



The Commonwealth of Massachusetts
Executive Office of Health and Human Services
Department of Public Health
Bureau of Health Care Safety and Quality
99 Chauncy Street, 11th Floor, Boston, MA 02111
617-753-8000

DEVAL L. PATRICK
GOVERNOR

TIMOTHY P. MURRAY
LIEUTENANT GOVERNOR

JUDYANN BIGBY, MD
SECRETARY

JOHN AUERBACH
COMMISSIONER

Circular Letter: DHCQ 10-02-528

TO: Chief Executive Officers, Acute Care Hospitals

FROM: Alice Bonner, PhD, RN
Bureau Director

DATE: February 4, 2010

RE: Acute Care Hospital Survey Visits – Infection Prevention and Control

The purpose of this letter is to inform you that the Department of Public Health (the Department) through the Division of Health Care Quality, will be initiating focused surveys of all acute care hospitals in Massachusetts. This activity is part of the statewide Infection Prevention and Control Program. Surveys will be specific to infection prevention and control, and will be conducted in accordance with Massachusetts Hospital Licensure regulations,¹ which incorporate the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS), Condition of Participation for Infection Control.² The surveys will commence in early March 2010, however, individual surveys will be unannounced.

The methodologies by which Department staff will be conducting assessments include observations, interviews, and document/record reviews. The attached document, entitled *Infection Prevention and Control – Regulations, Interpretive Guidelines and Procedures*, provides the specific regulations, associated guidelines, and relevant best practices³ that will be used to determine program compliance. These documents will also be available on the Department website at www.mass.gov/dph/dhcq under Health Care Quality Topics by selecting Circular Letters, Hospitals, and Healthcare Associated Infections.

At the conclusion of the survey a written statement of deficiencies (SOD) will be sent to the hospital, if applicable. The SOD identifies practices that do not meet regulatory compliance and require corrective actions. The hospital must then submit a plan of correction to the Department addressing those issues determined to be non-compliant.

Thank you for your continuing efforts to reduce the risk of healthcare-associated infections to patients receiving care in Massachusetts' hospitals. If you have any questions, please contact: Gail Palmeri at 617-753-8230 or e-mail gail.palmeri@state.ma.us.

cc: Massachusetts Hospital Association

¹ Hospital Licensure authority can be found at M.G.L. Chapter 111, Section 51, and Hospital Licensure Regulations at 105 CMR 130.000.

² The CMS Infection Control Condition of Participation can be found at 42 CFR 482.42.

³ Prevention and Control of Healthcare-Associated Infections in Massachusetts, Part I: Final Recommendations of the Expert Panel can be found at: http://www.mass.gov/Eeohhs2/docs/dph/patient_safety/haipcp_final_report_pt1.pdf