

## Antimicrobial Stewardship Profile: Bluewater Health



**Bluewater Health is a community hospital with 326 acute care beds.**

With close to 2,500 staff and state of the art facilities opening in 2010, Bluewater Health cares for the residents of Sarnia-Lambton providing an array of services including:

- Allied Health Care
- Ambulatory Care
- Complex Continuing Care
- Specialized Acute Care



**Champions (L-R):** Dr. Chris Greensmith, Chief of Staff; Helen Shaw, Manager, Infection Control & Prevention; Andrea Wist, Director of Pharmacy; Gayathri Radhakrishnan, Lead ASP Pharmacist.

### Why an Antimicrobial Stewardship Program (ASP)?

#### Exemplary health care experiences for patients and families—every time

The antimicrobial stewardship program at Bluewater Health was created in response to a *Clostridium difficile* outbreak that was thought to be partly linked to overuse of fluoroquinolones. The project was spearheaded by the Department of Pharmacy, and with the support of Dr. Chris Greensmith (Head of Infection Control and former Medical Officer of Health for the Lambton Health Unit), it was initiated in early 2011.

The program was allotted up-front funding for a 0.5 full time equivalent pharmacist who, along with Dr. Greensmith, Andrea Wist, the Director of Pharmacy, an infection control nurse and a medical laboratory technologist, formed the antimicrobial stewardship committee. The committee implemented the program using two proactive interventions: prospective audit with feedback and formulary restriction.

### Success without an in-house infectious diseases physician

Since Bluewater Health does not have an infectious diseases physician on staff, antimicrobial stewardship has been a collaborative effort. The infectious diseases physician at Windsor Regional Hospital assisted in the development of antimicrobial guidelines. Bluewater Health pharmacists rotate through an ASP position, making recommendations related to pharmacokinetics and treatment duration for all antimicrobial orders. The ASP pharmacist also provides renal dose adjustments for select antimicrobials and reviews restricted antimicrobials for appropriate prescribing based on indication. Daily interactions with the medical and nursing staff take place to review recommendations.

Getting initial buy-in from all pharmacists was challenging. Many staff pharmacists felt they did not have sufficient experience in stewardship, since they had no specialized infectious diseases training. To address this issue, an ASP pharmacist from a tertiary site provided one-on-one infectious diseases assessment training, and the lead ASP pharmacist at Bluewater Health, Gayathri Radhakrishnan, mentored all pharmacists on

principles of antimicrobial stewardship. Feedback from staff was used to modify the ASP pharmacist's responsibilities, resulting in greater comfort with the new role.

Since the start of the program, antimicrobial stewardship has become entrenched in the culture at Bluewater Health, so that antimicrobials are reassessed routinely. Dr. Greensmith notes, "Antimicrobial stewardship is not a person-dependent process at our institution. It has become a hospital-wide process." Indeed, the ASP team has found that the shared approach fosters greater accountability and collaboration among all health care providers, allowing for the development of quality order sets and enhanced clinical decision making.

## Successes

- Communication tool for all pharmacist ASP activities
- Updated Automatic Stop Date Policy to curtail antimicrobial treatment duration
- Poster Presentation at Canadian Society of Hospital Pharmacists (CSHP) Professional Practice Conference 2014
- Recipient of CSHP Patient Care Grant

## Challenges

- Metrics collection and antibiogram generation, manual processes
- Clear and consistent communication of indication with antimicrobial orders

## Horizon

- Implement stewardship software
- Standardize IV to PO step-down process to implement on all units
- Incorporate more nurses into stewardship activities

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