

# Clara Barton Hospital Focuses on Antibiotic Stewardship

*Clara Barton Hospital hopes to develop new resources to promote appropriate use of antibiotics*

In hopes to develop resources and tools needed to start antibiotic stewardship programs for rural hospitals, the Center for Disease Control and Prevention, the American Hospital Association and the Pew Charitable Trust invited representatives from critical-access hospitals across the country to gather in Atlanta, Georgia to collaborate and share their current efforts to enhance antibiotic prescribing practices. Clara Barton Hospital Infection Prevention Nurse, Kacey Beck, RN, was one of the representatives selected to attend the Antibiotic Stewardship Convening.

During the convening, Beck was able to share about Clara Barton Hospital's Antibiotic Stewardship Program development and their progress thus far.

"Antibiotic stewardship is a coordinated program promoting the appropriate use of antibiotics, improved patient outcomes, reduced bacterial resistance, and decreased infections caused by multidrug-resistant organisms, often referred to as 'the super bug'," said Clara Barton Hospital Chief Nursing Officer, Jane Schepmann.

Clara Barton Hospital and Clinics Antibiotic Stewardship Program was started by a multidisciplinary team in 2015 with the development of a mission statement and policy. The team is comprised of a pharmacist, a physician leader, and other hospital and clinic staff to insure the program's mission has an organization-wide impact. The Antibiotic Stewardship Program aims to impact provider prescribing practices and to increase antibiotic knowledge and treatment expectations among patients and community members.



## CLARA BARTON Hospital & Clinics

"The goal of antibiotic stewardship is to use antibiotics only when medically indicated," said Beck. "Part of that is raising awareness with our patients. We want them to understand that they will not necessarily walk out of the Doctor's office with an antibiotic after a visit. There are consequences to taking antibiotic medications and sometimes they can do more harm than good."

It is often assumed that antibiotic will fight off any infection, but when a viral infection is present, an antibiotic will not cure the infection. Instead, antibiotic can create bacterial resistance, making it more difficult to fight off future infections.

"Other small hospitals are experiencing the same challenges we are facing when monitoring prescribing practices and tracking antibiotic use," said Beck. "By sharing our ideas and working to create these guidelines, we are hoping to find more efficient ways to meet the goals of our program."

Because resources available to small critical-access hospital are often much different than those available to large hospitals, the Antibiotic Stewardship Convening was organized to gain a better understanding of what progress has already been made by rural critical-access hospitals and what areas could be improved upon.

"Attending the convening validated that we are on the right track with our Antibiotic Stewardship Program," said Beck. "Although we are well on our way, it was great

to hear what other critical access hospital are doing to ensure the appropriate use of antibiotics and to learn new ways to improve our efforts."

"It was a great honor for Kacey to be nominated to represent our organization at the Antibiotic Stewardship Convening," said Schepmann. "Her focus on what is best for our patients combined with her promotion of the Antibiotic Stewardship Program has put our organization in an ideal position to impact practice moving forward."

Since the convening, Clara Barton Hospital has shifted their efforts to Antibiotic Stewardship in the outpatient setting. This includes the clinics, emergency room and other outpatient services. Education is a core element of the Antibiotic Stewardship Outpatient Program that the committee intends to promote. Informational posters are now displayed in each patient room explaining the purpose of antibiotic stewardship and why antibiotics are not always prescribed.

Patients and community members can learn more about antibiotic stewardship on Monday, January 29th 2018 at the Clara Barton Hospital Annual Meeting. Dr. T. Scott Webb will be the guest speaker and will be highlighting Clara Barton's Antibiotic Stewardship Program. During his presentation, Dr. Webb will be breaking down the specifics of antibiotic stewardship so patients are able to better understand the purpose of this initiative.



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