About St. Elizabeth Medical Center

St. Elizabeth Medical Center, based in Utica, NY, is committed to excellence in healthcare and education. It offers a wide range of inpatient medical/surgical services for adults and children, as well as adult inpatient psychiatric services.

$5 million in avoided costs

Infection preventionists (IPs) Linda Kokoszki, Sandy Mercer and Teresa Inka began an initiative to reduce the total nosocomial infection marker (NIM) rate at St. Elizabeth Medical Center with the help of BD MedMined™ services.

After analyzing the housewide blood NIM rate, the infection prevention team discovered that the NIMs over the past year were due primarily to blood culture contamination. They decided to develop a plan to reduce the incidence of the common blood contaminant and infectious pathogen, coagulase-negative Staphylococcus.

Their efforts began with increased education via a housewide “Scrub the Hub” campaign and a change in product use, increasing the use of the antiseptic chlorhexidine gluconate (CHG). In addition, a vascular access team was formed and has continuously worked with the infection prevention department to implement new strategies. These combined actions contributed to a 51% reduction in the blood NIM rate.

“They have streamlined our daily workflow and allowed us to do better surveillance in less time. I cannot imagine life in our department without BD MedMined™ Services.”

Linda Kokoszki, RN, BSN, CIC
Director of Infection Prevention and Bioterrorism Coordinator
In addition to addressing the blood NIM rate, the team also put interventions into place for urine and respiratory infections, which included implementing the associated bundles, setting reduction goals and continuing educational campaigns for their program. These activities are reflected in the nursing units through increased accountability to leadership.

As a result of significantly reducing NIM rates, St. Elizabeth Medical Center avoided $5 million in costs. They continue to promote process improvements in their crusade to enhance patient care—with expectations of future NIM rate reductions and cost savings.

Through these initiatives, the hospital was able to realize a 29% reduction in the urine NIM rate and a 42% reduction in the respiratory NIM rate.

Providing consistent, timely feedback and building accountability across the organization is vital to the success of any goal-setting campaign. The St. Elizabeth infection prevention team accomplished these objectives by sharing NIM data regularly and by using the annual DRG-adjusted financial analysis from BD MedMined™ services as an opportunity to build executive support.

### Rate trend summary

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
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<th>Baseline period (7/06–6/07)</th>
<th>Active period (7/07–3/10)</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Urine NIM reduction</td>
<td>29.26%</td>
<td>NIMs prevented 423</td>
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<tr>
<td>Respiratory NIM reduction</td>
<td>42.10%</td>
<td>Direct cost avoided $5M</td>
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<tr>
<td>Blood NIM reduction</td>
<td>51.88%</td>
<td>Days of LOS* saved 3,255</td>
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</tbody>
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### NIM rate reduction

[Graph showing NIM rate reduction from 2006 to 2010 for Urine, Respiratory, and Blood NIM rates]