

Day Kimball Healthcare is very pleased to report we have made great strides in reducing our number of *C. difficile* infections in the past year. With hard work and a very effective multidisciplinary team, we have decreased our number of infections by more than half in 2016 from 2015.

At Day Kimball Healthcare, we take our patients' health and safety very seriously, so when we saw a rise in our rates of *C. difficile* infections, we knew this was something that we needed to address immediately and from all perspectives. Our first step was to develop a leadership group to make *C. difficile* reduction a priority and to work on finding the methods that would be most effective to reduce our rates.

In 2014, Day Kimball Healthcare started our Antimicrobial Stewardship Program. The goal of this program is to decrease the use of unnecessary antibiotics, and the reduction in improper antibiotic use has the effect of decreasing the risk of developing *C. difficile* infection. Our pharmacy, in conjunction with our Infectious Disease physician, now closely monitors antibiotic use to ensure our patients are receiving the right antibiotic for the appropriate length of time and we have noticed many positive changes in the prescribing of antibiotics as well as a decrease rate of *C. difficile* infections.

Another of our first major improvements made within the hospital was to change the cleaning product that was being used in our patient care areas. The new product that we are using is effective in killing the *C. difficile* spores whereas our previous product was not. This means we are now able to provide a cleaner and safer environment for our patients and staff.

Staff education played a major role in our infection rate reduction along with the development of a "Diarrhea Decision Tree" used to assist physicians in deciding if testing would be appropriate for that patient. This has been very effective reducing infections, and has increased awareness of *C. difficile* infections both within the hospital as well as in our community.

Day Kimball Healthcare plans to continue to focus on the continued reduction of *C. difficile* infections as well as other Healthcare-Associated Infections. We are very proud of all the hard work that has gone into keeping Day Kimball Healthcare's other HAI rates below state and national averages, and plan to continue on this path. The health and safety of our patients, staff, and community are of the utmost importance to Day Kimball Healthcare, and we will continue to focus on the prevention of all HAIs going forward.