

Institute for Safe Medication Practices
200 Lakeside Drive Suite 200, Horsham, PA 19044
www.ismp.org

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
June 18, 2009

CONTACT: Renee Brehio, Media Relations
704-831-8822
rbrehio@ismp.org

**ISMP Launches First Self Assessment of
Automated Dispensing Cabinet Safety**

Horsham, Pa.— More than 80% of hospitals across the U.S. have implemented automated dispensing cabinets (ADCs) as an important part of their drug distribution system, making the evaluation of practices and policies surrounding this technology an essential step in ensuring patient safety. To help meet healthcare organizations' growing need for assistance in this area, the Institute for Safe Medication Practices (ISMP) has introduced the first *Medication Safety Self Assessment® for Automated Dispensing Cabinets*.

The self-assessment is based on guidelines developed by a national forum of practitioners and vendors with expertise in the safe use of ADCs, which was convened by ISMP. The self assessment is uniquely designed to help the nation's hospitals evaluate their automated dispensing cabinet safety practices, identify opportunities for improvement, and compare their experience with that of hospitals of similar size and demographics.

The assessment contains 12 core elements that support the safe use of ADCs in all clinical settings. Many of the elements represent system improvements and safeguards that ISMP has recommended in response to analysis of medication errors reported to the ISMP Medication Errors Reporting Program, and problems identified during onsite ISMP consultations with hospitals

Healthcare organizations can download a PDF copy of the self assessment from the ISMP website at: www.ismp.org/selfassessments/ADC/survey.pdf. Since safe use of ADCs involves collaboration between many different disciplines and departments, hospitals are being asked to convene multidisciplinary teams to provide a wide range of perspectives for the most complete data set possible.

ISMP strongly urges hospitals to use the following process to complete the ADC self assessment:

- **Establish a multidisciplinary team.** Recommendations for team composition and procedures are contained in the self assessment document.
- **Assess organizational use of ADCs through a consensus vote** from all team members, after thoroughly investigating the level of implementation of each core element.

Institute for Safe Medication Practices
200 Lakeside Drive Suite 200, Horsham, PA 19044
www.ismp.org

- **Confidentially submit data to ISMP.** ISMP is a federally certified Patient Safety Organization (PSO). When the self assessment is used for quality improvement purposes and patient safety activities and data are submitted to ISMP, they are considered a patient safety work product and therefore privileged and confidential. *Deadline for submission is December 31, 2009.*
- **Compare experience** with the aggregate experience of demographically similar hospitals—national data will be available for comparison at the end of the submission period.
- **Document progress** toward improvement by regularly using ISMP’s tool to re-assess the organization’s ADC use.

ISMP conducted landmark medication safety self assessments for hospitals in 2000 and 2004. It also has created separate self assessments for medication safety in physician practices and community/ambulatory pharmacies, and the specific areas of bar coding and antithrombotic therapy. As with its other self assessments, ISMP will use the findings to develop additional educational resources and tools to assist healthcare organizations in improving their medication safety policies and procedures.

ISMP’s national ADC forum was made possible by support from CareFusion (formerly Cardinal HealthCare), McKesson, and Omnicell. AmeriSource Bergen, Cardinal Healthcare, and Omnicell sponsored development of the ADC self assessment.

For a copy of the ISMP ADC self assessment, visit www.ismp.org/selfassessments/ADC/survey.pdf.

For a copy of ISMP’s ADC guidelines, visit www.ismp.org/Tools/guidelines/ADC_Guidelines_Final.pdf.

More information on ISMP’s other self assessments can be found at

www.ismp.org/selfassessments/default.asp.

About ISMP: The Institute for Safe Medication Practices (ISMP) is an independent, nonprofit organization that works closely with healthcare practitioners and institutions, regulatory agencies, consumers, and professional organizations to provide education about medication errors and their prevention. ISMP represents more than 35 years of experience in helping healthcare practitioners keep patients safe, and continues to lead efforts to improve the medication use process. ISMP is a federally certified patient safety organization (PSO), providing healthcare practitioners and organizations with the highest level of legal protection and confidentiality for patient safety data and error reports they submit to the Institute. For more information on ISMP, or its medication safety alert newsletters and other tools for healthcare professionals and consumers, visit www.ismp.org.

-end-