

August 10, 2012

Exeter Hospital Statement Regarding CMS Survey

The Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS) conducted an unscheduled survey on June 6, 2012 following the public announcement of hepatitis C infections at Exeter Hospital, an outbreak that was caused by alleged criminal activity.

Following that inspection, the hospital participated in a full survey by CMS on July 10-13. A team of six inspectors reviewed every aspect of patient care at Exeter Hospital. At the conclusion of the inspection, CMS announced no additional significant findings to those reported in the June spot survey.

As outlined in Exeter Hospital's August 8, 2012 Corrective Action Plan to CMS that became public on August 9 prior to its formal acceptance by CMS, the hospital has thoroughly addressed each finding.

For example, the medication preparation process described in the Cardiac Catheterization Lab was designed to enable prompt access to pain medication in connection with life-saving treatment. All healthcare providers expect that medical personnel with access to the treatment area are there solely to help deliver that life-saving treatment and pain control. Individuals with criminal intent undermine this expectation. Exeter Hospital uses state-of-the-art technology to safeguard pain medication. However, based on Exeter Hospital's investigation that uncovered alleged drug diversion by an ex-employee after dispensing from our secure system, the hospital modified the pain medication preparation process several weeks ago. As of June 12, once filled, syringes are locked up by a nurse until the moment they are needed and only then are they unlocked. This may add a few seconds of additional time to the treatment process, but makes pain medication even more secure in the Cardiac Catheterization Lab.

We have posted the report in its entirety on our web page at ExeterHospital.com. We encourage anyone who is interested in learning more to review the full report.