



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE: February 1, 2012

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**BETH ISRAEL DEACONESS MEDICAL CENTER AMONG FIRST-EVER HONOREES
FOR NATIONAL AWARD ON PROGRESS IN ELIMINATING INFECTIONS**

BOSTON – The US Department of Health and Human Services has named Beth Israel Deaconess Medical Center among the first-ever awardees in the National Awards Program to Recognize Progress in Eliminating Healthcare-Associated Infections.

The awards focus on central line infections and ventilator-associated pneumonia, two of the deadliest and most expensive hospital-acquired infections. Preventing hospital-acquired infections (HAI) represents a major national priority for the government and health care reform.

HHS selected only 10 hospitals nationwide that demonstrated major progress in reducing both central line infections and ventilator-associated pneumonia. BIDMC is the only hospital in New England to be selected for prevention of both ventilator-associated pneumonia and central line infections.

“When we announced the awards program we thought we might receive 25 or 30 applications, but we had more than 350 so the competition was excellent,” Pamela Lipsett, MD, President of the Society of Critical Care Medicine (SCCM), said during a visit with BIDMC leaders, including President and CEO Kevin Tabb, MD. “Everyone here should be incredibly proud of this important recognition for your impressive work.”

SCCM partnered with HHS to develop the awards program.

HAIs are infections acquired while patients are receiving medical treatment for other conditions. At any given time, according to HHS, one in every 20 patients has an infection related to their hospital care. These infections lead to the loss of tens of thousands of lives and cost the U.S. health care system billions of dollars each year. In addition, HAIs can have devastating emotional, financial and medical consequences.

Lipsett, who is Co-Director of the Surgical Intensive Care Units at Johns Hopkins University Schools of Medicine and Nursing in Baltimore, toured the BIDMC ICUs and congratulated staff members on the improvements that include:

- A drop of more than 85 percent in BIDMC's rate of central line infections since 2004;
- A drop of 88 percent in BIDMC's rate of ventilator-associated pneumonia since 2006.

"When you do the math, we have prevented more than 1,000 of these deadly infections," said Michael Howell, MD MPH, Director of Critical Care Quality at BIDMC's Silverman Institute for Healthcare Quality and Safety. "This represents hundreds of lives and tens of millions of dollars saved."

Howell praised the collaborative work that has resulted in this progress.

"This represents an exceptionally effective partnership between ICU clinicians, the experts in infection control, hospital epidemiology and the hospital," he said. "One of the astounding things about this is that hundreds of people have contributed to this success – nurses, doctors, respiratory therapists, pharmacists, and infection control practitioners. They have done it at the bedside, in rounds and in committee meetings – day by day, month by month, year by year."

Reducing central line infections and ventilator-associated pneumonia cases have had other positive consequences, said Howell, including a 35 percent increase in patient throughput (patients entering and exiting the ICU) directly tied to the decrease in ventilator-associated pneumonia. That increase in patient throughput allowed BIDMC to scrap plans to build a new ICU estimated to cost \$6 million.

Beth Israel Deaconess Medical Center is a patient care, teaching and research affiliate of Harvard Medical School, and currently ranks third in National Institutes of Health funding among independent hospitals nationwide. BIDMC is clinically affiliated with the Joslin Diabetes Center and is a research partner of Dana-Farber/Harvard Cancer Center. BIDMC is the official hospital of the Boston Red Sox. For more information, visit www.bidmc.org.

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