MRSA regulations must be applicable to all relevant facilities so that the Department’s goal to collect needed data and ensure the quality of care for all patients may be fully met. In its current state, however, the rule fails to be as inclusive as necessary to reach that goal. We urge you to reconsider the section outlined above before releasing the next iteration of this rule.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Bob', is written over a light blue horizontal line.

cc: Rudolf Schreiber, Assistant Attorney General, Office of the General Counsel
Robin Diggs, MPH, Epidemiologist, Bureau of Epidemiology and Health Risk Assessment, District of Columbia Department of Health

Children’s National Medical Center • George Washington University Hospital • Georgetown University Hospital • Howard University Hospital
Malcolm Grow Medical Center, Andrews AFB, MD • National Naval Medical Center, Bethesda, MD • National Rehabilitation Hospital
Providence Hospital • Psychiatric Institute of Washington • Saint Elizabeths Hospital, D.C. Department of Mental Health
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