



American Board
of Medical Specialties
Higher standards. Better care.®

ABMS PATIENT SAFETY IMPROVEMENT PROGRAM NEWSLETTER

December 2009

In This Issue

[2009 In Review -
ABMS Patient Safety
Programs](#)

[Improvement Rates
with the ABMS
Patient Safety
Improvement
Program](#)

[Contact Information](#)

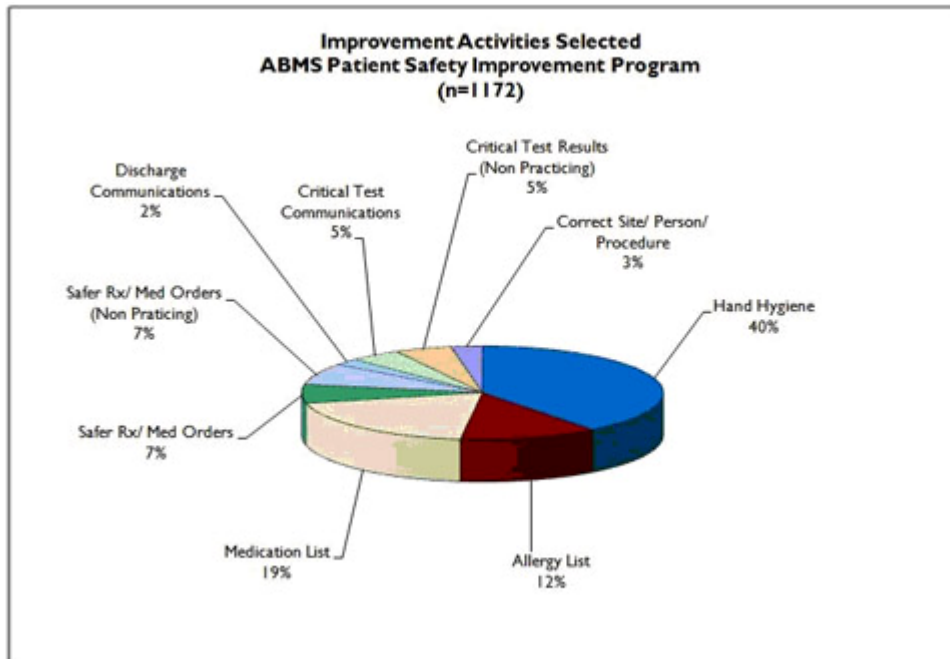
2009 In Review - ABMS Patient Safety Programs

Beginning with the release of the [ABMS® Patient Safety Improvement Program](#), our goal has been to provide physicians with a solid foundation in patient safety and quality improvement (QI). As we close 2009, more than 2,000 physicians representing all 24 ABMS Member Boards have completed the program. Many participate to satisfy ABMS Maintenance of Certification® requirements. Health insurers and medical malpractice carriers also incorporate the program into their QI initiatives and residency programs incorporate it into training curricula. Clearly, the focus on patient safety and quality improvement involves many areas of the healthcare system and program use extends beyond the ABMS Board Enterprise.

