



# FSCI Update



## August 17, 2010 Issue 1

### Upcoming Events

**Sept. 21:** FSCI Webinar from 10 a.m. – 11 a.m. ET. Contact Martha DeCastro, [martha@fha.org](mailto:martha@fha.org) to RSVP.

### Recruitment Update: 92 Hospitals Join FSCI

As of today, 92 hospitals have joined FSCI. Once we reach our goal of 100 participating hospitals, the collaborative will establish the largest statewide surgical improvement effort in the country.

### FSCI's on YouTube

To see FSCI's informational video, click [here](#).

### Contact

To join FSCI or if you have questions, contact:

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Welcome to the first edition of FSCI Update, a monthly newsletter for Florida Surgical Care Initiative (FSCI) participants as we count down to the FSCI kick-off. Each issue will keep you informed on program news and events, answer frequently asked questions and provide additional background on issues such as FSCI data collection and reports. We welcome your feedback. Please send comments and questions to Sarah Byrd, FHA communications director, [sarah@fha.org](mailto:sarah@fha.org).

## Florida Hospitals Join Together to Improve Care

Providing safe care and the best patient outcomes are top priorities, but complications still occur. During the recent health care reform debates, Florida's commitment to high quality care at an affordable cost was challenged by some members of Congress who want to shift health care funding to other states. The Florida Surgical Care Initiative (FSCI) aims to put Florida hospitals at the center of our nation's debate over improving the quality of our health care – not as an example for why improvements must be made, but as an example of how improvements can be made.

FSCI, a partnership of the Florida Hospital Association and the American College of Surgeons and its Florida chapter, is a statewide initiative to reduce surgical complications, improve the quality of care and reduce costs across our state. Supported in part by a grant from Blue Cross and Blue Shield of Florida (BCBSF), FSCI will focus on four key measures: surgical site infections, urinary tract infections, colorectal outcomes, and elderly surgery outcomes. These four high-impact measures were chosen because they relate to common procedures and conditions in which the related outcomes can be significantly improved.

FSCI is based on the ACS National Surgical Quality Improvement Program (ACS NSQIP), a program developed by surgeons that uses risk-adjusted,

clinical, 30-day outcomes data to review and assess outcomes and complications related to surgical care. Hospitals that already participate in ACS NSQIP, and those that are interested in the full program, can participate in the FSCI collaborative, and their data will be included in collaborative-specific reports.

By being proactive in improving quality, Florida's hospitals get out ahead of federal efforts focused on quality and cost. In the wake of the recent health care reform legislation, the Obama administration has identified "unjustified geographic variation in spending" as a key issue to address going forward. Geographic variation critics often cite Florida as a state where health care costs don't always align with quality.

Recent reports indicate that Florida's hospitals have room for improvement. Florida has shown no improvement in the latest state rankings released by the Agency for Healthcare Research and Quality (AHRQ). Using data from CMS, AHCA and other publicly available sources, Florida ranked below average in health care quality and fared poorly in surgical care measures, infections and avoidable hospitalizations.

The ACS NSQIP methodology on which FSCI is based has been proven to significantly reduce complications and deaths in participating hospitals. Hospitals using ACS NSQIP saw reductions in complications that averaged from 250 to 500 fewer complications per hospital per year, according to a study in the *Annals of Surgery* last year.<sup>1</sup> This program also has been shown to help hospitals save money by preventing costly complications, each of which can add \$11,000 or more to the cost of patient care.<sup>2</sup>

In addition, the four FSCI measures are currently under review with the National Quality Forum (NQF). If endorsed by NQF, the measures could be implemented as national quality measures by the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS), making Florida hospitals the first in the nation to participate in this outcomes-based program.

Working together, Florida's hospitals will be able to improve care, reduce costs and serve as an example to the nation in providing high quality surgical care.

**Sources:**

<sup>1</sup> Hall, BL et al. "Does Surgical Quality Improve in the American College of Surgeons National Surgical Quality Improvement Program." *Annals of Surgery* 250. 2009.

<sup>2</sup> Dimick, J.B., et al. "Who Pays for Poor Surgical Quality? Building a Business Case for Quality Improvement." *Journal of the American College of Surgeons* 202 (2006): 933-937

## Blue Cross and Blue Shield of Florida Doubles FSCI Support

Following the commitment and enthusiasm of Florida's hospitals to improve care across the state, Blue Cross and Blue Shield of Florida (BCBSF) has committed to doubling its support of FSCI – providing \$800,000 over two years. The additional support will be used to fund half of FHA members' participation fee in FSCI. In addition, BCBSF will provide additional support for collaborative meetings. We are grateful to BCBSF for its generous support of this important initiative.

## Please Join Us for an Informational Webinar in September

Please join us on **Tuesday, Sept. 21, 2010 from 10 a.m. to 11 a.m. ET** for an

informational webinar, “A Closer Look at FSCI,” hosted by Clifford Ko, MD, FACS, director and Karen Richards, administrative director of the American College of Surgeons Division of Research and Optimal Patient Care. The webinar will provide you with an overview of FSCI, and will answer common questions about the program.

## FSCI Hospital Communications Toolkit Now Available

Communicating your participation in FSCI shows your hospital’s commitment to quality care. In order to support the efforts of your communications staff, we have created a toolkit of materials and templates to help you inform your staff and external audiences. The contents of the toolkit include:

- Communications guide: This guide provides an overview of the program, as well as ideas for reaching out to local media and raising awareness within your own hospital, and guidelines for reporting results to the public.
- Press release templates: Templates to help you announce your hospital’s participation in the initiative and new staff members, such as your Surgical Clinical Reviewer (SCR).
- Newsletter article: This article can be repurposed to include in your newsletter to inform staff and patients about your participation.
- Website copy and participation logo: In order to spread the word about your participation, this content can be used to promote the initiative on your website.
- Website banner ads: We have provided several banner ad options that you can place on your website to highlight participation in the program.
- FSCI presentation template: This brief template provides slides you can incorporate into current presentations or use to present to leadership or other internal audiences.