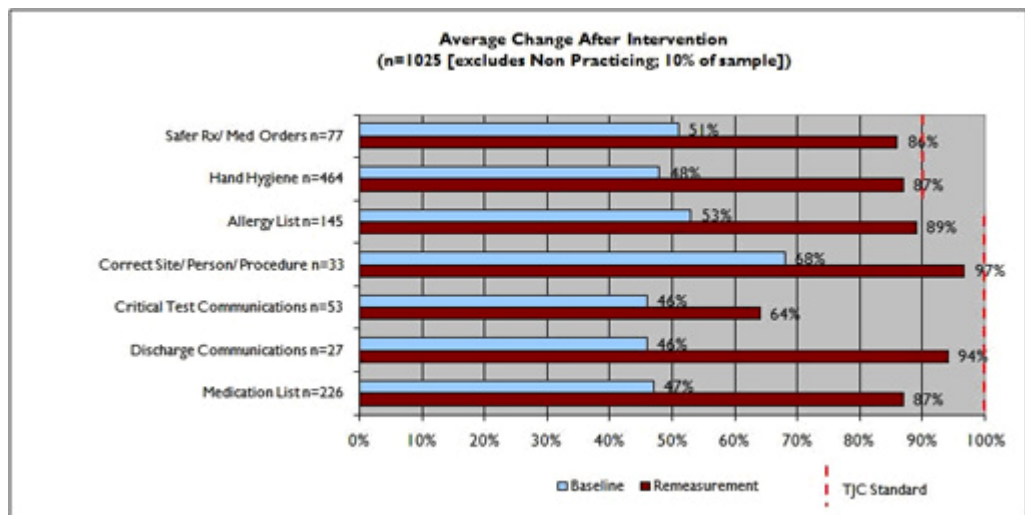
As we look forward to 2010, ABMS remains focused on improving healthcare quality and patient safety. The continued use of ABMS programs, including [ABMS® Patient Safety Foundations](#) and [ABMS® Quality Improvement in Practice](#), will benefit patients by ensuring that physicians have the knowledge, tools and skills to continually assess and improve the quality of care they deliver.

Improvement Rates with the ABMS Patient Safety Improvement Program

The ABMS Patient Safety Improvement Program requires participants to complete a performance improvement activity chosen from seven activities for practicing physicians and two for non-practicing physicians (see chart below). ABMS recently analyzed the activities physicians chose and resulting performance improvement of ~ 1,200 participants to learn about the program effectiveness. The Hand Hygiene activity was chosen most frequently (40%), followed by Medication List (19%) and Allergy List (12%). We believe that Hand Hygiene is the most popular because it applies to a wide range of specialties and practice settings. Hand Hygiene is also represented in high-visibility national initiatives, including The Joint Commission National Patient Safety Goals, as a means of reducing and preventing nosocomial infections.



The average change in participants' self-reported improvement scores between baseline and remeasurement cycles shows that the interventions have a strongly positive impact on physicians' practice, driving an average 41% rate of improvement across the seven improvement activities for practicing physicians:



These improvements are very encouraging for a single PDSA cycle and there is a clear opportunity for further improvement in practice as illustrated by the gap between The Joint Commission standards and the average remeasurement scores. This illustrates the importance for physicians to sustain the changes that led to the improvement and embed them as routine practice. Additional information regarding distributions of scores by individual improvement activity is available; please contact ABMS at patientsafety@abms.org.

**ABMS
Contact
Information**

American Board of
Medical Specialties
222 N LaSalle St.,
Suite 1500
Chicago, IL 60601
t: (312) 436-2600
f: (312) 436-2700

In summary, completion of the ABMS Patient Safety Improvement Program, combined with assessment of one's practice, led to rapid rates of improvement and made strong progress closing the remaining gap to reach The Joint Commission standards. It is our hope that participants continue to apply the skills acquired in the ABMS Patient Safety programs, not only in the activity originally chosen, but in other areas of practice as well.

Contact Information

We look forward to discussing the ABMS Patient Safety programs with you; contact information follows:

For information regarding this newsletter or the ABMS Patient Safety programs, please contact ABMS at (312) 436-2600 option 5 or patientsafety@abms.org.

For information regarding how to offer the ABMS Patient Safety programs within your organization, please contact HealthStream at 1-800-933-9293 or abms@healthstream.com.

For information on ABMS Patient Safety programs, including: [ABMS Patient Safety Improvement Program](#), [ABMS Patient Safety Foundations](#) and [ABMS Quality Improvement in Practice](#), please visit the ABMS Patient Safety Programs Web page at http://www.abms.org/Products_and_Publications/Performance_Improvement/PSIP.aspx.

ABMS Patient Safety Improvement Program Newsletter is an e-newsletter from the American Board of Medical Specialties, a national not-for-profit organization representing 24 Medical Boards. Visit our Web site at www.abms.org or write to American Board of Medical Specialties, 222 North LaSalle Street, Suite 1500, Chicago, IL 60601.